

# Chapter 3

## Japan's Foreign Policy to Promote National and Global Interests

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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**

Today, Japan's security environment is as severe and complex as it has ever been since the end of World War II. Military build-up, including nuclear and missile capabilities, is advancing rapidly around Japan. Further reinforcement of military capabilities and acceleration of military activities are becoming more prominent, and unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force are occurring more frequently than ever before. A historic shift in the power balance and geopolitical competition are intensifying particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, with some countries in the international community attempting to change the existing international order based on their own historical views and values. Russia started its aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. 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 the existing international order, thereby leading to situations of unjustifiable infringement of principles such as freedom of navigation and freedom of overflight.

Under these circumstances, grey zone situations over territories, cross-border cyberattacks on critical civilian infrastructures, and information warfare in the cognitive domain through information manipulation, including spread of disinformation, are constant occurrences in the international community, thereby further blurring the boundary between contingency and peacetime. Furthermore, the scope of security has expanded to include those fields previously considered non-military such as economic, technological and others, and thus the boundary between military and non-military fields has become blurred. In addition, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, as well as responding to international terrorism,

continue to pose serious challenges to the international community. In light of these developments, it is now necessary to strengthen efforts related to security policies across diverse sectors.

In December 2022, Japan formulated a new National Security Strategy (NSS), along with the National Defense Strategy and Defense Buildup Program. While the NSS sets forth a wide range of security measures (fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, including possession of counterstrike capabilities; reinforcement of comprehensive defense architecture; consideration of revisions to systems including the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines; development of systems for the introduction and implementation of active cyber defense; significant reinforcement of maritime security capabilities and expansion of systems; promotion of economic security policies, among others), it establishes diplomatic capability first among the main elements of comprehensive national power for Japan's national security. Based on this document, Japan will continue to develop a strong diplomacy, to prevent crises before they occur, and to proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment.

Furthermore, the NSS also notes that the transfer of defense equipment and technology overseas serves as a key policy instrument to create a desirable security environment for Japan, and to provide assistance to countries that are subject to aggression in violation of international law. From this perspective, the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines were partially revised in December 2023, and the Implementation Guidelines underwent further partial revision in March, in order to enable the transfer of defense equipment and technology across a wide

range of fields, and at the same time, to conduct more strict examinations on transfers. Regarding the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), a joint development program for next-generation fighter aircraft by Japan, the UK, and Italy, the three countries signed the Convention on the Establishment of the “Global Combat Air Programme – GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO)” in December 2023 to establish an international organization for the management and operation of the Programme, and the Convention entered into force in December.

## **(2) Enforcement of the “Legislation for Peace and Security,” and Initiatives Based on the Legislation**

In order to adapt to the changes in the security environment surrounding Japan and to secure the lives and peaceful livelihood of its people, it is important to advance vibrant diplomacy to create a peaceful, stable, and prosperous international environment. In addition, it is important to enable seamless responses to any situation, and to contribute even more proactively to the peace and stability of the international community based on the principle of international cooperation. To achieve these objectives, the “Legislation for Peace and Security,” a domestic legislation, took effect 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,

from 2017 to the end of 2023, Japan escorted the U.S. Forces and other troops a total of 137 times on occasions such as joint exercises, intelligence and surveillance operations, including ballistic missile warnings. In addition, Japan has also expanded and enhanced activities relating to cooperation on international peace and cooperation, such as UN Peacekeeping operations (PKO).

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, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (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.

## **(3) 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 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 its 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 for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (“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 missile defense, cyberspace, space and information security. While advancing these efforts, Japan and the U.S. have concurrently 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 personnel in Okinawa to Guam and other locations in order to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa.

## **(2) Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in Various Fields**

### **A An Overview of Japan-U.S. Security and 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.

At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held during Prime Minister Kishida's official visit to the U.S. in April, President Joseph Biden reiterated unwavering U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan. The two leaders also declared new strategic initiatives including upgrade of command and control frameworks, holding of the Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS) Forum that includes co-development, co-production, and co-sustainment within its scope, and holding of ministerial meeting on extended deterrence.<sup>(1)</sup> Furthermore, they issued instructions to further deepen concrete discussions on Japan-U.S. cooperation in the field of security through the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. “2+2”).

The Japan-U.S. “2+2” was held in Tokyo in July, and was attended by Foreign Minister Kamikawa and Defense Minister KIHARA Minoru from Japan, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin from the U.S. Recognizing that Prime Minister Kishida's official visit to the U.S. in April was historic in bringing the Japan-U.S. Alliance to an unprecedented level, both sides reaffirmed their

intent to implement new strategic initiatives following the official visit, with the vision to build a global partnership for the future, including upgrading Alliance command and control, deepening defense industry and advanced technology cooperation, and enhancing cross-domain operations. The first Japan-U.S. ministerial meeting on extended deterrence was also convened. The two sides engaged in in-depth discussions at the ministerial level on cooperation to further strengthen extended deterrence, and affirmed that they will continue enhancing discussions on extended deterrence at various levels, primarily through the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD). The ministers also underscored their support for the global partnership goals on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), and affirmed that realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific requires the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in leadership positions as well as their contributions toward conflict prevention, reconstruction, and peacebuilding.

In December, Prime Minister Ishiba received a courtesy call by Secretary of Defense Austin on the occasion of his visit to Japan. Prime Minister Ishiba expressed gratitude for Secretary Austin's past contribution to strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and stated that Japan and the U.S. must work together to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the alliance, in order to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific amidst the increasingly severe security environment.

On February 7, 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba, during his visit to Washington D.C., held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Donald J. Trump. The two leaders concurred to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to work closely to address strategic challenges in the region that both countries are facing. Prime Minister Ishiba also expressed Japan's unwavering commitment to fundamentally strengthen Japan's defense capabilities, which President Trump welcomed. Furthermore, 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 reaffirmed that Article V of the Japan-U.S. Treaty

<sup>(1)</sup> Providing deterrence that a country possesses to its allies and partners. Japan possesses its own deterrence while also receiving extended deterrence from its ally, the U.S..

of Mutual Cooperation and Security applies to the Senkaku Islands.

In 2024, Japan continued to engage in personnel exchanges with senior U.S. defense officials, including successive visits to Japan by General Charles A. Flynn, Commanding General, U.S. Army Pacific, Admiral Stephen Koehler, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (PACFLT), and Admiral John C. Aquilino, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in April; Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in May; General Charles Q. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense Austin in July; Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth in August; Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in October; General Mahoney, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps in November; Secretary of Defense Austin and Lt Gen. James F. Glynn, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific in December.

Discussions on extended deterrence are also being intensified in the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD). The EDD was established in 2010, and as a part of Japan-U.S. security and defense cooperation, 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 engage in an in-depth exchange of views on means to sustain and strengthen extended deterrence, which is at the core of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen mutual understanding on alliance deterrence. At the EDD meeting held at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming in June, the U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to enhance the regional deterrent effect of U.S. nuclear assets. The two sides explored avenues to enhance joint deterrence capabilities of both countries in an integrated manner to deepen Alliance political, diplomatic, and defense cooperation and further prepare the Alliance to defend against potential attacks and deter nuclear use. Both sides also reiterated their pledge to improve coordination and strengthen the Alliance's capabilities and posture against adversary missile threats. As a part of these discussions, the delegations received an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) wing mission brief before touring the missile procedures trainer, where U.S. Air Force missile combat crews conduct

training on ICBM launch procedures, and a training launch facility, where ICBM maintenance professionals train on maintaining the Minuteman III ICBM weapons system. In addition, as mentioned previously, the first Japan-U.S. ministerial meeting on extended deterrence was convened in July.

At the EDD held at MOFA in December, the two sides shared assessments of challenges to regional security, and particularly in the face of the dynamic reality surrounding nuclear capabilities, reiterated their shared resolve to further strengthen extended deterrence, bolstered by Japan's capabilities. In this context, the two sides discussed how to improve policy coordination and alignment of defense capabilities to deter and, if necessary, respond to aggression against the Alliance and in the region. Furthermore, they deepened discussion on the relationship between nuclear and non-nuclear military matters within the Alliance, on coordinating deterrence messaging and escalation management practices during both peacetime and contingencies, and on bilateral coordination through the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) throughout every phase of a developing situation. The delegations visited the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Camp Kengun in Kumamoto Prefecture and observed the Japan-U.S.-Australia command post exercise "Yama Sakura 87" (YS-87) and JGSDF assets such as the Type-12 surface-to-ship guided missile and Network Electronic Warfare System.

## **B Missile Defense**

Japan has been making steady efforts to develop and engage in the production of the Ballistic Missile Defense (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. Japan is also advancing its efforts to effectively counter new airborne threats, including hypersonic weapons, and at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in August 2023, announced the decision to initiate the joint development of Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI). In May, Japan and the U.S. signed the Project Arrangement for the joint development of



GPI. In the Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement issued in April, the two countries reviewed their approach to the sharing of information to counter missile threats, including announcing their "vision to cooperate on a networked air defense architecture among the U.S., Japan, and Australia."

### **C Cyberspace**

In light of the necessity for cross-governmental efforts by both Japan and the U.S., the 9th Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue was convened in June, where participants engaged in wide-ranging discussions on Japan-U.S. cooperation on cyber-related matters, including cyber policies in both countries, cooperation in the international arena and bilateral cooperation. At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" held in July, the two countries concurred on strengthening cooperation in the context of strengthening Alliance deterrence and response capabilities. Stakeholders from both sides engage in discussions, through frameworks such as the Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue, on bilateral cooperation across a wide range of areas. Furthermore, the two sides are continuing to cooperate on matters related to cyberspace, including promoting bilateral policy coordination, strengthening systems and capabilities, and exchanging incident information, while taking into consideration Japan's cyber security strategy and the cyber policies of the U.S..

### **D Space**

At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" convened in January 2023, Japan and the U.S. committed to deepening cooperation on space capabilities, and considered that attacks to, from, or within space, present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance, and affirmed such attacks, in certain circumstances, could lead to the invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

Japan and the U.S. are continuing to advance space cooperation in the field of security such as mutual exchanges of information in the field of Space Domain Awareness and others, cooperation on hosted payloads (mission instruments loaded onto other entities' satellites), and cooperation on space capabilities including Low Earth Orbit (LEO) detection and tracking constellation for strategic threats such as long-range missiles and hypersonic glide vehicles.

### **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 at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" held in July.

### **(3) Realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan**

While advancing the efforts described above, the Government of Japan will continue to make every effort to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, and to maintain the stable presence of U.S. Forces in Japan, by steadily implementing the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of MCAS Futenma to Henoko.

In the Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. "2+2" issued in July, the two sides reiterated their firm commitment to the steady implementation of such realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. This Statement emphasized the importance of optimizing Alliance force posture to address increasing security challenges in the region and be better postured to meet these challenges in the future. To this end, ministers welcomed the U.S. plan to modernize its tactical aircraft laydown across Japan, which reflects capability investments to enhance the Japan-U.S. Alliance and bolster regional deterrence. At the same time, they celebrated the U.S. redesignation of the 12th Marine Regiment to the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR), and the steady implementation of the MLR reorganization toward initial operational capability by 2025. Furthermore, they welcomed the forward deployment and return of the USS George Washington to Japan, and its critical role in supporting Alliance deterrence. Regarding the relocation of Marine Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam, it was confirmed in the Statement that the relocation would begin in 2024, and the commencement of relocation was officially announced on December 14.

In particular, the return of lands in Okinawa has been moving forward based on the April 2013 "Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa" ("Okinawa 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



the effective period of the new SMAs (April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027), the annual average budget for HNS is approximately 211 billion Japanese yen.

### **(5) Various Issues Related to the Presence of the U.S. Forces in Japan**

To ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and the stable stationing 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 local residents living in the vicinity and to gain their understanding and support regarding the stationing of U.S. Forces. The Government of Japan, taking into consideration the requests from local communities, has been making utmost efforts in areas such as preventing incidents and accidents involving U.S. Forces, abating the noise of U.S. Forces' aircraft, and dealing with environmental issues at U.S. Forces' facilities and areas. At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" convened in July, Japan and the U.S. emphasized the importance of continued bilateral coordination to ensure the sharing of information in a timely manner, and in the spirit of alliance cooperation, positively evaluated efforts to be implemented by the U.S. Forces in Japan to prevent unacceptable incidents and behavior. In matters related to the environment, ministers discussed enhancing bilateral environmental cooperation, including on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) issues.

MOFA is implementing various initiatives, including exchanges between U.S. Forces personnel and residents living near U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan. Since FY2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) have been implementing Student Educational Exchange and Dialogue (SEED) projects at the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan. These projects are aimed at deepening mutual understanding through cultural and educational exchanges among Japanese and American junior and senior high school students, and have been conducted continuously at U.S. Forces' facilities and schools in various parts of Japan, with the cooperation of local governments in the vicinity and U.S. Forces in Japan. (See the Column on page 199.) In addition, in Okinawa where there

is a concentration of U.S. Forces' facilities and areas, the "TOFU: Think of Okinawa's Future in the United States" program has been implemented since FY2017 to provide an opportunity for high school and university students from Okinawa to witness 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. The program served as an opportunity for participants to cultivate an international perspective through visits to Tokyo, Washington, D.C., and New York, exchanges of opinions with key government officials, and tours of government facilities. (See the Column on page 199.)

### **(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 were established in July of the same year based on the recommendation of UN Security Council resolution 83 in June. Following the cease-fire 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 four military staff members including a stationed commander, as well as 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. (Note that the status of U.S. forces that form a part of the UN forces is governed by the relevant agreements implemented made pursuant to the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.) At present, the UN forces in Japan are 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 October 2023, General Paul J. LaCamera (Commander, UNC/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea) paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Kamikawa. Foreign



Minister Kamikawa expressed her appreciation for the surveillance activities against illegal ship-to-ship transfers<sup>(2)</sup> by the UNC Sending States as well as the role played by Japan-U.S. Alliance and the trilateral

coordination among Japan, the U.S. and the ROK for peace and stability in the region. She also stated that Japan looks forward to continuing the enhancement of the relationship with the UNC.

## COLUMN

### Sowing the “SEED” for the Future of Japan and the U.S. — Japan-U.S. Exchange Programs through English (SEED/TOFU)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) conducts exchange programs in municipalities where the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas are located, in order to sow the “SEED” for the future of Japan and the U.S. and make it flourish. The Student Educational Exchange and Dialogue (SEED) project was implemented at seven locations across Japan in FY2024 (Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni; Yokota Air Base; Camp Kuwae; U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka; Camp Zama; Misawa Air Base; and U.S. Fleet Activities, Sasebo). This initiative is named “SEED” with the hope that the project will nurture talents who will play an active role in the international community by providing opportunities for Japanese junior and senior high school students and American students living in the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas to interact in English and deepen mutual understanding. TAKAHASHI Ryo, who participated in the project at U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, is one such valued “SEED.”

#### ■ TAKAHASHI Ryo, second year student at the Yokosuka School for the Deaf

I participated in the SEED project held on November 2 and 3 at U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka. I took part in this project as I felt it would be a good opportunity to interact with American students in English.

I am hearing impaired and live with cochlear implants in both ears. Some of the American students' English pronunciation was different from the English pronunciation that I usually hear in my classes, so I had to strain to understand it. However, since I have been working hard on my English studies, I was able to understand some of the conversations in English that the American students had.

While sharing ideas with my teammates in English, I introduced products made with local resources. As I delivered a presentation in front of those who have supported the SEED project as well as the American students, I felt so nervous that my heart was pounding. Also, I was able to make American friends for the first time.

Participating in the project made me realize that my English proficiency is still not good enough. I am now even more motivated to work harder in the future so that I can speak with people from all over the world. Despite being hearing impaired, I was able to gain experience by challenging myself. Going forward, I would like to continue learning English, never giving it up.



Takahashi receiving a completion certificate as the representative of the participating students (November 3, Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture)



Commemorative photo of the SEED participants at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni (September 8, Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Prefecture)

(2) 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.

MOFA also runs the “TOFU: Think of Okinawa's Future in the United States” program for Okinawa Prefecture, where there is a concentration of the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas. This initiative aims to promote mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. by providing students from, or residing in, Okinawa Prefecture with an opportunity to have a first-hand experience in the U.S.

In March, the program participants paid courtesy calls on Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, HOSAKA Yasushi, and received encouragement from them. Thereafter, they visited Washington, D.C. and New York. After returning to Japan, they participated in a final presentation to report the outcome of the program to various relevant stakeholders in Okinawa Prefecture in May. In June, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Okinawa Prefecture and met with the participants of the TOFU program, and she encouraged them to play an active role to bear responsibility for the future of Okinawa Prefecture. This initiative has been welcomed and highly commended in Okinawa Prefecture and elsewhere.

Such investments in future generations contribute to fostering the people-to-people connections that underpin the Japan-U.S. Alliance. MOFA, in cooperation with municipalities where the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas are located, will continue to support the development of the younger generation.



TOFU program participants at a meeting with Georgetown University students (March 23, Washington, D.C., U.S.)



TOFU program final presentation (May 11, Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture)

## 3 Global Security

### (1) Regional Security

In the international community, a historical shift in the power balance, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, is occurring. In light of the numerous security challenges confronting this region, there is a need for Japan to cooperate with its ally and like-minded countries and others. In particular, it is more important than ever to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. 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.

Japan and Australia concurred, at the leaders' and foreign ministerial levels, to continue strengthening cooperation in partnership with a focus on cooperation with like-minded countries, toward further deepening the “Special Strategic Partnership” between the two countries and realizing a “FOIP.” At the eleventh Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) convened in September, Japan and Australia concurred on working unwaveringly to deepen Australia-Japan strategic and security cooperation, including all tools of statecraft, in line with the Australia-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (JDSC)<sup>(3)</sup> issued in 2022. Japan and Australia are steadily strengthening security

<sup>(3)</sup> A document that sets out the direction for the next 10 years of Japan-Australia security cooperation, signed at the Japan-Australia Summit Meeting in October 2022.

cooperation by utilizing the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement that entered into force in 2023. For example, under this Agreement, the Australian Defence Force participated in Exercise Keen Sword 25, a joint Japan-U.S. exercise, for the first time in October. With regard to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, the Australian Defence Force conducted monitoring and surveillance operations in the waters around Japan with their naval vessels from early to mid-May and from early to mid-September, and with their aircraft from early to mid-February and from early to mid-November.

Japan and India have concurred, at the leaders' and foreign ministerial levels, to further diversify and deepen bilateral relations across a wide range of fields, including economy, security, and people-to-people exchanges, in order to further develop the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." At the Third Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting convened in August, the Ministers discussed cooperation toward the realization of FOIP, bilateral security and defense cooperation, as well as regional and global issues, and concurred to continue to work closely together. In November, Japan and India signed a Memorandum of Implementation for transfer of Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) based on their reciprocal Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, and held the inaugural Japan-India Dialogue on Economic Security, including Strategic Trade and Technology.

In regard to the Republic of Korea (ROK), the two sides concurred, at the Japan-ROK Security Dialogue held in November, to deepen mutual understanding of their respective security and defense policies, and to communicate closely toward enhancing Japan-ROK security and defense cooperation. Furthermore, based on the recognition that Japan-ROK relations are important in the current strategic environment, they agreed that Japan and the ROK, as well as Japan, the U.S., and the ROK, will continue to work closely together on matters, including responding to North Korea, taking advantage of various international conferences and other opportunities, and holding talks between leaders, foreign ministers, defense ministers, and heads of the national security agencies. Japan and the ROK are also advancing further trilateral cooperation to address

regional security issues, including Freedom Edge, the first multi-domain joint exercise among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK (June and November), and other joint trilateral exercises (January, April, November). The Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Diplomacy Working Group for Foreign Ministry Cooperation on North Korea's Cyber Threats was held in December 2023, March and September 2024, during which the three countries reaffirmed that they will continue to work closely, including in the cyber area.

In relation to the UK, which is Japan's "enhanced global strategic partner," defense cooperation is advancing with the application of the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) that entered into force in October 2023. In April, the UK Royal Navy patrol vessel, HMS *Spey*, made a port visit to Japan, a fact that was touched on at the Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Meeting convened in the same month. The HMS *Spey* conducted monitoring and surveillance operations on illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, from mid- to late June. Later, at the Japan-UK Defense Ministers Meeting in July, the Ministers announced that the defense authorities had reached an agreement to apply Japan Self Defense Forces' Asset Protection Measures to the UK. In September, the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) training vessels JS *Kashima* and JS *Shimakaze* visited ports in London and Southampton, UK, and conducted bilateral exercise with the UK Royal Navy patrol vessel, HMS *Tyne*, in the English Channel. These port visits mark the first instances of the application of the Japan-UK RAA to the SDF. The 8th Japan-UK Cyber Dialogue took place in the same month, where the participants exchanged opinions on a wide range of issues, including each country's cybersecurity strategy and policy, cooperation in the international fora including the UN, and capacity building for cybersecurity. Japan, the UK, and Italy signed the Convention on the Establishment of the "Global Combat Air Programme – GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO)" in December 2023. The Convention entered into force on December 10, with the deposition of the last instrument of ratification completed for Japan in July, the UK in October, and Italy in December.

With France, which Japan is bound by an "Exceptional Partnership," the Seventh Japan-France

Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") took place in May 2023. In addition to affirming that it is essential to further strengthen cooperation between Japan and France, as like-minded countries, in both diplomacy and defense, the Ministers concurred on further promoting cooperation in addressing various regional and global issues, in order to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order based on the rule of law. The four ministers also exchanged views on Japanese-French cooperation in areas such as cyber, space, and economic security, highly appreciated the defense cooperation and exchanges between Japan and France, and shared the view to deepen such cooperation and exchanges as well as defense equipment and technology cooperation. The 7th Japan-France Bilateral Consultations on Cyber security were convened in November 2023, at which the two sides exchanged views on broad topics, such as each country's cybersecurity strategy and policy, bilateral and multilateral cooperation including UN, and cybersecurity capacity building. In the same year, during the Japan-France Telephone Summit Meeting held in December, the Roadmap that will guide the Japan-France cooperation was announced, and the two leaders concurred on making a further leap on their "exceptional partnership." The French frigates *Bretagne* and *Prairial* made port calls in August and November respectively, while the French Air Force fighter aircraft visited Japan in July 2023 and July 2024. In September, the Japan-France joint exercise "Brunet Takamori 24" was held in Japan for the first time. Monitoring and surveillance operations were also conducted on illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, by the frigate *Prairial* from the end of October to the end of November, and by patrol aircraft from mid-October to late November. At the Japan-France Summit Meeting in May, the two leaders welcomed the multilayered developments of Japan-France cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and concurred on commencement of negotiations on the Japan-France Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA).

In relation to Germany, the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany Concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the SDF of Japan and the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany ("Acquisition and Cross-Servicing

Agreement," or ACSA) entered into force in July. German military aircrafts including Eurofighter Typhoons and a German frigate "*Baden-Württemberg*" and replenishment ship visited Japan in July and August respectively and conducted joint exercises with the SDF. The frigate conducted monitoring and surveillance operations on illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers from the end of August to mid-September.

At the Japan-Italy Summit Meeting in February, the leaders welcomed the progress in cooperation such as joint exercises by naval vessels scheduled in 2024. In March, the inaugural Japan-Italy Politico-Military (PM) Dialogue was convened in Rome. Thereafter, in June, the two leaders took the opportunity of the informal talks at the G7 Summit in Apulia to announce the Japan-Italy Action Plan, which serves as a guideline for future Japan-Italy cooperation, as well as the commencement of formal negotiations on the Agreement on the Japan-Italy ACSA. In August, the carrier strike group (comprising of the aircraft carrier *Cavour*, the frigate *Alpino*, and the patrol vessel *Raimondo Montecuccoli*) visited Japan, and the two countries conducted navy-to-navy joint exercises. The training ship, *Amerigo Vespucci*, also visited Port of Tokyo for the first time. The patrol vessel *Raimondo Montecuccoli* conducted Italy's first monitoring and surveillance operations on illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, from late August to early September. The JMSDF training vessels JS *Kashima* and JS *Shimakaze* made a port call in Naples, and carried out a goodwill exercise with the Italian navy frigate *Carlo Margottini* in the Aegean Sea. Following up from 2023, F-35 fighter aircraft from the Italian Air Force visited Japan in August and participated in a joint exercise. In November, Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of Defense Guido Crosetto signed the Japan-Italy ACSA.

Southeast Asia is located in a geopolitically strategic position and faces Japan's important sea lanes. A stable and prosperous Southeast Asia is crucial to the stability and prosperity not only for the East Asia region but also for the international community. On June 3, 2023, Japan signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with Singapore, which entered into force on the same day. In October 2023 and March 2024, Japan delivered the



first and second air surveillance radar systems to the Philippines as the first transfers of finished equipment. Japan and the Philippines concurred to commence negotiations on the Japan-Philippines Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) in November 2023, and signed the same Agreement in July. To ensure the rule of law at sea, Japan also provides continuous support to the Philippines, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, and other countries to improve the law enforcement capabilities of their coast guard authorities. The first joint exercise among the coast guard agencies of Japan, the U.S., and the Philippines was held in June 2023.

With regards to Canada, a “strategic partner” of Japan, at the Japan-Canada Summit Meetings and Foreign Ministers’ Meetings, the two countries welcomed the steady implementation of the “Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region (FOIP)” announced in 2022, as well as the consistent progress in bilateral cooperation. Negotiations on the Japan-Canada Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology also commenced in October. The Government of Canada revised its national defense policy in April, announcing its plan to inject 8.1 billion Canadian dollars of additional spending over the next five years (defense spending set at 1.76% of GDP in FY2029), followed by a fresh announcement by the Department of National Defence in July on a defense spending target of 2% of GDP by 2032. Canada has also set out measures in its defense policy to secure a more permanent presence in the Indo-Pacific, and is increasingly deepening its engagement with the region, as signaled by its dispatch of three naval vessels to the Indo-Pacific region in 2024 that passed through the Taiwan Strait at the end of July and late October. In September, the Minister of National Defence Bill Blair visited Japan, the first visit by a Canadian National Defence Minister in five years, and participated in the Japan-Canada Defense Ministerial Meeting. With regard to joint exercises with the Canadian Armed Forces, the Japan-Canada joint exercise “KADEX,” which has been conducted every year since 2017, was held from the end of August to early September, and Japan, the U.S., Canada, and the Philippines held cooperative maritime activities in the South China Sea in mid-June. As for responding to illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship

transfers, a Royal Canadian Navy vessel conducted monitoring and surveillance operations from mid-June to late July, from early to mid-November, and from late November to mid-December, while monitoring and surveillance operations by aircraft were conducted from early May to early June, and between late September and mid-October.

In relation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Prime Minister Kishida attended the NATO Summit in July for the third consecutive year. He reaffirmed the importance of cooperating with like-minded countries across regional boundaries, based on the recognition that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is becoming increasingly inseparable, and concurred on further strengthening Japan-NATO relations. During the Summit, NATO and the Indo-Pacific partners (IP4: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK) announced that the following four areas were identified as flagship projects aimed at establishing sustainable cooperation between IP4 and NATO: (a) support to Ukraine; (b) cyber defense; (c) hostile information, including disinformation; and, (d) technology. Furthermore, in October, members of the IP4 including Japan were invited to the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence for the first time. Defense Minister Nakatani attended the meeting and held a meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, who took office on October 1.

The 1st Japan-EU Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue was convened in November, during which the Japan-EU Security and Defence Partnership was released, making Japan the first country in the Indo-Pacific region to announce a partnership with the EU. In this dialogue, the Ministers concurred on strengthening concrete cooperation and dialogues in areas such as cyber, space, response to hybrid threats, and maritime security, given the current severe security environment. The 6th Japan-EU Cyber Dialogue was held in the same month, and the two sides exchanged views on various topics, such as cybersecurity strategies and policies of Japan and the EU, challenges in the cyber domain, bilateral and multilateral cooperation including in the UN, and capacity building assistance.

There are various issues of concern in relation to China, such as its intrusion into Japan’s territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, an inherent



territory of Japan, the extensive and rapid enhancement of its military power without sufficient transparency, and increasing activities by its military in the waters and air spaces surrounding Japan. Japan will continue to make use of opportunities at high-level dialogues, including summit meetings and foreign ministers' meetings, to firmly maintain and assert its position and strongly call for responsible actions by China. As China's military trends are a matter of serious concern for 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 2018 is aimed at promoting mutual understanding and mutual trust, and at avoiding unexpected collisions, and a hotline under this Mechanism commenced operation in May 2023.

Peace and stability in the Middle East region are 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 own efforts toward ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East and the safety of Japan-related vessels, the Government of Japan made a Cabinet decision in December 2019 on utilization of vessels and aircraft of the SDF to (a) make further diplomatic efforts toward easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East, (b) to take thorough measures for ensuring safety of navigation including robust information sharing with relevant stakeholders, and (c) strengthen its information gathering system. Japan has continued to conduct information gathering activities using SDF vessels and aircraft in the waters of the Middle East since January 2020. The 1st Cyber Security Consultation between Japan and Jordan was held in June 2023, followed by the second Consultation in July 2024. They

discussed their respective cybersecurity policies as well as threat awareness in cyberspace. In May 2023, Japan signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the first such agreement concluded between Japan and a country of the Middle East. This Agreement entered into force in January.

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 a framework in which various entities participate, including North Korea and the EU, with the aim of improving the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region by promoting confidence-building and preventive diplomacy through dialogues and cooperation. In July, the 31st ARF Ministerial Meeting was held, and the participants candidly exchanged views mainly on regional and international affairs, including issues concerning Ukraine, Taiwan, the East China Sea and the South China Sea, North Korea, Myanmar, and the Middle East. Japan also actively contributes to the forum including through 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 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. Various risks are emerging, such as the risk of stolen or leaked advanced civilian technologies being converted to military use in other countries,

the risk of suppliers influenced by foreign governments obstructing the stable operation of critical infrastructure such as those for telecommunications, the risk of disruptions to the supply of critical goods due to over-dependencies on other countries, and the risk of being targeted by economic coercion by some countries seeking to achieve political objectives by using their advantages in the supply chain or their purchasing power in the market as leverage.

In light of the emergence of various threats related to economic means, securing Japan's national interests such as peace, security, and economic prosperity by carrying out economic measures, in other words economic security, is becoming increasingly important. The Council for the Promotion of Economic Security, chaired by the Prime Minister and with the Foreign Minister as a member, has been convened since November 2021. In addition, in May 2022, Japan enacted the Economic Security Promotion Act centered around four pillars: enhancing the resilience of supply chains, ensuring security and reliability of critical infrastructure, support for the development of advanced critical technologies, and non-disclosure of selected patent applications. The operation of various systems related to these four pillars has commenced.

In the face of various threats at hand through economic means, the National Security Strategy, established in December the same year, also lays out that Japan will coordinate ideas on necessary economic measures and execute these measures comprehensively, effectively, and intensively to enhance Japan's self-reliance and to secure the advantage and indispensability concerning its technologies and others.

In light of the fact that it has become clear that supply chain vulnerabilities can have adverse impacts in diverse fields even from the perspective of development, the Development Cooperation Charter approved by the Cabinet in June 2023, as one of the priority policies in Japan's development cooperation, advocates promoting cooperation to enhance resilience and diversification of supply chains as well as economic diversification, sustainable development of critical mineral resources, and stable supply and security of food, among other forms of cooperation, in order to strengthen the socioeconomic autonomy and resilience of developing countries.

In May, the Act on the Protection and Utilization of Critical Economic Security Information, which covers the introduction of a security clearance system in the field of economic security, was enacted. It is scheduled to be enforced within one year from its promulgation.

### **B Recent Initiatives by Other Countries**

Other countries have also been rapidly advancing initiatives to promote economic security in recent years.

The U.S. has taken the lead in adopting and implementing regulations and promotion measures from the perspectives of maintaining its technological advantage and addressing supply chain risks. With the aim of strengthening data security and protection for American citizens, the President issued an Executive Order in February 2024 that grants the Attorney General the right to issue regulations to prohibit the large-scale transfer of American's sensitive personal data to countries of concern. A National Security Memorandum (NSM) to manage AI security risks was announced in October, based on the Executive Order for the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) issued in October 2023. At the end of the same month, the Department of the Treasury issued a final rule on the Outbound Order (provisions pertaining to U.S. foreign investments) regarding countries or regions of concern (China, Hong Kong, and Macau) in relation to the three areas of semiconductors, quantum information technologies, and AI in view of the severe impact it may have on national security. In December, the Department of Commerce tightened export control measures of semiconductor-related items to China with the aim of restricting China's capability to produce advanced semiconductors that can be diverted for military applications. In the same month, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced tariff increases on imports of five products originating from China, including tungsten, polysilicon, and wafers, based on Section 301 of the Trade Act.

In January, the European Commission published a policy document entitled "Advancing European economic security: an introduction to five new initiatives," and announced a comprehensive policy package comprising proposals on the screening of foreign direct investments into the EU, export control, outbound

investment, support for research and development involving technologies with dual-use potential, and research security, based on the European Economic Security Strategy issued in June 2023. The Critical Raw Materials Act, which establishes targets related to supply capacities for strategic raw materials and sets out provisions on support for strategic projects and supply chain risk monitoring, entered into force in May, with the aim of securing the supply of critical raw materials for the EU. The need to address economic security issues, including critical raw materials and supply chain resilience, was also stressed in the report on the single market presented by former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta in April, and the report on the future of European competitiveness presented by former Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi in September. The “Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2024 – 2029,” published in July by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, positions the advancement of Europe’s economic security as a priority, and a Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security was newly appointed in the European Commission inaugurated in December.

Australia has, thus far, positioned the securing of national resilience and the protection of assets and infrastructure as its national interests, and advanced concrete measures to that end. These include the formulation of the International Cyber and Critical Tech Engagement Strategy (April 2021), which sets out the policy for promoting the identification of technologies that should be protected, and the tightening of investment screening systems for land and businesses related to sensitive national security (January 2021). In November, it amended the Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018 to further enhance security. This includes measures such as promoting information sharing between public and private entities by clearly stipulating the protection of trade secrets provided by businesses and other parties to the government, and introducing powers that allow regulators to issue remedial orders pertaining to the mandatory development of risk management programs by critical infrastructure owners and operators.

Canada published its Critical Minerals Strategy in 2022 and strengthened its efforts ranging from critical mineral research and exploration to recycling. In

January 2024, it made a statement on new measures to protect Canadian research, which incorporates the publication of a list of named research organizations connected to military, national defense, or state security entities that may pose a risk to Canada’s national security, as well as a list of sensitive technology research areas. Under the new measures, grants and funding will not be provided to research in these areas if any of the researchers involved in activities supported by the grant are affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support from, a university, research institute or laboratory connected to such entities. In August, the Government of Canada announced additional tariffs of 100% on electric vehicles (EVs) produced in China as well as 25% on steel and aluminum products imported from China, with the aim of protecting Canadian workers and major economic sectors from China’s unfair trade practices. These additional tariffs went into effect from October.

### **C Diplomatic Efforts Toward the Promotion of Economic Security**

Diplomacy plays a significant role in promoting economic security. Japan, in cooperation with the international community, is engaged in active diplomacy in areas such as further strengthening cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries, responding to issues based on existing rules, and rule-making to address new challenges.

In relation to further strengthening cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries, Japan leverages bilateral efforts including through the Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee Meeting (the Economic “2+2”) and economic security consultations, as well as cooperation under the G7, Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), and Japan-U.S.-ROK, to expand and deepen cooperation with a view to developing common recognition and coordinating policies.

With regard to responses based on existing rules, Japan has been working in coordination with like-minded countries to seek correction of unfair trade policies and practices by other countries, from the perspective of consistency with existing rules such as World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements. Furthermore, Japan gathers and analyzes information on economic security measures and trade rules, drawing on the

efforts of like-minded countries, and works to ensure that Japan's economic security policy needs are appropriately met.

With regard to rule-making to respond to new challenges, existing international agreements are not adequate for addressing areas such as critical and emerging technologies, economic coercion, and others. In fields where there is a need to further develop international rules, Japan continues to play a leading role in international debates in cooperation with like-minded countries.

### **D Cooperation with its Ally and Like-minded Countries**

Following on from last year, Japan continued to make particularly significant progress in cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries in 2024.

Under the G7 framework, based on the G7 Leaders' Statement on Economic Resilience and Economic Security issued at the G7 Hiroshima Summit held in May 2023, the G7 leaders affirmed at the G7 Apulia Summit held in June that they will continue to cooperate and act together on addressing issues related to overcapacity and non-market policies and practices (NMPP), countering economic coercion, enhancing supply chain resilience, and protecting critical and emerging technologies. In particular, they affirmed a shared recognition that the market distortions and overcapacity resulting from NMPP not only undermine the free and fair rules-based international economic order, but also exacerbate strategic dependencies and vulnerabilities and hinder emerging and developing countries' sustainable development. At the same time, they concurred on pursuing joint monitoring to assess how NMPP are producing harmful overcapacities and other spillover effects. At the G7 Trade Ministers' Meeting held in July, the Ministers concurred to strengthen collaboration among like-minded countries and between the public and private sectors for enhancing supply chain resilience, and to bolster efforts to address overcapacity and NMPP. At the same meeting, the Ministers also confirmed that they will work to strengthen monitoring and information exchange on export controls of critical minerals.

Moreover, they condemned any attempts to weaponize economic dependencies, and concurred to increase collective assessment, preparedness, deterrence, and response to economic coercion.

Furthermore, a session on economic resilience was convened at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Ministerial Council Meeting chaired by Japan in May. During the session, participating countries discussed cooperation among member countries and the role that OECD could play, in efforts related to economic resilience and economic security, such as strengthening supply chain resilience, countering economic coercion, and addressing NMPP.

At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting held in September, the leaders concurred on expanding cooperation in the area of 5G and Open RAN to the Philippines and Tuvalu, following the 2023 announcement of the launch and rollout of Open RAN<sup>(4)</sup> in Palau. They also affirmed their continued commitment to advancing cooperation on semiconductors.

At the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting held in November, the leaders commended the Trilateral Economic Security Dialogue for deepening trilateral engagements on economic security issues, and welcomed regularized, active consultation among the three countries to exchange early warning information on supply chain disruptions. They also concurred on the need for trilateral collaboration on technology security, standards, and trusted ecosystems.

With regard to Japan's relations with the U.S., at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in April, the two leaders concurred on strengthening cooperation to respond to economic coercion, non-market policies and practices and overcapacities, and enhance supply chain resilience. In this context, they shared the view to further deepen coordination toward ensuring economic security either bilaterally, through the G7, or based on other various frameworks.

In regard to relations with European countries, the first Japan-France Economic Security Working Group was held in February, based on the "Roadmap on Japan-France Cooperation under the 'Exceptional Partnership'"

(4) Refers to radio access networks (RAN) that can be built in an open way by a combination of multiple vendors. It offers the advantage of contributing to the mitigation of supply chain risks.

announced between the leaders of Japan and France in December 2023. At the Japan-UK Summit Meeting held in November, the two leaders concurred on the launch of the Japan-UK Economic 2+2 Ministers' Meeting ("Economic 2+2") to further advance bilateral cooperation in the field of economy, including trade and economic security, between Japan and the UK. In regard to Germany, the first meeting of the Japan-Germany Economic Security Consultations was held in November based on the outcomes of the Japan-Germany Summit Meeting that took place in July.

With regard to Japan's relations with the EU, the two sides exchanged views on their respective initiatives regarding economic security at the Japan-EU High-Level Economic Dialogue held in May. In addition to affirming the importance of cooperation between like-minded countries, they confirmed the launch of the "Transparent, Resilient and Sustainable Supply Chains Initiative" and concurred on working together to address strategic dependencies and systemic vulnerabilities and ensure resilient and reliable global supply chains.

With regard to Japan's relations with the ROK, at the 16th Japan-ROK High-Level Economic Consultations held in December, the two sides confirmed the progress of collaboration and cooperation in a wide range of areas, including economic security.

With regard to Japan's relations with Australia, at the Eleventh Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") held in September, the Ministers concurred on strengthening cooperation in the field of economic security, including through leveraging the Australia-Japan Economic Security Dialogue. Furthermore, at the Japan-Australia Summit Meeting in October, the leaders concurred on strengthening dialogue and cooperation in the field of economic security.

As for India, at the Third Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting held in August, the two sides confirmed that they would enhance cooperation in the field of economic security. Following that, the inaugural round of the Japan-India Dialogue on Economic Security, including Strategic Trade and Technology, was held in November.

In relation to Canada, in addition to the 2022 announcement of the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for

contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region" that includes cooperation in the field of energy security, the two countries signed Memorandums of Cooperation Concerning Battery Supply Chains and Industrial Science and Technology respectively in September 2023, further accelerating cooperation in these fields.

With regard to Japan's relations with Southeast Asia, the "Joint Vision Statement from the Leaders of Japan, the Philippines, and the United States" issued on the occasion of the Japan-U.S.-Philippines Summit in April set out the leaders' strong opposition to economic coercion, and stressed the importance of a rules-based economic order while underscoring the need for close coordination in dealing with economic coercion. The "Mekong-Japan Cooperation Strategy 2024" adopted at the 15th Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in July confirmed that Japan and the Mekong countries will work on strengthening economic security and economic resilience, expressed their concerns over as well as opposition to economic coercion, and stressed the importance of the rules-based economic order.

## **E Response to Economic Coercion**

Among the new issues described in section C on page 206, economic coercion that involves using economic ties with a specific country and taking measures or threatening to take measures in an abusive, arbitrary, or opaque manner, in order to achieve political objectives, is becoming a particularly serious problem against the backdrop of globalization and the growing economic interdependence between countries. Such economic coercion poses challenges to a free, open and rules based international order.

The National Security Strategy published in December 2022 also sets out the policy for promoting effective efforts against economic coercion by foreign countries. To address economic coercion, which is an issue that cannot be adequately addressed by existing international agreements, it is important to foster a common recognition broadly within the international community in cooperation with the relevant countries including the Global South, while also working with allies and like-minded countries to raise international awareness on how economic coercion challenges the free, open, and rules-based international order. Based



on such understanding, steady efforts have been made on the Coordination Platform on Economic Coercion, whose launch was confirmed by the leaders at the G7 Hiroshima Summit. At the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting held in May, an abstract was released for the OECD trade policy paper titled “Trade Impacts of Economic Coercion,” prepared with voluntary contributions from Japan. This paper analyzed past cases of economic coercion to shed light on their characteristics and economic impacts. The Japan-Philippines-U.S. Trilateral Discussion on Economic Resilience was held in October, during which participants shared their concern over and strong opposition to economic coercion, and a commitment to building economic resilience. They also affirmed that the three countries intend to cooperate to enhance their resilience and ability to respond to potential economic coercion.

### (3) Cyber

Today, cross-border cyberspace has become an indispensable social infrastructure for conducting all activities in countries around the world, and its importance and public nature are growing due to its role as a public space that all citizens are engaged in. On the other hand, amid the growing competition among nations and other entities that reflects recent geopolitical tensions, cyberattacks have been used constantly to disable or destroy critical infrastructures, interfere in foreign elections, demand ransoms, and steal sensitive information, even in the form of state-sponsored cyberattacks.

Based on this recognition, MOFA is engaged in various diplomatic efforts to realize a free, fair, and secure cyberspace: deterring cyberattacks, rule-making in cyberspace, supporting developing countries, and leveraging various cyber consultations and dialogues for information exchange and policy coordination related to these efforts.

As an initiative to deter cyberattacks, Japan has carried out “public attribution,” which is to publicly condemn or express concerns about groups conducting cyberattacks. MOFA has issued statements by its

Press Secretary to condemn North Korea’s involvement behind the WannaCry incident<sup>(5)</sup> in 2017, the cyberattacks by APT10 based in China in 2018, and the cyberattacks carried out by APT40 in 2021. Also, in January 2025, Japan issued the Japan-U.S.-ROK Joint Statement on Cryptocurrency Thefts by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Public-Private Collaboration, working with ally and like-minded countries to send out such messages.

Regarding initiatives on rule-making in cyberspace, through discussions at the UN that have spanned about a quarter of a century, all UN Member States have confirmed the application of existing international law to cyberspace and adopted the UN norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace,<sup>(6)</sup> which sets out 11 items. While these norms are not legally binding under international law, they have been adopted by consensus among the UN Member States and provide the basis for rule-making in cyberspace. Therefore, it is important for each country to implement these norms concretely, and to build up state practices. Based on this perspective, Japan participates actively in the relevant discussions in the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), in which all UN Member States participate, for the term from 2021 to 2025. It is also important for each country to clarify their basic positions on how existing international law applies to cyberspace. Japan made its position public in 2021,<sup>(7)</sup> and has been emphasizing the importance of clarifying basic positions through various venues.

With regard to capacity building support, in view of the borderless nature of cyberspace, enhancing the capacity of other countries and regions contributes to the security environment for the world as a whole, including Japan, relevant ministries and agencies, including MOFA are engaged in initiatives, including those through international organizations, with a focus on ASEAN, which is a cornerstone for realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” based on the rule of law. Specifically, Japan conducts training at the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building

(5) A malicious program that North Korea is believed to have been involved in. In May 2017, more than 300,000 computers in over 150 countries were infected, and ransom was demanded.

(6) At the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) in 2015, a report setting out 11 items on non-binding, voluntary norms for responsible state behavior was adopted.

(7) See MOFA’s website for Japan’s position:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page3e\\_001114.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page3e_001114.html)

(7)



Centre (AJCCBC) and provides training programs and equipment by the relevant ministries and agencies, implements the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Country/Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP), contributes to the Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund through the World Bank, and co-organizes the “JP-US-EU Industrial Control Systems Cybersecurity Week for the Indo-Pacific Region” jointly with the U.S. and European governments through the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Industrial Cyber Security Center of Excellence (ICSCoE) under the Information-technology Promotion Agency, Japan (IPA), among other initiatives.

Leveraging various cyber consultations and dialogues is of utmost importance in advancing these initiatives in cyberspace. To that end, Japan is promoting international cooperation through cyber consultations and dialogues with many countries and regions. In 2024, Japan held intergovernmental consultations with the U.S., Jordan, Lithuania, and the UK, as well as trilateral consultations between Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Philippines, and with the EU. Under the Quad Cybersecurity Partnership announced at the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting in May 2022, the four countries are cooperating on cybersecurity for critical infrastructure and capacity building support in the Indo-Pacific region, among other efforts. Japan also participates actively in discussions within the International Counter Ransomware Initiative, a multilateral framework led by the U.S. to combat the rapidly growing threat of ransomware,<sup>(8)</sup> as well as the Pall Mall Process, which is a framework led by the UK and France to tackle the proliferation and irresponsible use of commercial cyber intrusion capabilities.

Through these diplomatic efforts, Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of a free, fair and secure cyberspace.

#### **(4) Maintaining and Developing the International Maritime Order**

Japan is a country 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. “Free and Open 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. Based on this stance, the Government of Japan has stood united in promoting efforts to maintain and develop the international maritime order, in addition to securing Japan's national interests in its territorial waters, in accordance with the Fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy adopted in April 2023 and the Ocean Development Strategy formulated this April. In cooperation with allied and like-minded countries, Japan is advancing efforts to realize a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” and working in particular to strengthen maritime order in the Indo-Pacific region, where important sea lanes are located.

#### **A Basic Stance**

There is an increasing number of cases, particularly in Asia, of tensions arising from friction between countries over issues surrounding the seas. In light of this, 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 Section 1, 6(2) on page 253.) At the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in March 2023, Prime Minister Kishida reaffirmed the importance of the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” while introducing the new plan for FOIP. Based on these principles, Japan has been cooperating with other countries to work toward maintaining and developing the international maritime order. (See Chapter 2, Section 1)

#### **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 its 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

<sup>(8)</sup> Cyberattacks carried out for ransom purposes.

discussions among concerned international organizations at conferences that include the Meeting 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 Section 1, 6(2) on page 253.) At the G7 Apulia Summit held in June, G7 leaders re-emphasized the universal and unified character of UNCLOS.

**C Response to Challenges to Japan's Sovereignty and Maritime Rights and Interests (Situation Surrounding the East China Sea) (See Chapter 2, Section 2, 2(1) B(D))**

In the East China Sea, China Coast Guard vessels intruded into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands in rapid succession in 2024, and the number of days China Coast Guard vessels navigated in the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands reached a record high of 355 days in the year. Furthermore, there were repeated occurrences of China Coast Guard vessels intruding into the territorial sea and approaching Japanese fishing vessels, and the situation remains severe, with the number of hours of intrusion into the territorial sea hitting a record high of more than 80 hours in April 2023. The Chinese military is also becoming increasingly active and expanding their operations, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in the air and waters in the East China Sea, and China has been continuing with unilateral resource development in areas where the 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. In July 2023, Japan spotted a buoy believed to have been installed by China in Japan's EEZ in the East China Sea. The Government of Japan has taken various opportunities at all levels, including at the leader and foreign ministerial levels, to protest against China and has strongly and repeatedly urged China to remove the buoy immediately. In February 2025, it was confirmed that the buoy in question was not within Japan's EEZ. Regarding a buoy newly identified within Japan's EEZ south of Yonaguni Island in December 2024, the Government of Japan is calling on China for its immediate removal, on

such occasions as the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in the same month.

Given China's continued and strengthened 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 with a determination to resolutely defend Japan's territory as well as territorial sea and airspace. 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.

At the G7 Apulia Summit convened in June, G7 leaders stated that they remain seriously concerned about the situation in the East and South China Seas, and strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion. Furthermore, at the ASEAN Japan Summit and East Asia Summit (EAS) held in October, Prime Minister Ishiba expressed strong opposition to the continuing and intensifying activities in the East China Sea that infringe upon Japan's sovereignty.

**D Response to Challenges to the Maritime Order in the South China Sea (See Chapter 2, Section 2, 7(2))**

In the South China Sea, China has been continuing and intensifying unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, which run counter to the rule of law and openness, as well as actions that increase regional tensions, based on expansive maritime claims without legal basis. These include further militarization of disputed features, and coercive and intimidating actions against coastal states and others by using its armed forces, coast guards and maritime militia. Especially since 2023, ramming between Chinese and Philippine vessels as well as use of water cannons by Chinese vessels against Philippine vessels have frequently occurred. In June, Chinese crews boarded a Philippine vessel in the vicinity of Second Thomas Shoal, seized weapons and supplies, destroyed equipment, and forcibly towed a Philippine vessel. A Philippine soldier lost a thumb due to the ramming.

From the perspective of supporting the full enforcement of the rule of law at sea, and upholding freedom of navigation and overflight and the safety of sea lanes,

### ■ Uotsuri Island (Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture)



Photo: Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat

Japan has consistently expressed its strong opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, as well as any actions that increase tensions in the South China Sea. Japan has also 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. In July, which marked eight years since the issuance of the Arbitral Tribunal's award as to the disputes between the Philippines and China regarding the South China Sea in 2016, MOFA released a statement by the Foreign Minister, reiterating that the 2016 Tribunal's award is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute, the Philippines and China, and that Japan strongly hopes that the parties' compliance with the award will lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

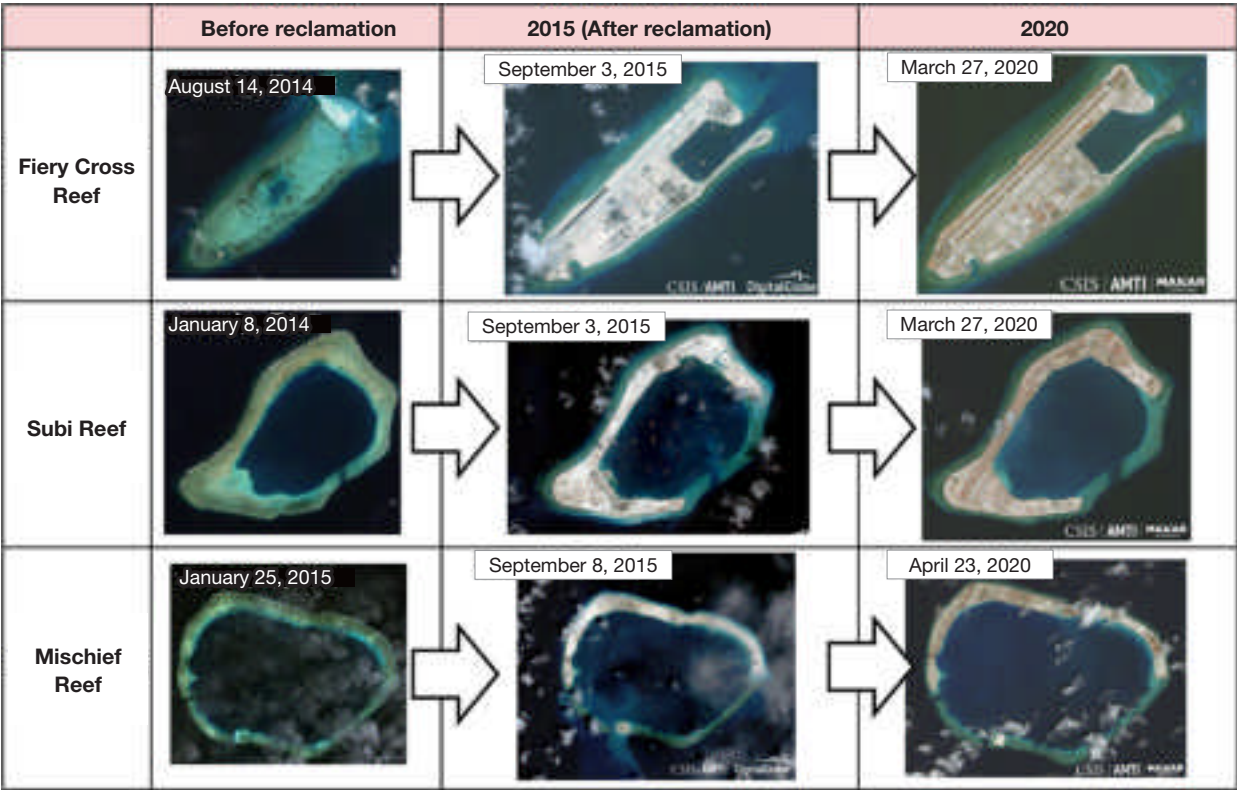
At the Japan-U.S.-Philippines Summit, held for the first time in April, the three leaders reiterated serious concern over China's repeated obstruction of Philippine vessels' exercise of high seas freedom of navigation and the disruption of supply lines to Second Thomas Shoal, which constitute dangerous and destabilizing conduct. At the G7 Apulia Summit convened in June, the G7 leaders expressed serious concern about the situation in the South China Sea, and reiterated their strong

opposition to any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion. They also expressed serious concern about the increasing use of dangerous maneuvers and water cannons against Philippine vessels. In this regard, they reaffirmed UNCLOS's important role in setting out the legal framework that governs all activities in the oceans and the seas. At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting held in September, the leaders expressed their serious concern about the militarization of disputed features and coercive and intimidating maneuvers in the South China Sea, and condemned the dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels, including increasing use of dangerous maneuvers. Furthermore, they underscored their opposition to efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities, and re-emphasized the importance of maintaining and upholding unimpeded commerce consistent with international law. At the ASEAN Japan Summit and EAS held in October, Prime Minister Ishiba stressed that, as the militarization and coercive activities in the South China Sea are continuing and intensifying, any unjust claims of maritime interests and activities that do not align with UNCLOS are unacceptable.

Issues regarding the South China Sea are directly related to the peace and stability of the region and



Large-scale, rapid outpost building in the South China Sea by China



Source: CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative/Digital Globe/MAXAR

constitute a legitimate concern of the international community. These issues are also important matters of concern for Japan, which depends on marine transport for much of its resources and energy. Japan will continue to work with the international community, such as ASEAN member states, and the U.S. to uphold and strengthen a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law.

Measures to Combat Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships

Japan actively contributes to ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and safe maritime transport through efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia and Africa as well as close partnership and cooperation with other countries.

(A) Measures to Address Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia

In 2006, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) entered into force under Japan's leadership, and through the Information Sharing Centre

(ReCAAP-ISC) established in Singapore, has been conducting information sharing on incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore and other regions, as well as cooperation to support capacity building. To date, Japan has been supporting the activities of ReCAAP-ISC by dispatching the Executive Directors (expiration of term in March 2022) and Assistant Directors and making financial contributions. According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), while the number of cases of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the seas of Southeast Asia was 58 in 2022, 67 in 2023, and 70 in 2024, the occurrence of serious incidents, including kidnappings and assaults, has been suppressed in recent years as a result of activities by ReCAAP-ISC and the contributions of the contracting parties.

(B) Measures to Address Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden

According to the IMB, the number of cases of piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of



Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, which is an important sea lane linking Asia and Europe, was 237 at its peak in 2011. It has declined to a low level with zero or one attempted incident since 2019. This low level has been maintained despite the occurrence of eight piracy cases in 2024. Going forward, there is a need for cooperation with the international community to ensure that the number of piracy cases does not reverse into an increasing trend again.

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, which have helped to stabilize the situation in these waters. Japan has also been making multilayered efforts such as support for enhancing the maritime law enforcement capabilities of Somalia, Djibouti, and the neighboring countries, and ensuring the stability of Somali society.

### **(C) Measures to Address Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Gulf of Guinea**

According to IMB, the number of cases of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Guinea was 19 in 2022, 22 in 2023, and 18 in 2024, and the Gulf of Guinea continues to be a sea area with the largest number of serious incidents in the world, including cases with multiple casualties. Strengthening maritime law enforcement capabilities among coastal states remains a key issue. To that end, Japan provides capacity building assistance to the coastal countries through training programs conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and JICA, and works with the international community through participation in meetings of the “G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea,” among other efforts.

### **F International Cooperation on Capacity Building Assistance**

Amid advancing globalization, the impact of technological innovation on the global security environment, rapid changes in the military balance, including China's growing militarization, and greater cross-border threats, no single country can protect its peace and security on its own. This is particularly true in the

maritime field. Therefore, Japan is advancing efforts to strengthen its defense capabilities and maritime law enforcement capabilities, while providing capacity building assistance to various countries to support their maritime security and maritime law enforcement capabilities as well as engaging in international cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) with the aim of maintaining and developing international maritime order, in collaboration and cooperation with allied and like-minded countries.

Japan has been utilizing Official Development Assistance (ODA) in these cooperative efforts. At the IISS Shangri-la Dialogue in 2022, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan will make use of technical cooperation, training, and other means conducive to strengthening the maritime law enforcement capabilities of at least 20 countries to promote efforts to train at least 800 maritime security personnel and strengthen their human resources network over a three-year period until 2025, including through sharing Japan's knowledge and experience on advanced technologies, such as satellites, artificial intelligence (AI) and unmanned aerial vehicles, with other countries. Additionally, he pledged to provide at least approximately 2 billion U.S. dollars in assistance, such as the provision of maritime security equipment including patrol vessels and development of maritime transportation infrastructure, to Indo-Pacific countries. He also stated that Japan will strengthen support to Indo-Pacific countries, utilizing Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) and international organizations and so forth.

In 2023, trainings were conducted in Japan and overseas for more than 600 officials of coast guard authorities and relevant agencies of 20 countries. Japan also decided to provide a large patrol vessel, which will be built at a Japanese shipyard, to the Indonesian Coast Guard Agency under the grant aid project, “The Project for Enhancement of Ability in Maritime Safety and Security.” Through its 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), Japan also develops training courses and conducts training and workshops on measures against maritime crimes in the target countries of the Indo-Pacific and West Africa.

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 foreign coast guard authorities with capacity building (including through the GMCP framework). The Japan Coast Guard also invites foreign coast guard officials to Japan to train them under the “Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program.” In addition, Japan provides capacity building in areas, such as vessel maintenance and underwater medicine, to the militaries of countries in the Indo-Pacific region, and conducts training on board Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) vessels for young naval officers of ASEAN member states and other countries.

Official Security Assistance (OSA), newly established in 2023, positions maritime security as one of its priority areas with a view to strengthening security and deterrence capabilities by providing equipment and supplies as well as assistance for infrastructure development to the armed forces and related organizations of like-minded countries. In FY2024, Japan decided to provide the Philippines with Rigid-hulled inflatable boats and coastal radar systems, Indonesia with patrol boats, and Djibouti with coastal radar systems and related infrastructure.

Japan also provides support toward strengthening maritime law enforcement capabilities through international organizations and multilateral frameworks. In October, coast guards and other law-enforcement agencies from 12 ReCAAP contracting parties, primarily Asian countries, were invited to Tokyo to participate in a capacity building project. (See the Special Feature on page 216.) Japan is also coordinating with allied and like-minded countries, such as by cooperating on the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA), an initiative implemented by Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), and sharing MDA information with various countries based on memorandums of understanding.

## (5) Outer Space

In June 2023, Japan revised its Basic Plan on Space Policy for the first time in three years and formulated a new Space Security Initiative. The Space Security

Initiative sets out specific challenges and policies in the field of space security, incorporates measures to be taken for space security during the next decade, and covers efforts to maintain the stable use of and free access to outer space together with Japan's allied and like-minded countries.

In recent years, outer space has become more congested due to diversification of use and an increase in the number of countries using space. In addition, the increase of space debris due to factors such as anti-satellite (ASAT) tests poses a growing risk to the sustainable and stable use of outer space. In order to respond to this situation, Japan has been engaging in initiatives such as strengthening Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and mission assurance for space systems. Japan has also been working on international rule-making and international space cooperation.

### **A** Realization of the Rule of Law in Outer Space

Based on the belief that outer space must remain a domain free of nuclear weapons, Japan and the U.S. jointly drafted a United Nations Security Council resolution in April that calls on the member states not to develop nuclear weapons and any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction specifically designed to be placed in outer space. This draft resolution was co-submitted by 65 member states but was rejected, as Russia exercised its veto. Subsequently, Japan, the U.S., and Argentina jointly submitted a draft resolution that included similar elements to the United Nations General Assembly. The draft resolution was adopted with an overwhelming majority of 167 member states.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), a permanent committee established under the UN General Assembly, plays an important role in international rule making related to civil space activities.

Apart from the Committee, which engages in comprehensive discussions, COPUOS has the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, which conducts reviews on issues related to space activities from scientific and technical aspects, and the Legal Subcommittee, which discusses legal matters arising from space activities.

At the session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee convened from January through

SPECIAL  
FEATURE

## Modern Counter-Piracy Measures and Japan's Contribution

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “pirate”? They may be the villains in fairy tales or the protagonists in movies and cartoons, but, even today, pirates actually exist and still pose threats to global peace and security.

As a maritime nation, Japan has long been connected to the world and has developed through trade and the movement of people by sea. Today, with the development of maritime transportation routes and dramatic improvements in transportation capabilities and technology, many of the various products and resources imported to Japan, such as oil, are transported by ships. Some of these shipping routes, including the Panama Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Suez Canal, are waters that serve as vital hubs for global maritime transportation and are known as “chokepoints.” Many modern piracy incidents<sup>1</sup> occur around these chokepoints.

The international community has been working together to address this old yet new threat. In the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia, where piracy incidents frequently occur, about 60 countries are cooperating to combat piracy. Japan has dispatched Self-Defense Force destroyers and patrol aircrafts which are conducting warning and surveillance operations even at this very moment. Piracy incidents are also occurring in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, which are the main arteries of the global economy. In light of this, Japan is cooperating with the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) to address piracy in these regions.

The safety of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, through which most ships from Europe, the Middle East, and Africa pass to reach Japan and other ports in Asia, directly affects our lives. Given this, in 2001, Prime Minister Koizumi proposed the establishment of a legal framework to promote regional cooperation in order to effectively address the problem of piracy in Asia. This came to fruition in 2006 with the entry into force of ReCAAP. This Japan-led agreement came to include not only Asian countries, but also the U.S., Australia, and European countries. Among ReCAAP-ISC's activities, Japan places particular priority on supporting capacity building for the coast guard agencies of Asian countries. The coast guard agencies of coastal countries shoulder the safety and security of Asian waters, including the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. Strengthening their maritime law enforcement capabilities through ReCAAP will lead to peace and security in the region, including Japan.



Group photo of CBEP participants (October, Tokyo)

introduced Japan's efforts in maritime security to deepen participants' understanding. With the participants taking the outcomes of this seminar back to their home countries and sharing them within their respective agencies, this initiative will contribute to improving maritime law enforcement capabilities across the region and lead to the safety of the seas in Asia, including Japan, as well as the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).”

In this way, protecting our way of life through ensuring maritime safety and security is one of the most important efforts in Japan's foreign policy. And, as with other global issues, addressing piracy is not something that Japan can achieve on its own. The Government of Japan will continue to work as one to promote international cooperation for maritime security.



Major maritime transportation routes to Japan and their chokepoints

As a notable example, in October 2024, the ReCAAP Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), and the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) jointly held the ReCAAP Capacity Building Executive Programme (CBEP) in Tokyo. This week-long seminar was attended by senior officers of maritime law enforcement agencies from 13 countries that are ReCAAP Contracting Parties, primarily Asian countries. They shared information on the counter-piracy efforts of their respective countries and discussed ways to address challenges. Japan emphasized that building a maritime order based on the rule of law is important in combating piracy and

<sup>1</sup> “Piracy incidents” include piracy that occurs on the high seas and armed robbery that occurs in territorial waters of coastal states.

February, active discussions were held on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, in addition to discussions on individual themes, such as space debris and remote sensing.

At the session of the Legal Subcommittee convened in April, discussions were held on the definition of outer space and on issues related to equitable access to the geostationary satellite orbit, as well as on Space Traffic Management (STM) and space resources, which have been attracting more attention in recent years. In particular, intensive discussions were held at the working group established under the Legal Subcommittee in 2021 on how international rules regarding space resources should be.

Regarding the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), active discussions were held in the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on “Responsible Behaviours in Outer Space” from 2022 through 2023, which was jointly proposed by Japan, the UK, and other countries in 2021. However, the OEWG was unable to adopt the report due to objection from some countries. Separately, the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on PAROS, established through a proposal by Russia in 2022, was convened in Geneva in November 2023 and August 2024, and a report was adopted by consensus. The United Nations General Assembly also decided to merge the succeeding OEWG on “Responsible Behaviours” proposed by the UK and the OEWG on PAROS proposed by Russia in 2023 respectively.

In addition, with a view to contributing to the rule of law in outer space, Japan announced in 2021 that it would cooperate with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) on its “Space Law for New Space Actors” project and has since been offering support to emerging space-faring nations in the Asia Pacific region for the development and implementation of domestic space-related laws. Japan provided legal capacity building support with a focus on continuing supervision as well as authorization and licensing of space activities, and conducted an intensive three-day workshop at the United Nations University in January with about 25 experts from seven countries (Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, and Thailand).

## **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 particular, the Ninth Meeting of the Japan-U.S. Comprehensive Dialogue on Space was held in the U.S. in August. It was attended by officials from space-related ministries and agencies of Japan and the U.S., who engaged in comprehensive discussions on a wide range of subjects including commercial space, space security, and civil space. A joint statement was issued on the outcomes of the Dialogue.

As part of the efforts under Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), workshops were conducted through the Quad Space Working Group established at the Quad Leaders’ Meeting held in 2021. At the Quad Leaders’ Meeting held in September, the four leaders concurred on calling upon all States to contribute to the safe, peaceful, responsible, and sustainable use of outer space.

With regard to multilateral meetings, the 30th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-30) was held in November, co-organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and the Australian Space Agency (ASA). At this Forum, discussions were held regarding a collaborative system for building a sustainable and responsible regional space sector.

## **C International Space Exploration and the International Space Station (ISS)**

The progress of space exploration and application for peaceful purposes is a common benefit for all humankind, and is also of diplomatic significance.

In 2019, Japan decided to participate in the Artemis Program, a U.S.-led international space exploration program. In 2020, with the Artemis Program in mind, 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. Thereafter, more countries signed the Artemis Accords, and the number of signatories increased to 52 countries as of the end of December 2024.



Furthermore, in 2023, the Governments of Japan and the U.S. signed the Framework Agreement between Japan and the United States of America for Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, which is a new legal framework to further facilitate Japan-U.S. space cooperation, represented by the exploration and use of outer space. This Agreement entered into force in June. The Implementing Arrangement prepared for this Framework Agreement and signed in April states that Japan will provide and maintain the operation of the Pressurized Rover on the lunar surface, while the U.S. will provide two astronaut flight opportunities on the lunar surface to Japanese astronauts in future Artemis missions. In connection with this, at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting convened in the same month, 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.

Japan has been providing human resource development programs (robot programming, physics and plant experiments, etc.) to the Asia Pacific region through the Kibo-ABC Initiative established under the APRSAF, utilizing the Japanese Experiment Module “Kibo” on the ISS to support capacity building in the space field. Japan also provides emerging space-faring nations with the opportunity to deploy nano-satellites through the KiboCUBE program,<sup>(9)</sup> a collaborative framework implemented with the UNOOSA. Under this program, the Central American Integration System (SICA), Mexico, as well as Tanzania and Côte d’Ivoire (both countries jointly) are developing satellites for deployment.

### **D Addressing Global Issues through the Utilization of Space Technology**

Amidst rising expectations of space technology’s potential in resolving global issues in recent years, Japan has been promoting international cooperation based on the utilization of its internationally superior space technologies, and contributing toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For example, Japan 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 152 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 490 emergency requests from 37 countries. Japan also holds workshops for those who are involved in disaster readiness and response, and contributes to capacity building in the utilization of satellite data during disasters in Asian countries.

In addition, the JICA, in collaboration with JAXA, hosted 13 officials from space-related agencies of 10 countries in Japan in July for training to enhance their ability to utilize space technology to contribute to the SDGs. Additionally, in the technical cooperation projects launched in FY2023 to improve the organizational and technological capacity of the space agencies of Paraguay and Rwanda, several training courses were conducted in Japan with the support of industry, academia, and government partners in Japan’s space sector. On the occasion of Prime Minister Kishida’s visit to Paraguay in May, JAXA and the Paraguayan Space Agency (AEP) signed a memorandum of cooperation on space development and established the “Japan-Paraguay Space Cooperation Program” through industry-academia-government collaboration, affirming that both sides will advance multifaceted cooperation.

### **(6) Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding**

The international community is still experiencing regional and domestic conflicts as a result of various factors including differences in race, religion, and history, or due to the impact of poverty and disparity. In recent years, the protracted nature of these conflicts has particularly become a challenging problem. For this reason, in addition to post-conflict peacekeeping through the dispatch of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and other means, peacebuilding efforts that take into consideration building a foundation for development have become an important issue for preventing

<sup>(9)</sup> A program that provides selected organizations with the opportunity to deploy nano-satellites from the ISS/Japanese Experiment Module – Kibo, with the aim of contributing to improving space-related technologies in emerging space-faring nations.



conflicts and their recurrence, as well as realizing post-conflict nation-building and sustaining peace.

In recent years, there have been concerns about the impact of conflicts, as well as new risks such as climate change and infectious diseases, on peace and stability, necessitating a more unified approach. As issues facing the international community become more complex and diverse, peacekeeping and peacebuilding initiatives are becoming increasingly important. For example, the strengthening of Peace operations, such as peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts has been incorporated into the “New Agenda for Peace” and the outcome document of the Summit of the Future entitled “Pact for the Future.” (See Section 5 (2) on page 243.)

### **A On-the-Ground Initiatives**

#### **(A) UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO)**

As of December 31, 2024, 11 UN PKO missions are on active duty, primarily in the Middle East and Africa, to handle a wide range of duties that include monitoring cease-fires, promoting political processes, and protecting civilians. About 70,000 military, police, and civilian personnel have been deployed to these missions. Against the backdrop of an increasingly complex environment surrounding UN PKO, including growing threats associated with the use of new technologies, active discussions are being held on the future of Peacekeeping.

In addition to PKO missions, the UN has also established Special Political Missions (SPMs) mainly consisting of civilian personnel. SPMs fulfill diverse roles including the peaceful settlement of disputes, post-conflict peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

Based on the Act on Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO Act), Japan has dispatched more than 12,700 personnel to a total of 29 missions since 1992, including UN PKO missions. Most recently, since 2011, Japanese staff officers have been dispatched to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), while engineering units have been deployed there from 2012. The engineering units undertook such activities as developing infrastructure and providing water supplies to

displaced persons, and concluded their activities in May 2017. Two additional SDF personnel, including an officer to fill a Deputy Chief of Staff position, were dispatched to the UNMISS Headquarters in May 2024, making a total of six SDF personnel on active duty there as of December 31, 2024. They continue to work toward peace and stability in the country. Additionally, since 2019, Japan has been conducting activities contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East by dispatching SDF officers to the Headquarters for the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) stationed on the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, where four SDF officers are on active duty as of December 31, 2024. Leveraging 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 conflicts and 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. With the number of refugees and displaced persons in the world exceeding 100 million people for the first time in 2022, there is a greater need than before to address the root causes of crises through assistance for self-reliant development by building resilient nations and stabilizing societies from a medium- to long-term perspective. Japan clearly set out the “Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP Nexus)”<sup>(10)</sup> approach in its Development Cooperation Charter revised in June 2023. At the Second Global Refugee Forum (GRF) held in December 2023, Japan expressed its resolve to play a leadership role in advancing this approach while cooperating with the international community to address the unprecedented humanitarian crisis, including support for peacebuilding.

<sup>(10)</sup> Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus: An approach, whereby, in parallel with humanitarian assistance, development cooperation is provided to support the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the burden on host countries, and peace efforts are promoted to resolve and prevent conflicts that are the root causes.

### 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. As for Palestine, in addition to an increase in the refugee population, it is also facing serious deterioration of the living environment, including the deteriorating refugee camp infrastructure as well as unemployment and poverty. 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 Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting convened in August, Japan engaged in discussions toward peace and stability. Specifically, Japan announced the launch of the “Women's Peace Human Resource Development Initiative in the Horn of Africa” based at the Intergovernmental Development Organization (IGAD) and the development of a Mine Action Platform for counter-mine and unexploded ordnance measures, and highlighted the importance of reforming the UN Security Council to better reflect African voices. TICAD 9 is scheduled to be held in Yokohama in August 2025, and Japan will continue to support African-led efforts toward peace and stability through consolidating democracy and promoting the rule of law, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and community empowerment.

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. Japan has also provided African countries with security equipment to improve their ability to maintain security against frequent terrorist attacks and transnational crimes, and provided support for landmine clearance.

In the “Horn of Africa” region, the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa works to secure humanitarian access and promote ceasefire. Japan also contributes to the peace and stability of this region by providing support in elections, support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in Ethiopia, and humanitarian assistance, among other efforts. Furthermore, Japan, in collaboration with the UNDP, has disbursed a total of 66 million U.S. dollars between 2008 and 2024 to Peacekeeping Training Centers located in 14 African countries, contributing to strengthening Africa's capacity for peacekeeping activities.

## B Initiatives within the UN

Against the backdrop of the growing awareness within the international community of the need for peacebuilding efforts, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established based on UN Security Council resolution 1645 and a General Assembly resolution of 2005, as an advisory body to the UN Security Council and General Assembly, with the aim of providing consistent advice on assistance, from conflict resolution to recovery, reintegration and reconstruction. In addition to conducting discussions on the approach to peacebuilding in countries and regions, the PBC also engages in discussions on themes such as Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). In recent years, there have been increasing opportunities for the PBC to fulfill its advisory function to the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

Japan has consistently served as a member of the PBC's Organizational Committee since its establishment. It has been advocating the importance of investments in institution building and people, recognizing the need to adopt the HDP Nexus approach, in order to realize resilient and sustainable peace. In 2024, Japan served as the informal coordinator between the PBC and the Security Council, thereby contributing to strengthening cooperation between the two bodies.

Japan has contributed a total of 66.85 million U.S. dollars to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)<sup>(11)</sup> as of December 31, 2024, and as a major donor country,

<sup>(11)</sup> A fund established in October 2006 to provide support to various regions, including Africa, for stopping the recurrence of regional conflicts and civil wars after they have ended as well as preventing conflicts. Specifically, the fund supports peace processes and political dialogues, economic revitalization, institution building for nations, and the participation by women and youth in nation-building, among other initiatives.

also actively supports the execution of projects implemented by UN agencies in Africa and other regions.

Japan continued to address peacebuilding as one of its priorities during its two-year term on the UN Security Council starting in January 2023. It hosted Open Debates on peacebuilding and conflict prevention on two occasions in January 2023 and March 2024 during its Presidency of the UN Security Council. These debates focused on various challenges faced by the so-called “Global South,” emphasized the role of people in preventing the recurrence of conflict and in sustaining peace, and underscored the importance of strengthening the UN through the utilization of the PBC. Many countries supported such views.

Furthermore, Japan engaged in efforts in the area of peacebuilding in cooperation with other members of the UN Security Council. In January 2024, Japan, Guyana, and Mozambique co-hosted a Security Council meeting based on the theme “Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace through Comprehensive Approaches – Investment in People, including Empowerment of Women.” During this meeting, Japan actively communicated its position, bringing up the importance of investing in people, including the empowerment of women, in peacebuilding. In these ways, Japan stimulated discussions not only as a PBC member state, but also in UN fora as a member of the UN Security Council. Even after the conclusion of its term in the UN Security Council, Japan will continue to contribute actively through the PBC and in other ways.

### **C Human Resource Development**

#### **(A) The Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development**

Human resource development for highly skilled civilian experts with expertise presents a challenge in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. Japan has been implementing a human resource development program in order to cultivate people who can play a leading role in the field. As of the end of 2024, more than 1,000 people have been trained. The participants who complete the program go 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 different countries. Out of the 228 Japanese participants who have completed the training course (Primary Course) for entry-level human resources, 123 work in international organizations (as regular staff, as well as Junior Professional Officers (JPO), UN volunteers, and consultants). Hence, this program also contributes significantly to the career development of Japanese nationals, as well as the enhancement of their presence in international organizations in the fields of peacebuilding and development. In 2024, the Primary Course and a training course for mid-career professionals with experience in the fields of peacebuilding and development (Mid-Career Course) were conducted. (See the Column on page 223.)

#### **(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 contributed financially to 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. Japan has also dispatched SDF personnel and other individuals as instructors. To date, Japan has conducted training on the operation of heavy engineering equipment for 336 personnel from nine African countries that expressed intentions to dispatch engineering units to UN PKO. In 2018, the TPP was extended to include Asia and the surrounding regions, and Japan conducted training in Viet Nam and Indonesia. Since October 2019, Japan has also started a lifesaving training program in the medical field, a considerably problematic area for UN PKO, while support for the introduction of telemedicine into UN PKO missions was launched in 2021. A total of 408 SDF personnel and other individuals have contributed to the training programs by serving as instructors for the operation of heavy engineering equipment and in the field of medicine. Japan decided in 2023 to contribute approximately 8.5 million U.S. dollars to expand the TPP and conduct training for personnel dispatched for peace support activities led by the African Union (AU),

and it began training AU mission personnel in 2024. In Cambodia, Japan has also conducted cross-sectoral training in partnership with the ROK and Australia. Other than TPP, Japan dispatches instructors and other personnel, as well as providing financial assistance, to Peacekeeping Training Centers in Asia and Africa.

### **(7) Initiatives to Combat Security Threats**

Ensuring public security and protecting the lives of the people are the premise of various socioeconomic activities and the basic responsibilities of a country. To cope effectively with security threats such as international terrorism and organized crime, which are rapidly becoming more complex and severe in tandem with social changes such as the advancement of science and technology and the spread of COVID-19, it is vital for the international community to cooperate as a whole.

#### **A Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

In recent years, as people grow increasingly reliant on information and communication technology, it has become easier to spread information on extremism ideology online and to disseminate harmful contents that could incite terrorism or other damaging acts. There is a prominent trend of misuse of the Internet and social media by terrorist organizations for financing, recruitment, and propaganda activities. There has also been growing incidence of indiscriminate terrorist attacks that use simple, low-cost devices such as drones on soft targets where large crowds gather and security measures are limited, and some are of the view that terrorism is becoming more lethal. To counter such acts of terrorism, there is a need to cut off the flow of terrorist financing. Alongside international cooperation, it is also important for the public and private sectors to work together.

As a part of Japan's efforts to counter international terrorism and violent extremism, and to take measures against terrorist financing, it contributes to projects through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and supports capacity building for law enforcement organizations in

Southeast Asian countries. Japan has also participated actively in relevant meetings and discussions held by the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), an international counter-terrorism framework, and cooperates on the project level with the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), an organization affiliated with GCTF, and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ). In particular, MOFA, together with IIJ and the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI),<sup>(12)</sup> held the "Rule of Law Workshop in South Asia and Southeast Asia" in Tokyo in February 2024. Through bilateral and trilateral counter-terrorism consultations and the Quad (Japan-Australia-India-U.S.) Counterterrorism Working Group, among other initiatives, Japan also exchanges information on terrorism situations and affirms the strengthening of partnerships, while developing practical cooperation with other countries. As an initiative that Japan has carried out continuously for the past 20 years, Japan also runs an exchange program inviting Islamic school teachers to Japan and providing opportunities to experience interfaith dialogue, intercultural exchanges, and visit educational sites in Japan, with the aim of promoting moderation and the creation of more tolerant societies that are receptive to different values. Going forward, it will continue to implement such initiatives.

#### **B Criminal Justice Initiatives**

The UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) and the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice ("Congress") (both of which have their secretariats under UNODC) are in charge of shaping policy on crime prevention and criminal justice in the international community. In March 2021, the 14th Congress ("Kyoto Congress") was convened in Kyoto. In accordance with the overall theme, "Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: toward 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

<sup>(12)</sup> A regional UN research institute established in 1962 based on an agreement between the Government of Japan and the UN. Located in Akishima City, Tokyo, it is operated by the Ministry of Justice, and continuously implements training courses in the field of criminal justice for participants invited from overseas.



## COLUMN

## Peacekeeping in Guinea-Bissau through Japan's Grant Aid

KATSUKI Taiga, Guinea-Bissau office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

I am KATSUKI Taiga, a program associate in the Primary Course of The Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Through this course, I am working as a United Nations Volunteer at the UNDP Guinea-Bissau office.

Have you ever heard of a country called Guinea-Bissau? Located in West Africa, this country is made up of 88 islands of various sizes and boasts beautiful seas and a rich natural environment. However, it is one of the poorest countries in the world and faces various challenges such as poverty, insufficient medical care, lack of social security, political instability, and corruption.

UNDP, whose mission is to put an end to poverty, inequality, and injustice, is engaged in anti-corruption initiatives in Guinea-Bissau through grant aid provided by the Government of Japan. Many people may wonder how anti-corruption contributes to peacekeeping, but I believe it is an important effort toward maintaining peace. For example, embezzlement of public funds or misappropriation of medical supplies causes discontent among citizens and gives rise to political instability such as coups d'état. In fact, as recently as November 2023, there was a shooting incident sparked by a corruption issue, which led to an attempted coup d'état that involved people who were dissatisfied with the president and government.

I work in the UNDP Guinea-Bissau office on anti-corruption activities in the medical sector of this program. Not only is corruption a problem that occurs within the government; its potential risk lurks in many different places. Therefore, in order to prevent corruption, it is necessary to verify the flow of funds and medical supplies as well as their management methods, and to ensure transparency. Specifically, we conduct surveys on the Ministry of Public Health, local governments, hospitals, pharmacies, and other entities and prepare materials analyzing the results of these surveys. We also explore ways to digitize information to enhance transparency.

I also lead capacity building training for state officials in several ministries and agencies, including the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, in coordination with the Guinea-Bissau government. Based on our training on risk assessment and risk management, we conduct training to identify where the risks of corruption are lurking and how to address such risks. Furthermore, as Prime Minister Rui Duarte de Barros took great interest in our anti-corruption activities, we were requested by the Guinea-Bissau government to provide technical assistance to the evaluation and planning team within the finance department of the Ministry of Public Health. I felt that this was a sign of the significant impact that our activities have. As a part of our technical assistance to the team, we are now working on capacity building training and advisory activities in areas including organizational structure, goal setting, budgeting, and financial strategies to implement strategic vision and internal audits.



Visiting a rural hospital to collect data as part of anti-corruption activities (author on the far right)



In discussions with the government (author on the far left)

UNDP's mission is to fight injustice. To that end, we are cooperating with the Government of Japan to prevent corruption in Guinea-Bissau. I find it very rewarding to be able to tackle anti-corruption head-on through an approach that can only be taken by the UN, while setting the ambitious goal of building a just society and national system. Going forward, I aim to continue enhancing Japan's presence while working on anti-corruption activities through grant aid from the Government of Japan.

prevention and criminal justice, was adopted. Since then, in cooperation with UNODC and other organizations, Japan has been demonstrating its leadership in advancing such initiatives as; (a) regularly convening the Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific as a platform for information sharing and exchanges of opinions between practitioners in the field of criminal justice in the Asia-Pacific region; (b) regularly holding the Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness, with the aim of facilitating independent discussions among youths, and incorporating their views into policies; (c) working toward the formulation of UN model strategies to promote efforts by the international community to reduce reoffending. In addition, Japan proactively engages in following up on the Kyoto Declaration through efforts such as supporting theme-based discussions on the Kyoto Declaration conducted by UNODC. At the session of the CCPCJ convened in May 2024, Japan submitted a draft resolution to continue following up on the Kyoto Declaration, and this resolution was adopted unanimously. As a result, the outcomes of the Kyoto Congress will be carried on to the 15th Congress (hosted by United Arab Emirates) in 2026. 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, INTERPOL, and the Council of Europe. Japan also contributes to the capacity building of criminal justice officers and other relevant personnel from various countries by conducting training on offender treatment, crime prevention, and anti-crime measures in Japan, through the UNAFEI. 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 investigations in accordance with the UNTOC and reviewing the implementation of the Convention. With cybercrime emerging as a rising cross-border threat today, the UN launched discussions in 2019 on the United Nations

Convention against Cybercrime; Strengthening International Cooperation for Combating Certain Crimes Committed by Means of Information and Communications Technology Systems and for the Sharing of Evidence in Electronic Form of Serious Crimes, with the goal of bringing the international community together to address cybercrime. This Convention was adopted at the UN Headquarters in New York in December 2024. With the aim of ensuring a free, fair, and secure cyberspace, Japan worked tirelessly to conclude negotiations, including serving as the Vice-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee established for the purpose of elaborating the Convention.

### **C Anti-corruption Measures**

There is growing global interest in addressing corruption, which has been pointed out as a factor that threatens sustainable development and the rule of law. Against this backdrop, Japan, 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, actively participates in discussions for the effective implementation of the UNCAC and the strengthening of international cooperation on preventing and combating corruption. In September 2023, under the UNCAC review mechanism (mutual reviews conducted among the State Parties), an executive summary was published on the results of a country review conducted on Japan's implementation of the UNCAC regarding the provisions for criminalization and law enforcement (Chapter III) and international cooperation (Chapter IV). Japan also participates actively in the activities of the Anti-Corruption Working Group convened under the G20 framework and has contributed to formulating the Group's action plan from 2025 to 2027, as well as high-level principles in relation to the strengthening of anti-corruption measures in the private sector. In October 2024, Japan attended the ministerial meeting in Natal, Brazil, held for the third time since the establishment of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group. The G20 countries, including Japan, engaged in discussions on strengthening the international anti-corruption framework, after which the G20 Anti-Corruption

Ministerial Meeting Ministerial Declaration<sup>(13)</sup> was adopted. In addition, Japan conducts the International Training Course on the Criminal Justice Response to Corruption in Japan through the UNAFEI. Japan is an active participant in the OECD Working Group on Bribery, which verifies the implementation of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions 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. Since the adoption of the Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation Report in 2021, Japan has been steadily implementing measures based on the Report, and at the FATF Plenary held in October 2024, successfully increased its ratings on all the points for improvements raised in the same Report. In addition, Japan actively takes measures to counter the financing of terrorism as a State Party to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and also implements its own response measures to freeze the assets of terrorists and terrorist entities in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1373<sup>(14)</sup> and designations by the UN Security Council Taliban Sanctions Committee and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. As of November 30, 2024, Japan has implemented asset freezing and other measures, based on foreign exchange and international

terrorist asset freezing laws, on 390 individuals and 94 entities related to Taliban, Al-Qaida, and ISIL (Da'esh) as designated by the respective UN Security Council Sanctions Committees, as well as 41 individuals and 31 entities designated in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1373, making a total of 420 individuals and 122 entities (excluding 11 individuals and 3 entities overlapping in both categories).

#### **E Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants**

To effectively combat increasingly sophisticated and obscure trafficking in persons, Japan has strengthened its domestic system in accordance with its “2022 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons,” while proactively providing assistance to developing countries. In 2024 as well, Japan continued to conduct training programs through the JICA to deepen mutual understanding on human trafficking countermeasures (especially prevention, victim protection and support to restore the financial independence of victims) of stakeholders in various countries, including Japan, and to promote more effective regional cooperation. For example, Japan has been implementing a technical cooperation project with the Government of Thailand via JICA since January 2022, and as a part of that, held a workshop in July 2024 on human trafficking countermeasures to strengthen networks among those involved in such countermeasures in the Mekong region. Since March 2022, Japan has been engaged in technical cooperation with the government of Cambodia through JICA, aimed at enhancing the capacity of the relevant organizations to support victims of human trafficking. With respect to cooperation with international organizations, in 2024, 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 reintegration assistance programs to prevent the recurrence of trafficking after they return to their countries. Japan also provided support to strengthen response capabilities, including training

<sup>(13)</sup> For the full text of the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meeting, see MOFA's website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100748701.pdf>

<sup>(14)</sup> Adopted by the UN Security Council in September 2001 after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. in the same year. It calls for UN Member States to take comprehensive measures against those who undertake acts of terrorism and those who have involvement with such actors, such as by freezing their assets.

<sup>(13)</sup>



programs for law enforcement authorities, by funding projects organized by UNODC in Southeast Asia. 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**

In cooperation with UNODC, Japan is contributing to investigations and development of analytical information for interdiction of the production, manufacturing, and trafficking of precursor chemicals and newly emerged synthetic drugs, and the maintenance

and enhancement of cooperative networks. Japan is also strengthening practical capabilities for cross-border drug control, providing development support for alternative livelihoods such as the production of alternative crops in place of illicit cultivation of plant materials for drugs to prevent the vulnerable communities (including migrants and youths) in farming villages with unstable political situations and rural areas with poor border controls, particularly in developing countries, from becoming involved in organized crime, as well as advancing efforts to improve the availability of information related to crackdowns on illicit trafficking. At the same time, it is engaged in global efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking, while giving consideration to region-specific development challenges in the area of drug control.

## **4 Disarmament and Nonproliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy**

### **(1) Nuclear Disarmament**

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan has a historical mission to lead international efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

At the same time, Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, and in areas surrounding Japan, nuclear arms expansion is advancing in both quantity and quality. Against this backdrop, based on the premise that Japan itself will not possess nuclear weapons, the extended deterrence provided by the U.S., including its nuclear capabilities, is essential in order for Japan to protect the lives and property of its citizens, as well as its own independence and peace.

Moreover, as seen in the situation surrounding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), there is a divergence of views on how to advance nuclear disarmament, not only between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States but also among non-nuclear-weapon States depending on

whether they are exposed to nuclear threats. Under such circumstances, it is essential to persistently advance realistic and practical efforts, while bridge-building between states with divergent views, in order to promote nuclear disarmament.

With the aim of realizing a world without nuclear weapons, Japan is steadily advancing efforts toward nuclear disarmament. While building on the “G7 Leaders’ Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament” issued at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023 as a solid platform, Japan will continue and strengthen realistic and practical efforts by implementing each of the initiatives under the “Hiroshima Action Plan”<sup>(15)</sup> announced by Prime Minister Kishida at the NPT Review Conference in 2022. Furthermore, Japan has continued to pursue bridge-building between states with divergent views. It has done this, for example, through meetings of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP), submitting the Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in the UN General

<sup>(15)</sup> Proposed by Prime Minister Kishida at the NPT Review Conference in August 2022. As the first step of a realistic roadmap to take us from the “reality” we face in the harsh security environment to the “ideal” of a world without nuclear weapons, it is rooted in the following five actions alongside efforts to reduce nuclear risks: (a) shared recognition on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons; (b) enhancing transparency; (c) maintaining the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile; (d) securing nuclear non-proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and, (e) encouraging visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by international leaders and others.



Assembly, and cooperation and collaboration with like-minded countries, including within the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), as well as individual consultations. Moreover, Japan intends to continue maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime, which is the only universal framework toward realizing a world without nuclear weapons. It aims to achieve this through cumulative efforts including through building up realistic and practical efforts by also involving nuclear-weapon States, such as through encouraging states to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to immediately commence negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). As a part of such efforts, the launch of the “FMCT Friends” in 2024, promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education, and further, discussions towards 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. On the other hand, it imposes a comprehensive ban on the possession and use of nuclear weapons, and under the current circumstances, it is highly unlikely that any nuclear-weapon States will sign the treaty given its incompatibility with nuclear deterrence. It is difficult to pursue nuclear disarmament without the engagement of nuclear-weapon States, and Japan believes that it remains preferable for global nuclear disarmament efforts to be promoted under the NPT. In light of the increasingly challenging road toward realizing a world without nuclear weapons, Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, considers it even more pertinent to continue making every effort to advance realistic and practical measures with the participation of both nuclear-weapon States and state parties to the TPNW, based on the NPT regime, while maintaining and strengthening deterrence as well as responding appropriately to security threats as the fundamental premise.

#### **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.

The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026 was convened from July 22 to August 2 at the UN Office in Geneva. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs KOMURA Masahiro represented Japan at this meeting, during which he delivered a statement at the General Debate. He stated that the international community is now at a turning point in history and the security environment is rapidly becoming more severe, which is why Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, is leading the international community's efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, under the “Hiroshima Action Plan” and with the NPT as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. He added that Japan will cooperate with the international community to advance efforts on nuclear non-proliferation, including issues regarding North Korea and Iran, and emphasized that Japan is actively engaged in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Chair's Summary for this session of the Preparatory Committee was submitted as a working paper, and it reflected a wide range of elements emphasized by Japan in the Hiroshima Action Plan, including enhancing the transparency regarding States' nuclear arsenal and the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. Japan appreciates the issuance of the Chair's Summary under the current severe security environment, and considers it meaningful that the State Parties demonstrated a common recognition of the importance of maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime toward the next NPT Review Conference in 2026, and that candid exchanges were held in person.

#### **B International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP)**

The International Group of Eminent Persons (IGEP) was established in 2022 to provide a forum for participants from nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as those from countries

participating and not participating in the TPNW, to exchange ideas and thoughts beyond their respective national positions, with the involvement of former and incumbent political leaders of the world, and engaged in candid discussions concerning a concrete path toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons. Following the first meeting (December 2022, Hiroshima), the second meeting (April 2023, Tokyo), and the third meeting (December 2023, Nagasaki), the fourth meeting was held in Yokohama on May 21 and 22. In addition to three Japanese members, including Chair SHIRAISHI Takashi (Special Professor of Emeritus of the Prefectural University of Kumamoto), 10 non-Japanese members from both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States also attended the meeting, making 13 members in total participating in person. Two other non-Japanese members also attended the meeting online. Foreign Minister Kamikawa delivered a video message at the start of the meeting, in which she introduced continued efforts by the Government of Japan toward a world without nuclear weapons and stated that Japan will continue to pursue realistic and practical efforts, taking the sage views of the IGEP as guidance. The IGEP members held frank and in-depth discussions through six sessions, focusing on responsibilities, ethics, and norms surrounding nuclear weapons, updates to nuclear arms control and non-proliferation regimes, and the impact of emerging technologies such as AI, with a view to making recommendations to the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

The fifth meeting was held online on November 6 and 7. In addition to three Japanese members



Courtesy call on Prime Minister Kishida by members attending the fourth meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (May 22, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

including Chair Shiraishi, 11 non-Japanese members also attended the meeting, making 14 members in total participating. For this meeting, Prime Minister Ishiba sent a written message stating that in the midst of an international climate with increasing division and conflict, he looks forward to receiving recommendations grounded in the sage views of IGEP, and that he would like to contribute to the future of the international community together. During the meeting, the IGEP members engaged in discussions focusing on issues such as the importance of norms and ethics surrounding nuclear weapons, strengthening the NPT-based Non-Proliferation Regime, and the impact of emerging technologies such as AI on nuclear risks, with a view to preparing recommendations to the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

### **C Japan Chair for a world without nuclear weapons**

In his address at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly in 2023, Prime Minister Kishida announced the establishment of “Japan Chair for a world without nuclear weapons” at overseas research institutes and think tanks with a view to overcoming the dichotomy of “deterrence versus disarmament.” Following the announcement, “Japan Chairs” were established as specialized posts for nuclear disarmament at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (U.S.), Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (Austria), and the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Asia (IISS-Asia) (Singapore).

Based on the recognition that multilayered efforts, not just government efforts, are important in order to steadily advance the trend of “mainstreaming” nuclear disarmament, the Japan Chair initiative is aimed at stimulating discussions on “realistic and practical nuclear disarmament” for which Japan advocates, as well as contributing to overcoming divisions in the international community.

### **D The Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)**

The NPDI, a group of 12 non-nuclear-weapon States<sup>(16)</sup> from various regions established under the leadership

<sup>(16)</sup> Japan, Australia, Germany, Poland, Netherlands, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Nigeria, and the Philippines

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. In August 2022, Prime Minister Kishida attended the 11th NPDI High-level Meeting held in New York, as the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend this NPDI High-level Meeting. A Joint High-level Statement was released after the meeting, which expressed NPDI's resolve to remain committed to fostering the sustained, high-level political leadership and diplomatic dialogue needed to strengthen the implementation of the NPT. The NPDI has actively contributed to the NPT review process through realistic and practical proposals, including the submission of 19 working papers to the Ninth NPT Review process and 18 to the Tenth NPT Review process. At the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026 held from July to August, NPDI released a joint statement and submitted joint working papers on transparency (reporting) and accountability, as well as on promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

### **E Initiatives Through the United Nations (Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons)**

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 with a view to presenting a realistic and concrete nuclear disarmament approach proposed by Japan to the international community. Recognizing the need to present a way forward for realistic and practical measures to realize a world without nuclear weapons, the 2024 draft resolution took into consideration discussions at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026, and focused on calling on the international community to implement concrete measures to make substantial progress on negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) and to enhance transparency, in order to further realize and promote the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” while underscoring the importance of NPT as a cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Furthermore,

in regard to promoting understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings, the draft resolution also referred to hibakusha (those who have suffered as a result of the use of nuclear weapons), including Nihon Hidankyo, recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize 2024. The resolution was adopted with the support (affirmative votes) of 145 countries at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in November, and 152 countries at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in December. The states supporting the resolution have divergent views, including nuclear-weapon States such as the U.S. and UK, as well as U.S. allies such as NATO member countries, Australia, the ROK, and the states advocating the TPNW. While other resolutions that comprehensively addressed nuclear disarmament were submitted to the General Assembly in addition to Japan's draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, Japan has enjoyed support among a larger number of states. Every year, Japan's resolutions continue to enjoy the broad support of states with divergent views in the international community.

### **F Initiatives Through the United Nations (Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation”)**

On March 18, Foreign Minister Kamikawa chaired the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation,” which was for the first time under the presidency of Japan. Among the 15 members of the Security Council, ministerial-level representatives from Japan, as well as three countries and the U.S., participated in this meeting. In her statement, Foreign Minister Kamikawa stated that Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, has led the international community toward a world without nuclear weapons, through various measures such as submitting the Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament, proposing the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” and holding the G7 Summit in Hiroshima, based on the belief that the catastrophes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated. She also stated that it is important to steadily advance realistic and practical efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons given the increasingly severe situation surrounding nuclear disarmament, and emphasized

that maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime is the cornerstone of such efforts. At the meeting, delegations including those from nuclear-weapon States, namely the U.S., Russia, the UK, France, and China, engaged in active discussions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation based on the experiences and knowledge of their own countries, and reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime. The meeting also provided an opportunity to accelerate substantive discussion between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States toward the NPT Review Conference in 2026. Participants from many countries pointed out that the world is once again in a very severe situation and expressed that no other countries are more suitable than Japan to raise this agenda. They also shared their own experiences of visits to Hiroshima, and spoke about the importance of the role of women in conflict and the possible impact of emerging technologies such as AI. (See the Special Feature on page 233.)

### **G Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)**

Japan attaches great importance to promoting the entry into force of the CTBT as a realistic measure for nuclear disarmament where both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States can participate. It continues making diplomatic efforts to call on countries which have not signed or ratified the treaty, including states whose ratifications are necessary for its entry into force. The Eleventh Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the CTBT was held during the UN General Assembly High-level Week in September. In her statement, Foreign Minister Kamikawa spoke about the importance of promoting the universalization and the early entry into force of the CTBT, along with the strengthening of its verification system, as a part of realistic and practical efforts towards a world without nuclear weapons, amid the increasingly severe international security environment. At the same time, she called on all relevant states to declare new or maintain existing moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion until the Treaty enters into force. At the end of the meeting, a Joint Ministerial Statement

was adopted. It stressed the importance of the early entry into force of the CTBT, urged for early ratification by all states, including states whose ratifications are necessary for entry into force, urged North Korea to take concrete actions toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, and related programs, highlighted the importance of maintaining nuclear test explosion moratoria, ensuring and strengthening the effectiveness of the CTBT verification regime, and underscored the significance of CTBT at the political level.

### **H Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT<sup>(17)</sup>)**

A Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) would have 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 would limit the production of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. However, since the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution calling for an FMCT in 1993, no consensus has been reached on the commencement of negotiations on such a treaty despite decades of discussions in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). In light of such a situation, it was decided at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly in 2016 to establish the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. Japan actively participated in the preparatory group's discussions, and a report was compiled by the group in 2018.

Furthermore, at the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council on "Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation" chaired by Japan in March 2024, Foreign Minister Kamikawa announced the establishment of the "FMCT Friends" with the aim of maintaining and enhancing political attention on an FMCT. During the UN General Assembly High-level Week in September, Prime Minister Kishida hosted the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of an FMCT, and launched the "FMCT Friends" with high-level representatives of the "FMCT Friends" member states, including U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, Australian Foreign

<sup>(17)</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 device.





Prime Minister Kishida delivering the opening remarks at the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) (September 23, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

Minister Penny Wong, and the Philippine Foreign Minister Enrique Manalo. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Kishida emphasized the need for an early start to negotiations on an FMCT, which limits the quantitative improvement of nuclear weapons by banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, as the world is on the cusp of a reversal of the decreasing trend of the number of nuclear arsenals for the first time since the peak of the Cold War. A number of participating countries pointed out the need for political will to realize an early start to negotiations on an FMCT, and the Joint Press Release issued after the meeting affirmed that participants would work closely together to enhance political attention on an FMCT, and cooperate with the relevant countries and partners toward launching negotiations as soon as possible. (See the Special Feature on page 233.)

## I Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan places great importance on disarmament and non-proliferation education. Specifically, Japan has been actively engaged in efforts to convey the realities of the atomic bombings to people around the world, through activities such as translating the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors into other languages,



Courtesy call on Special Advisor to the Prime Minister ISHIHARA Hirotaka by participants of the "Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons" training program (August 30, Tokyo)

invitations for young diplomats from various countries to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the UN Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament,<sup>(18)</sup> providing assistance for holding atomic bomb exhibitions overseas,<sup>(19)</sup> and designating atomic bomb survivors who have given testimonies of their atomic bomb experiences as "Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons."<sup>(20)</sup>

At the General Debate of the NPT Review Conference held in August 2022, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan would contribute 10 million U.S. dollars to the UN for the establishment of the "Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons." The goal of this program is to create a global network of future generations with the shared goal toward the elimination of nuclear weapons by bringing future leaders such as young policymakers and researchers from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to Japan to learn firsthand the realities of the atomic bombings. Under the Fund, courses commenced in December 2023, and in August, 49 young leaders selected among those who completed the online training courses participated in a week-long study tour in Japan, during which they visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Additionally, as the atomic bomb survivors are aging, it is becoming increasingly important to pass

<sup>(18)</sup> A UN training program aimed at fostering disarmament experts particularly in developing countries. Its implementation was decided at the First United Nations Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD) in 1978. Since 1983, Japan has invited participants of the program (young diplomats and others from various countries) to Japan at the expense of the Government of Japan; as of 2024, 1,027 participants have visited Japan. The study visit to Japan provides a meaningful opportunity to promote understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings through tours of museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, talks by atomic bomb survivors about their experiences, and other activities.

<sup>(19)</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.

<sup>(20)</sup> From 2010 to 2022, more than 300 atomic bomb survivors have been named "Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons."

on the realities of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings across generations and borders. To this end, from 2013 to 2024, Japan conferred the designation of “Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” on more than 750 youths in Japan and overseas.

## **J Initiatives Toward Future Arms Control and Disarmament**

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 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. However, in August 2022, Russia announced the exemption of all its facilities from inspection activities temporarily. It also notified the U.S. about the postponement of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) scheduled for November the same year. In January 2023, the U.S. Department of State submitted a report to Congress stating that Russia cannot be certified as being in compliance with the New START Treaty. In February of the same year, President Putin announced in his Address to the Federal Assembly the suspension of the implementation of the New START Treaty. In light of these developments, the “G7 Leaders’ Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament,” for example, also expressed deep regret over Russia’s decision to undermine the New START Treaty, and called on Russia to enable a return to full implementation of the Treaty.

In view of the recent situations 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 explaining this issue to the relevant countries at various levels. Furthermore, the aforementioned Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons also reaffirms the special responsibility of

nuclear-weapon States to initiate arms control dialogues on effective measures to prevent a nuclear arms race.

## **(2) Non-proliferation and Nuclear Security**

### **A Japan’s Efforts Toward Non-proliferation**

As stated in the 2022 National Security Strategy of Japan, 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.

Amid the upheaval of the international order, there are growing concerns over proliferation in countries such as North Korea, Iran, and Syria. Proliferation risks are also growing on the back of many factors. For one, economic growth has enabled expanded capacity to produce and supply weapons as well as materials that could be diverted to the development of such weapons. In addition, distribution channels have become more complex alongside advancing globalization, and procurement methods for substances of concern and other materials have become increasingly sophisticated. The emergence of new technologies has also heightened the risk of the diversion of private sector technologies to military uses. Furthermore, with growing demand for nuclear energy in recent years, non-proliferation and nuclear security are also becoming increasingly important.

Under these circumstances, Japan has been implementing its non-proliferation policies through international non-proliferation regimes and rules, taking non-proliferation measures domestically, and promoting close coordination with and capacity building support for other nations.

Measures for preventing proliferation include IAEA safeguards, export control, and counter-proliferation initiatives, as well as the aforementioned NPT, CTBT, and FMCT.

Safeguards refer to verification activities for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, conducted in

SPECIAL  
FEATUREMinisterial Meeting of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” and Launch of the “Friends of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT<sup>1</sup> Friends)”

On March 18, Foreign Minister Kamikawa hosted the Ministerial Meeting of the UNSC on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.” This meeting covered the agenda of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for the first time under Japan’s Security Council Presidency and was aimed at promoting dialogue between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. At the outset of the meeting, three speakers, including UN Secretary-General Guterres, gave briefings on the situation and challenges surrounding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Following that, Foreign Minister Kamikawa delivered a statement, stressing the following four points: (1) With an ever greater sense of urgency, the international community must implement the five actions<sup>2</sup> set forth in the “Hiroshima Action Plan;” (2) Japan will further strengthen and lead the efforts to embody the five actions of the “Hiroshima Action Plan;” (3) The international community must be united with one voice against any movement that runs counter to a world without nuclear weapons such as by Russia and North Korea; and, (4) The possible impact of emerging technologies such as AI, and the “Women, Peace, and Security (WPS)” perspective, are also important.



Foreign Minister Kamikawa presiding over the Ministerial Meeting of the UNSC on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (March 18, New York, U.S.)

At the same meeting, Foreign Minister Kamikawa announced the establishment of the “FMCT Friends,” a cross-regional group<sup>3</sup> comprised of countries from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. The group aims to maintain and enhance political attention on an FMCT, as well as contribute to expanding support for the immediate commencement of FMCT negotiations. This is a part of efforts to bring about the realization of the “Hiroshima Action Plan” toward a world without nuclear weapons. Following this announcement, Prime Minister Kishida hosted the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of an FMCT on September 23 during the UN General Assembly High-Level Week. The meeting was attended by ministerial-level officials from eight countries,



Representatives of each country attending the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of an FMCT (September 23, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

including U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, Philippine Foreign Minister Enrique Manalo, and Nigerian Defense Minister Mohammed Abubakar, as well as senior government officials from other countries. Participants affirmed the establishment of the Friends of an FMCT and confirmed that they will work closely for an early start of negotiations on an FMCT. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Kishida stated that he is convinced that further increasing political interest in and revitalizing the discussion on an FMCT will build momentum toward an early start of negotiations, which will ultimately lead to the maintenance and strengthening of the NPT regime.

An FMCT, together with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), is an important framework for maintaining the decreasing trend of the global number of nuclear arsenals. As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan will continue to advance realistic and practical efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, including efforts toward an early start of negotiations on an FMCT through the “FMCT Friends.”

<sup>1</sup> FMCT: Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or other Nuclear Explosive Devices / Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty

<sup>2</sup> Five Actions: (1) a shared recognition on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons; (2) enhancing transparency; (3) maintaining the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile; (4) securing nuclear non-proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and (5) encouraging visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by international leaders and others.

<sup>3</sup> The 12 participating countries are Japan, the U.S., the UK, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Germany, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Brazil.

accordance with safeguards agreements between states and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and aim to ensure that nuclear energy (nuclear materials) will not be diverted from peaceful uses, such as nuclear power generation, to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Safeguards are a primary means of achieving nuclear non-proliferation, which is one of three pillars of the NPT, and strengthening safeguards is vital toward promoting nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear power. As a designated member of the IAEA Board of Governors,<sup>(21)</sup> Japan is advancing various efforts including supporting the IAEA's activities, supporting enhanced understanding and implementation capabilities toward safeguards, and promoting the universalization of the Additional Protocol (AP).<sup>(22)</sup> Japan also contributes to capacity development in the area of safeguards in each country, such as through its contributions to the meetings of the Asia Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN) and training projects conducted in Japan for Asian countries.

Export control is an effort undertaken from the supply-side toward countries of proliferation concern, terrorist organizations, and other entities attempting to acquire or distribute weapons or related materials or technologies. There are four export control frameworks (international export control regimes) in the international community. Japan participates in all of them upon 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>(23)</sup> and the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) for

conventional weapons, establishes a list of dual-use items and technologies which contribute to the development of weapons that should be controlled. To ensure the non-proliferation of materials and technologies of concern, participating countries to the regimes implement export control measures on the listed items and technologies in accordance with their domestic laws. Japan is actively involved in international rule-making and the implementation of rules, and the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna serves as the Point of Contact of the NSG.

Furthermore, Japan is promoting counter-proliferation initiatives with a view to complementing such safeguards and the activities of the international export control regimes, and comprehensively addressing the proliferation and threat of weapons of mass destruction. Specifically, Japan participates actively in the activities of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI),<sup>(24)</sup> and works jointly with each country to implement and consider possible measures with relevant international and national legal authorities in order to interdict the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, along with related materials. In addition, with regard to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540,<sup>(25)</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 regimes through means such as making financial contributions to support the implementation of the resolution by Asian nations.

Non-proliferation measures, including export control, play a role in enhancing the predictability of the

<sup>(21)</sup> 13 countries are designated by the IAEA Board of Governors. The designated member states include Japan and other countries with advanced nuclear energy capabilities.

<sup>(22)</sup> 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 are required to conclude with the IAEA pursuant to Article III Paragraph 1 of the NPT, an Additional Protocol is concluded between the 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 October 2024, 143 countries have concluded the Additional Protocol.

<sup>(23)</sup> Apart from export control regimes, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC), which includes the principle of exercising restraint in their development and deployment, addresses the issue of ballistic missiles. As of October 2024, 145 countries subscribe to the HCOC.

<sup>(24)</sup> PSI launched in 2003. As of October 2024, 115 countries participate in and support the PSI. In 2013, the six countries of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore, and the U.S. agreed to conduct a yearly rotation exercise in the Asia Pacific region. Through the cooperation of agencies including MOFA, the National Police Agency, the Ministry of Finance, the Japan Coast Guard and the 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, including the training hosted by Australia most recently in September 2024.

<sup>(25)</sup> Adopted in April 2004, UN Security Council resolution 1540 obliges all countries to: (a) refrain from providing support to terrorists and other non-state actors attempting to develop weapons of mass destruction; (b) adopt and enforce laws prohibiting the development of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-state actors; and (c) 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.



### ■ Japan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The IAEA is an organization related with the UN, which was established in 1957 with the aim of promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and at the same time, ensuring that nuclear energy is not used for any military purpose. Article III of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which entered into force in 1970, sets out the obligation of non-nuclear-weapon States to accept IAEA safeguards with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear technology from peaceful uses to military uses.

The IAEA, known as the nuclear watchdog, from the perspective of nuclear non-proliferation, plays a key role in implementing safeguards and is also engaged in nuclear non-proliferation challenges in countries such as North Korea and Iran, while also addressing nuclear terrorism. Furthermore, from the perspective of promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the IAEA has been strengthening not only technical support related to nuclear power generation, but also research and support for nuclear technologies in non-electric applications such as health, medicine, food and agriculture, water resource management, the environment, and industrial uses. In recent years, it has also been focusing on fusion energy, and its activities range widely.

Since joining the IAEA as an original member state, Japan has contributed to discussions in the General Conference and Board of Governors meetings as a designated member state, and has also deepened cooperation with the IAEA traditionally in the nuclear non-proliferation field and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and actively supported IAEA activities in the human resources, financial, and technical aspects. Recently, in addition to cooperation on the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea by TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, and on nuclear safety in Ukraine, Japan is also advancing cooperation on various initiatives that the IAEA is promoting against the backdrop of growing global interest and demand for the use of nuclear energy in areas such as medicine, food, and the environment. Some examples are the "Rays of Hope" (an initiative related to radioactive cancer treatment and diagnosis) advocated by the IAEA and "Atoms4Food" (an initiative related to food issues), aimed at the attainment of SDGs in developing countries. Japan contributes funding to such initiatives.

Through opportunities such as visits by Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi to Japan as a guest of MOFA on four occasions, Japan is strengthening cooperation with the IAEA in both nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.



Foreign Minister Kamikawa with IAEA Director General Grossi on his visit to Japan as a guest of MOFA (March 14, Tokyo)

<sup>1</sup> ALPS treated water is water which is processed by devices such as ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System) to ensure that the radioactive materials other than tritium surely meet the regulatory standards for safety. ALPS treated water is then sufficiently diluted so that the concentrations of the radioactive materials including tritium is far below the regulatory standards for safety, and then finally discharged into the sea.

international business environment and promoting investment and trade. In order to carry out efficient and effective export control while ensuring free trade in the highly globalized world economy, Japan is advancing international coordination efforts, including the harmonization and strengthening of the national export control systems of various countries, in cooperation with Japan's industry and academia which have advanced technologies. In this regard, Japan holds the Asia Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP)<sup>(26)</sup> and the Asian Export Control Seminar<sup>(27)</sup>

every year in order to promote a better understanding of the non-proliferation regimes and strengthen regional efforts, mainly in Asian countries.

### B Regional Non-proliferation Issues

In 2024, North Korea conducted launches of ballistic missiles, including an Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM)-class as well as a launch using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch. This series of actions by North Korea is a flagrant violation of relevant UN Security Council

<sup>(26)</sup> A multilateral Director-General-level meeting launched in 2003 and hosted by Japan to discuss various issues related to the strengthening of the non-proliferation 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 19th meeting was held in October 2024, and discussions were held on topics such as proliferation challenges in Asia and the strengthening of export control.

<sup>(27)</sup> 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. (It was suspended only in 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.)

resolutions, and constitutes a grave and imminent threat to Japan's national security. At the same time, it also poses a clear and serious challenge to the international community, and is absolutely unacceptable. The IAEA Director General's report in August pointed out that North Korea's nuclear activities continue to be a cause for serious concern, and that the continuation of North Korea's nuclear programme is a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions. Moreover, at the IAEA General Conference convened in September, a resolution calling strongly on North Korea to take concrete steps toward achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all of its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear plans, as well as the prompt suspension of all related activities, was adopted by consensus. This demonstrated the united position of the IAEA member states toward the denuclearization of North Korea. Japan also actively communicated to the international community the importance of addressing North Korea's nuclear issue at The Secondary Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference held from July to August, as well as the IAEA General Conference in September, and the IAEA Board of Governors' Meetings.

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. Military cooperation such as the transfer of ballistic missiles from North Korea to Russia is a flagrant violation of UN Security Council resolutions, and Japan will continue to coordinate closely with related countries, including the U.S. and the ROK, as well as international organizations such as the UN and 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 the MTCR.

Since the withdrawal of the U.S. (administration under President Trump's first term) from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)<sup>(28)</sup> in 2018 and the reimposition of independent sanctions on Iran, Iran has continued actions to reduce its commitments under the JCPOA. In February 2021, Iran suspended the implementation of transparency measures under the JCPOA including the AP, and commenced production of 60% enriched uranium in April the same year.

Japan has consistently supported the JCPOA, which contributes to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime. From this perspective, it has continued to support efforts by relevant countries toward the rebuilding of JCPOA by both the U.S. and Iran. Deeply concerned by Iran's continued reduction of its commitments under the JCPOA, Japan has repeatedly urged Iran to refrain from further measures that may undermine the JCPOA and to fully return to its commitments under the JCPOA.

In March 2023, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi visited Iran to discuss these issues related to the implementation of the JCPOA and the series of safeguards issues (in which nuclear materials that had not been declared to the IAEA were found in Iran). The two sides issued a joint statement toward future cooperation on matters such as the safeguards issues. Subsequently, as the cooperation between the two sides, including the implementation of the joint statement, stagnated, a resolution was issued at the IAEA Board of Governor's meeting in June, calling upon Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA without any further delay. In November, Director General Grossi revisited Iran once again and engaged in discussions on cooperation between the two sides. Based on the outcomes of the discussion, another resolution was issued at the Board of Governor's meeting in November requesting the Director General to produce

<sup>(28)</sup> 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.

a comprehensive and updated assessment on Iran's safeguards issue. Japan will continue to call strongly on Iran to cooperate completely and unconditionally with the IAEA. Japan will also continue to contribute to discussions related to Iran's nuclear, missile, and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) activities in the international export control regimes such as the NSG and the 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, and the issue remains unresolved and under discussion to this day. The IAEA visited three facilities related to the undeclared construction of nuclear reactors by October 2024. Future developments of this issue will be our concern. To address this outstanding issue, Japan has called upon Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA. It is important for Syria to sign, ratify and implement the AP.

### **C Nuclear Security**

Nuclear security is aimed at preventing acts of terrorism involving the use of nuclear and other radioactive materials. In the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., there has been growing recognition of the importance of nuclear security as a counter-terrorism measure. Thereafter, multilateral conferences, including the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), Nuclear Security Summit, and the International Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS) have been held with a view to strengthening nuclear security. Progress has been also made in cooperation in the international community, with the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in 2007 and of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material in 2015. However, as the activities of GICNT conducted under the joint chairs of the U.S. and Russia came to a standstill due to

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the U.S. launched the Global Forum to Prevent Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism (Global FTPRNT). At the inaugural meeting held in November, the participants discussed measures on how to enhance nuclear counter-terrorism capabilities, among other matters. It also called for efforts to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TSUJI Kiyoto attended the ministerial-level meeting of 4th ICONS organized by the IAEA, where he delivered a speech on behalf of the Government of Japan. In his speech, State Minister Tsuji stated that, amid growing energy demand in every country and a global trend toward decarbonization, as well as growing interest in nuclear power generation in the international community, it is necessary for countries advancing the peaceful use of nuclear energy to raise awareness of nuclear security, such as the proliferation risk of nuclear weapons and nuclear materials to non-state actors, and to work toward ensuring the highest level of nuclear security standards. With regard to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, he stated that the "seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security"<sup>(29)</sup> set out by the IAEA Director General should not be compromised, and that Japan, under the leadership of the IAEA Director General, will continue to contribute toward ensuring the highest level of nuclear security standards in the international community in collaboration with the IAEA and the other countries engaging in relevant activities.

The IAEA General Conference held in September engaged in discussions on Ukraine's nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and a resolution was adopted by a majority vote that expressed concern over Russia's failure to heed previous resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors calling for the immediate cessation of all actions against and at Ukraine's nuclear facilities and commended and supported IAEA's efforts to ensure nuclear safety in Ukraine, including the IAEA Director

(29) 1. The physical integrity of the facilities – whether it is the reactors, fuel ponds, or radioactive waste stores – must be maintained;  
2. All safety and security systems and equipment must be fully functional at all times;  
3. The operating staff must be able to fulfil their safety and security duties and have the capacity to make decisions free of undue pressure;  
4. There must be secure off-site power supply from the grid for all nuclear sites;  
5. There must be uninterrupted logistical supply chains and transportation to and from the sites;  
6. There must be effective on-site and off-site radiation monitoring systems and emergency preparedness and response measures;  
7. There must be reliable communications with the regulator and others.

General's Seven Pillars and five principles.<sup>(30)</sup> Japan will continue to strongly condemn Russia's aggression, including its seizure of nuclear facilities, and to support the IAEA's efforts to ensure the nuclear safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

### (3) Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

#### A Multilateral Efforts

Along with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the peaceful uses 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. Against the backdrop of growing global energy demand and rising interest in decarbonized energy sources, many countries use, or plan to use, nuclear power.<sup>(31)</sup> In light of such global trends, the First Nuclear Energy Summit was convened in Brussels, Belgium, in March 2024. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, KOMURA Masahiro, attended the Summit on behalf of Japan.

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>(32)</sup> that is, (a) Safeguards, (b) Nuclear Safety (e.g. measures to ensure safety to prevent nuclear accidents), and (c) Nuclear Security. As the country that experienced the Tokyo Electric Power Company (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 enhancing global nuclear safety. In 2013, the IAEA Response and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC) was designated in Fukushima Prefecture. At this Center, the IAEA and

Japan cooperate to conduct training for Japanese and foreign officials to strengthen their capacity in the field of emergency preparedness and response.

Nuclear energy is applied not only to the field of power generation, but also to the field of non-power generation, including health, medical treatment, food, agriculture, the 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. Therefore, the IAEA also contributes to technical cooperation for developing countries and to the achievement of the SDGs.

In this context, Japan has been actively supporting the IAEA's activities in the technical and financial aspects, for example, through 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). Examples of support projects facilitated by Japan's contributions to the PUI include cancer control projects, projects to address the food issue, and projects to address the marine plastic waste issue. In November, the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme, pertaining to the use of nuclear science and technology and IAEA's technical cooperation activities in this field, was held for the first time in six years in Vienna. State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma attended the conference on behalf of Japan. In addition to presenting Japan's initiatives, he expressed the hope that this Ministerial Conference would provide greater impetus to promoting the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology.

#### B Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

Bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements are concluded to establish a legal framework required for ensuring a

(30) 1. There should be no attack of any kind from or against the plant, in particular targeting the reactors, spent fuel storage, other critical infrastructure, or personnel;  
2. Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) should not be used as storage or a base for heavy weapons (i.e., multiple rocket launchers, artillery systems and munitions, and tanks) or military personnel that could be used for an attack from the plant;  
3. Off-site power to the plant should not be put at risk. To that effect, all efforts should be made to ensure that off-site power remains available and secure at all times;  
4. All structures, systems and components essential to the safe and secure operation of ZNPP should be protected from attacks or acts of sabotage;  
5. No action should be taken that undermines these principles.

(31) According to the IAEA, 415 nuclear reactors are in operation worldwide and 63 reactors are under construction (IAEA website; as of November 2024).

(32) "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.



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 them. Under such bilateral agreements, cooperation in areas such as the improvement of nuclear safety can be promoted. Japan makes its decision on whether 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 its partner country, and its trust in and expectations toward Japan, as well as the bilateral relationship between the two countries among others. As of December, Japan has concluded bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements with 14 countries and one organization, which in order of entry into force of the agreement are: Canada, France, Australia, China, the U.S., the UK, the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), Kazakhstan, the ROK, Viet Nam, Jordan, Russia, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, and India.

### **C Decommissioning of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and Handling of ALPS Treated Water**

The work of decommissioning, contaminated water management, decontamination and environmental remediation at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station is challenging. However, Japan is making steady progress in these areas by leveraging the collective technologies and knowledge of the world, and in close cooperation with the IAEA, the expert organization in the field of nuclear energy. In April 2021, the Government of Japan announced its basic policy on the handling of ALPS treated water, and in July of the same year, signed the Terms of Reference (TOR) on Reviews of Safety Aspects of Handling ALPS treated water at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station with the IAEA. Based on this TOR, the IAEA Task Force consisting of the IAEA officials and international experts selected by the IAEA has conducted third-party reviews on the Government of Japan and TEPCO in safety and regulatory aspects.

On July 4, 2023, IAEA Director General Grossi visited Japan and handed to Prime Minister Kishida

the Comprehensive Report compiled by the IAEA, summarizing these reviews conducted based on the TOR. The report concluded that (a) the approach to the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea, and the associated activities, are consistent with relevant international safety standards, (b) that the discharge of the ALPS treated water will have a negligible radiological impact on people and the environment, and (c) indicated the IAEA's plans to continue implementing additional reviews and monitoring during and after the discharge.

After the Inter-Ministerial Council for Contaminated Water, Treated Water and Decommissioning Issues and the Inter-Ministerial Council for Steady Implementation of the Basic Policy on Handling ALPS Treated Water were held on August 22, 2023, the discharge of ALPS treated water commenced on August 24 the same year. ALPS treated water is being discharged as planned, and safety has been confirmed based on the monitoring results to date.

After the start of the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea, the IAEA conducted three safety review missions in October 2023 and April and December 2024. In the published reports on the First and Second Review Missions conducted after the start of the discharge into the sea, the IAEA also reaffirmed the fundamental conclusions of the safety review as outlined in the Comprehensive Report dated July 4, 2023.

In the light of the interest of the concerned countries, Japan and the IAEA concurred in conducting additional measures under the IAEA's framework on September 20. On the same day, the two countries announced a "Shared Recognition between Japan and China" regarding the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea and China's import restrictions on Japanese aquatic products, which mentioned that after conducting additional measures under the framework of the IAEA, the Chinese government will initiate adjustment of its import restrictions on Japanese aquatic products, and will steadily restore imports of Japanese aquatic products. As a part of additional measures, seawater sampling was carried out on October 15 by the experts from the participating countries (China, the ROK and Switzerland) under the IAEA's framework.

In order to make progress in the decommissioning works and in recovery with the 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 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 relevant organizations, including Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo and to the IAEA. Furthermore, Japan has organized more than 100 briefing sessions to the Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo since the nuclear power station accident and provided and disseminated information through Japanese diplomatic missions overseas or through social media and other means.

Regarding the safety of discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea, the Government of Japan continues to provide information sincerely to the international community in a highly transparent manner, based on scientific evidence, and to respond appropriately to claims that may encourage reputational damage.

#### (4) Biological and Chemical Weapons

##### **A** Biological Weapons

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)<sup>(33)</sup> is the only multilateral legal framework comprehensively prohibiting the development, production and possession of biological weapons. However, how to reinforce the Convention is a challenge as there are neither provisions on measures to verify 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 intersessional 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 BWC regime.

At the 9th Review Conference of the BWC held in 2022, it was decided that a working group open to all States Parties would be established, with a view to strengthening all aspects of the implementation of the

BWC. The working group started meeting from 2023, and States Parties are discussing measures on international cooperation, the scientific and technological developments, and compliance and verification relevant to the BWC.

##### **B** Chemical Weapons

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)<sup>(34)</sup> comprehensively prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons, and stipulates that all chemical weapons stockpiles 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 Organisation 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 free of chemical weapons were highly acclaimed, and the Organisation was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

Japan, which has a highly developed chemicals industry and numerous chemicals factories, accepts numerous OPCW inspections.

Japan also actively cooperates with the OPCW in many other concrete ways. In March, Japan contributed about 26 million Japanese yen to the OPCW to contribute to chemical weapon protection and assistance in Ukraine. This fund will be used to provide Ukraine with chemical identification analyzers through the OPCW. In addition, Japan is engaged in efforts to increase the number of States Parties, as well as to enhance the effectiveness of the CWC by strengthening the national implementation measures of the CWC by States Parties.

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>(33)</sup> Entered into force in March 1975. As of December 2024, 187 countries or regions are parties to the BWC.

<sup>(34)</sup> Entered into force in April 1997. As of December 2024, 193 countries or regions are parties to the CWC.

## (5) Conventional Weapons

Conventional weapons generally refer to arms other than weapons of mass destruction and include a wide variety of weapons ranging from landmines, tanks, and artillery to small arms and light weapons such as handguns. The problem of conventional weapons, which are used widely in actual wars and cause injury and death to civilians, is serious in light of both national security and humanitarian concerns. The disarmament agenda presented in 2018 by UN Secretary-General António Guterres categorizes disarmament of conventional weapons as one of the three pillars, “Disarmament that Saves Lives.” Japan continues to make active efforts through international cooperation and support toward matters concerning conventional weapons, and participates in discussions at the relevant conferences.

### A Small Arms and Light Weapons

Described as “the real weapons of mass destruction” due to the many human lives they take, small arms and light weapons 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 2001, Japan has been working with other countries to submit a resolution on the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons 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 and light weapons, including training and the collection and destruction of weapons. In 2019, Japan contributed 2 million U.S. dollars to a funding facility established under UN Secretary-General Guterres’ Agenda for Disarmament to address the issue of small arms and light weapons, and projects to support countries affected by illicit small arms and light weapons are implemented through this funding facility.

### B The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)<sup>(35)</sup>

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which seeks to establish common standards to regulate international trade and

prevent the illicit transfer of 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. Moreover, after the Treaty entered into force, Japan has continued to contribute actively in ways such as hosting the Fourth Conference of States Parties to the ATT in Tokyo as the first Presidency elected from the Asia-Pacific region in August 2018. At the Tenth Conference of State Parties to the ATT (held in August) marking the 10th anniversary since the ATT entered into force, a Political Declaration affirming the importance of the ATT was issued. Japan served as the chair of the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR) at the Conference, contributing proactively to promoting the implementation of the ATT.

### C Convention on Prohibitions 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>(36)</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 (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) have been held under the CCW framework since 2017, and 11 guiding principles on LAWS were formulated in 2019. Japan has continued to contribute actively and constructively to such discussions

<sup>(35)</sup> As of December 2024, there are 116 states and regions that are parties to the ATT. Japan signed the Treaty on the date it was opened for signing and deposited its instrument of acceptance in May 2014.

<sup>(36)</sup> As of December 2024, 128 countries and regions are parties to the CCW.

on international rule-making. In March 2023, Japan submitted the “Draft articles on autonomous weapon systems – prohibitions and other regulatory measures on the basis of international humanitarian law” to the GGE, with the U.S., the UK, Australia, Canada, and the ROK. At the GGE meeting convened in March 2023, a report incorporating the prohibition of weapons systems that cannot adhere to international humanitarian laws and the restriction of other weapons systems, was adopted unanimously. Furthermore, in light of the UN General Assembly resolution on LAWS, a working paper summarizing Japan's views on LAWS was submitted in May 2024 for the purpose of contributing to the preparation of the Report of the Secretary-General and discussions within the GGE.

Against the backdrop of increasingly active international discussions on the impact of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), on the military domain, the second summit of Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) was held in the ROK in September.

#### **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 Convention)<sup>(37)</sup> in 1998, Japan has continued to promote comprehensive measures under the Convention, including 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.”



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya attending an event held jointly with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre during the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines (November 24, Siem Reap, Cambodia)

The Fifth Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in November, was attended by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya. In her statement, she reflected on Japan's initiatives and achievements to date in supporting mine action, and in light that Japan will preside over the 22nd Meeting of States Parties in 2025, declared that it will continue to work toward the steadfast implementation and universalization of the Ottawa Convention.

#### **E Cluster Munitions<sup>(38)</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>(39)</sup> Japan is also continuing its efforts to increase the number of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).<sup>(40)</sup> At the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the CCM held in September, Japan participated in discussions concerning these issues and shared its proactive efforts.

<sup>(37)</sup> The Convention, which entered into force in 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 2024, there are 164 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

<sup>(38)</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>(39)</sup> See the White Paper on Development Cooperation for specific efforts on international cooperation regarding cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines.

<sup>(40)</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. There are 111 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan (as of December 2024)



## 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 members of (193 member states as of December 2024). 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 public health.

Since joining the UN in 1956, Japan has leveraged both its universality and expertise to realize 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. Japan served for the 12th time as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from January 2023 to December 2024, the most frequent among all UN Member States. Throughout its two-year term on the Security Council, Japan played a key role and worked proactively on a wide range of issues aimed at maintaining peace and security in the international community through close communication and dialogue with each country, while cooperating to ensure that the Security Council fulfills its primary role. (See “Summary of Japan’s Term as a Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (Statement by Foreign Minister Iwaya)” on page 244.) In order to support such activities, the Government of Japan financially contributes to the UN alongside actively engaging in the organizational aspects (management) of the UN. Japan also supports Japanese staff working in the UN to obtain important posts. (See Chapter 4, Section 1, 2(1)) With the international order undergoing major upheavals, it is becoming more important than before to strengthen international norms based on the rule of law. Japan is working proactively to strengthen the functions of the UN, including UN Security Council reform, with a view to strengthening multilateralism with the UN at its core.

### (2) Major Events in 2024

In March, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited New York and presided over the Ministerial Meeting of the

UN Security Council on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation,” Japan’s first as the chair of the UN Security Council and the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during the war. She also held a meeting with UN Secretary-General António Guterres, where she stated that Japan would continue and strengthen its efforts in disarmament and non-proliferation. Both sides agreed to cooperate to strengthen multilateralism, and exchanged views on the Middle East situation, the situation in Ukraine, the response to North Korea including the abductions issue, and the promotion of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), among other topics.

Japan also hosted the UN Security Council meeting on peacebuilding during the same month. As it has contributed during previous terms, Japan continued to work on improving the work methods of the UN Security Council, including enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the Council.

The High-Level Week of the 79th UN General Assembly convened in September. Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended from Japan.

At the Plenary Meeting of the Summit of the Future, the outcome document, “Pact for the Future,” which sets out 56 actions to protect the interests of current and future generations, was adopted. This outcome document covers the rule of law, human dignity, and the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, and for the first time, concrete details on UN Security



Foreign Minister Kamikawa presiding over the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” (March 18, New York, U.S.)

### ■ Summary of Japan's Term as a Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (Statement by Foreign Minister Iwaya)

1. For two years from the beginning of 2023 to the end of 2024, Japan served as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 12th time, the most among the UN Member States. During this period, Japan was facing the most severe security environment since the end of World War II, and the existing international order has been challenged. Against this backdrop, Japan prioritized the rule of law, peacebuilding, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, making the utmost contribution to the realization and maintenance of international peace and security.
2. In response to repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea, Japan worked closely with the United States, the Republic of Korea, and other countries concerned, and led the discussions at the UNSC to demonstrate a resolute stance against North Korea's provocations in violation of the relevant UNSC resolutions. In addition, an open briefing of the UNSC on "The situation in the DPRK" was held upon requests from Japan and other countries concerned for the first time since 2017 in August 2023 and again in June 2024, which fostered international discussion with a view to improving North Korea's human rights situation, including the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.
3. Through meetings of the UNSC and the UN General Assembly, Japan expressed its strong condemnation of Russia's protracted aggression against Ukraine, called for the immediate withdrawal of Russian military forces, and advocated for the realization of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, Japan strongly condemned the advancement of military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, including the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia and their engagement in combat against Ukraine, as well as Russia's procurement and use of North Korean weapons and munitions.
4. Regarding the situation surrounding Gaza, which has been facing a humanitarian catastrophe since the terror attacks by Hamas and others in October 2023, Japan contributed to the adoption of four UNSC resolutions calling for a ceasefire and the release of hostages to ensure that the UNSC fulfills its responsibility since October 2023. Notably, during Japan's presidency in March 2024, the Council was able to adopt a resolution demanding the parties to realize a ceasefire while Japan vigorously coordinated with other Council members as the President of the Council and a co-penholder.
5. Japan also contributed to discussions on key thematic issues, such as Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC), humanitarian issues, food security, climate change, AI, and outer space. Taking the opportunity of its Presidency of the UNSC twice during its term, Japan hosted a ministerial-level open debate on the rule of law in January 2023, and a ministerial meeting on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in March 2024, as well as two open debates on peacebuilding.
6. Over the two-year period, Japan, as a penholder on Afghanistan, led the negotiations on related documents including UNSC resolutions. Japan also actively addressed other complex issues facing the international community, such as the situations in Myanmar, Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, Japan chaired UNSC subsidiary bodies, including the Libya Sanctions Committee and the Al-Shabaab Sanctions Committee, and sought to realize their appropriate operations.
7. Enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the UNSC will lead to strengthening the functions of the UN. In 2024, Japan assumed the chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, a subsidiary body of the UNSC, and compiled a comprehensive and systematic Note by the President on the working methods of the Council and related matters. Japan's leadership in improving the operations and strengthening the functions of the UNSC during each of its Council membership terms since 2006 has been highly praised by a wide range of UN Member States.
8. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the UN. Even after the end of its term as a non-permanent member, Japan will continue to advance multilateral diplomacy with the UN at its core, and make a proactive contribution to realizing and maintaining international peace and security, with a view to leading the increasingly divided and confrontational international community toward cooperation.
9. At the same time, the UNSC, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, must be reformed in order to reflect the present world. Japan aspires to realize early UNSC reform, including the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership, and secure a permanent seat on the Council. Working with many other countries, Japan will continue to make persistent efforts to this end.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the Plenary Meeting of the Summit of the Future (September 22, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

reforms at the leaders' level. In his address delivered at the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Kishida stressed once again the importance of these elements, and called strongly on the international community to share responsibility and unite under the banner of multilateralism.

At the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) organized by Japan, Prime Minister Kishida, together with ministers and high-level government officials from 12 Friends of FMCT member states comprising both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States, including U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, confirmed close cooperation toward the early start of negotiations on an FMCT. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Kishida, pointed out the need for an early start to negotiations on an FMCT in view that the world is on the cusp of a reversal of the decreasing trend of the number of nuclear arsenals for the first time since the peak of the Cold War. Furthermore, in his address at the UN General Assembly, he highlighted the importance of strengthening governance at both national and international levels as one of the foundations for uniting the international community to strengthen the rule of law and protect human dignity in these difficult times when divisions and confrontations are deepening (the address was delivered by Ambassador Yamazaki, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, on behalf of Prime Minister Kishida).

Prime Minister Kishida also took the opportunity of the UN High-level Week to meet with the leaders and high-level officials of eight countries and organizations, and exchanged opinions actively on various



Meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and UN Secretary-General Guterres at the UN General Assembly High-level Week (September 22, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

issues and bilateral relations in the international arena. In his meeting with UN Secretary-General Guterres, Prime Minister Kishida highlighted the importance of cooperating with the UN on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, and expressed his stance of promoting commitment to multilateralism. He also stressed the importance of increasing the number of Japanese staff in the UN organizations and agencies. Secretary-General Guterres thanked Japan for its cooperation with the UN and shared the recognition of the importance of multilateralism with the UN at its core.

During his stay in New York, Prime Minister Kishida attended the U.S.-Japan Tourism Event and a finance-related event hosted by Bloomberg. At the U.S.-Japan Tourism Event, he promoted the diverse sightseeing attractions, food, and alcohol from various parts of Japan, such as Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, the Sado Island Gold Mines, and Japanese sake from Noto. At the Bloomberg-hosted finance event, he announced the launch of an Asset Management Forum that will allow Japanese and U.S. asset management companies and others to promote investment and engage in dialogues on the reform of the asset management industry. During her short stay, Foreign Minister Kamikawa engaged in discussions with foreign ministers from 15 countries and organizations, including the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries on UN Security Council Reform, the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting, holding various intensive and strategic talks and meetings that covered priority issues for Japan's diplomacy. Through the meetings with various

countries, she strived to further boost cooperation with like-minded countries on addressing various issues, sending out a strong message on the importance of the UN and on strengthening its functions, including reform of the UN Security Council, while affirming cooperation on the regional situation in Ukraine, the Middle East, and North Korea.

### (3) UN Security Council and its Reform

#### A UN 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). The UN Security Council's agenda covers a wide range of areas from the peaceful settlement of disputes and addressing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, to peacebuilding and Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). In recent years, new themes such as climate change and food security have also been covered. The UN Security Council also has a mandate to determine the details of activities in UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and UN Special Political Missions (SPM).

#### B Reform of the UN Security Council

The composition of the UN Security Council has largely remained unchanged since the establishment of the UN, even amid significant changes to the structure of the international community and diversification of the UN's functions today. In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, a resolution that deplores the aggression by Russia and calls for the withdrawal of Russian troops 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 function effectively in response to situations such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine. There is a broadly shared view among the international community that an early reform of the UN Security Council is necessary to make the body more legitimate, effective, and representative.

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 an early 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 (IGN) on UN Security Council reform. Eight meetings took place during the 78th session of the UN General Assembly, between December 2023 and June 2024. During the 78th session, concrete discussions were held on the reform model (various proposals on the allocation of seats or on veto, including the G4 model or Africa model, by Member States/groups, and other details) through the initiative of the joint chairs of IGN on Security Council Reform, with the support of the Member States. In October, Philemon Yang, President of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly, reappointed the Permanent Representatives of the State of Kuwait and of Austria as Co-Chairs of the IGN. As they continue with the work from the 78th session, the spotlight will be placed on how future discussions will progress.

"Pact for the Future," the outcome document of the Summit of the Future held at the UN General Assembly in September, was the first concrete, leaders' level outcome document on UN Security Council reforms, and it provided impetus for advancing initiatives going forward. Examples of the outcomes include: (a) mention of the "urgent" need for UN Security Council reform;



Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries on UN Security Council Reform (September 23, New York, U.S.)



SPECIAL  
FEATUREThe Role of the Panel of Experts for the UN Security Council  
1718 Sanctions Committee

## ■ Activities of the Panel of Experts

The Panel of Experts (PoE) for assisting the UN Security Council 1718 Sanctions Committee was established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009). Since then, the PoE has monitored and published reports on cases of UN sanctions violations and evasions, including North Korea's nuclear and missile development, foreign currency acquisition through the dispatch of workers overseas, cryptocurrency thefts carried out through cyberattacks, and illicit transactions through ship-to-ship transfers.<sup>1</sup>

Every report needs to be signed by all eight PoE members before its publication. The PoE discusses draft reports in July and January each year, and former PoE members have said that discussions often become heated during this process. The reports adopted by consensus in the Security Council after these discussions have pointed out examples of activities that violate or evade the relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as the countries, organizations, and individuals involved in such activities. UN Member States have referred to this information in their domestic efforts toward ensuring full implementation of Security Council resolutions, and have maintained and strengthened UN sanctions on North Korea accordingly.

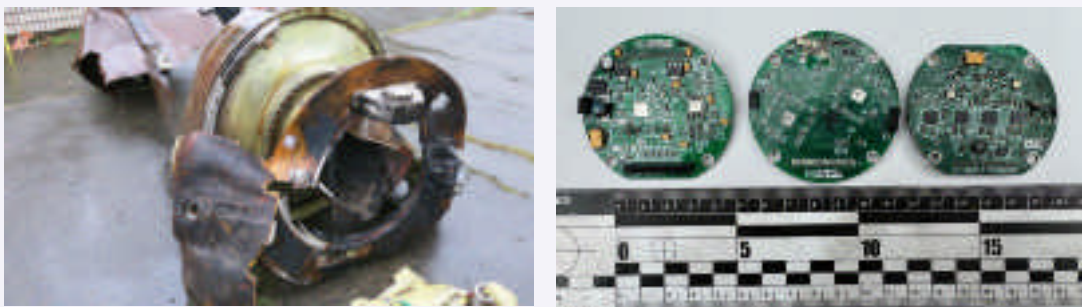
## ■ Activities Terminated due to Exercise of Veto by Russia

Reports by the PoE in recent years contain the cases regarding the transfer of military supplies from North Korea to Russia. However, in late March 2024, Russia exercised its veto on the draft Security Council resolution regarding the extension of the mandate of the PoE, which led to the end of 15 years of the PoE's activities at the end of April.

A former member of the PoE commented that despite the mounting piles of cases to be investigated, they have worked to the very end with a strong determination to raise awareness among the public on the activities of countries, organizations, and individuals involved in violation and evasions of the UN sanctions, and to promote full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The cases under investigation included the one regarding the short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) used by Russia in its attacks against Ukraine.

## ■ Final mission: Inspection of North Korea-made SRBMs in Ukraine

In early January, it was revealed that Russia had used North Korea-made SRBMs in its attacks against Ukraine. The PoE immediately communicated to the Government of Ukraine its wish to conduct an on-site investigation, but the PoE members from Japan, the UK, and the ROK only arrived in Ukraine in mid-April, just before the activities of the PoE were due to be terminated. As its final mission, the PoE obtained information indicating that the SRBM was made by North Korea and launched from inside Russia. It submitted the findings to the Security Council, which pointed to violations of Security Council resolutions by Russia and North Korea.



Some of the parts of a North Korea-made SRBM being examined by the PoE in Ukraine  
(April, Ukraine; Photo: Former member of the PoE)

### ■ Multilateral Sanctions Monitoring Team: A new initiative to ensure implementation of UN sanctions

Although the activities of the PoE were terminated, UN Member States are still obligated to implement Security Council resolutions. In this regard, as one of the alternatives to the PoE, Japan, together with like-minded countries, established the Multilateral Sanctions Monitoring Team (MSMT) in October. Going forward, Japan continues to play a role in ensuring the effectiveness of sanctions on North Korea by cooperating with like-minded countries to support implementation of resolutions by UN Member States through the regular publication of information on violations and evasions of UN sanctions, and by utilizing existing platforms such as the Asian Export Control Seminar.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

(b) establishment of an indirect timeline for the UN Security Council reform by taking into consideration SDG 16.8, one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in international organizations by 2030; (c) calling for the development of a consolidated model based on various reform models; (d) calling for agreement on the issue of expanding seat categories, based on IGN discussions to date; (e) encouraging restraint on the use of veto in the UN Security Council.

Japan also places great importance on the initiatives of the G4 (Japan, India, Germany, and Brazil), a group that cooperates on promoting UN Security Council reform. Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries in September in conjunction with the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly. At the meeting, the participants welcomed the international community's call for urgent reform of the UN Security Council set out in “Pact for the Future,” and looking ahead to the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the UN in 2025, concurred on working with the relevant countries including Africa and the U.S. to achieve concrete progress as soon as possible. Japan will continue to work closely with many countries and persevere toward the realization of UN Security Council reform.

## (4) Organizational Aspects of the UN (Management)

### A Management

UN Secretary-General Guterres positions reforms in the management of the UN along with peace efforts and development as issues of priority, and works continuously to enhance global governance. In 2024, he proposed concrete measures for the UN to adapt to a new era, including his initiative to organize the Summit of the Future. Japan supports the objectives of the reform with the hope that the UN will fulfill its mission more effectively and efficiently.

### B Budget

The UN budget is mainly composed of the regular budget for general activities (an annual budget for the period from January to December), 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 2025 amounting to approximately 3.72 billion U.S. dollars was approved in December 2024 at the UN General Assembly. The budget for peacekeeping operations for the period of 2024-2025 amounting to approximately 5.59 billion U.S. dollars in total was approved in June 2024.

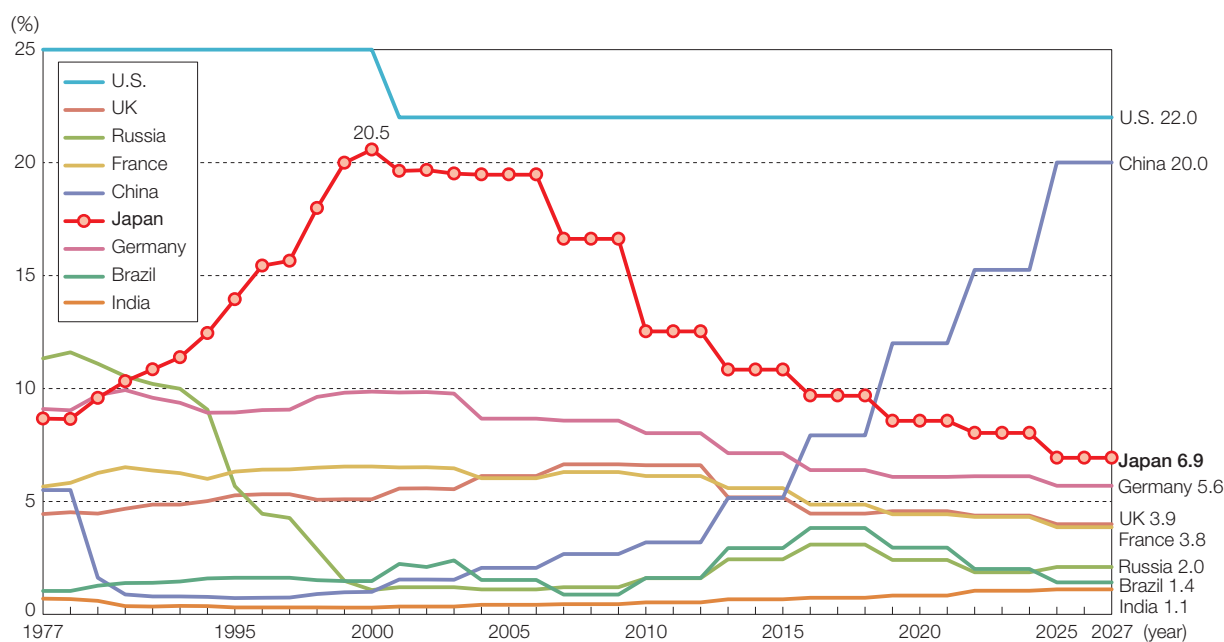
The budget to support UN activities is composed of assessed contributions mandatorily paid by Member States and voluntary contributions provided in accordance with Member States' policy needs. With regard

to assessed contributions, Japan currently ranks third following the U.S. and China. Japan contributed approximately 253.11 million U.S. dollars to the UN regular budget for 2024, and approximately 418.44 million U.S. dollars to the peacekeeping budget for 2024/25. As a major financial contributor, Japan has been encouraging the UN to make more efficient and effective use of its financial resources. The scale

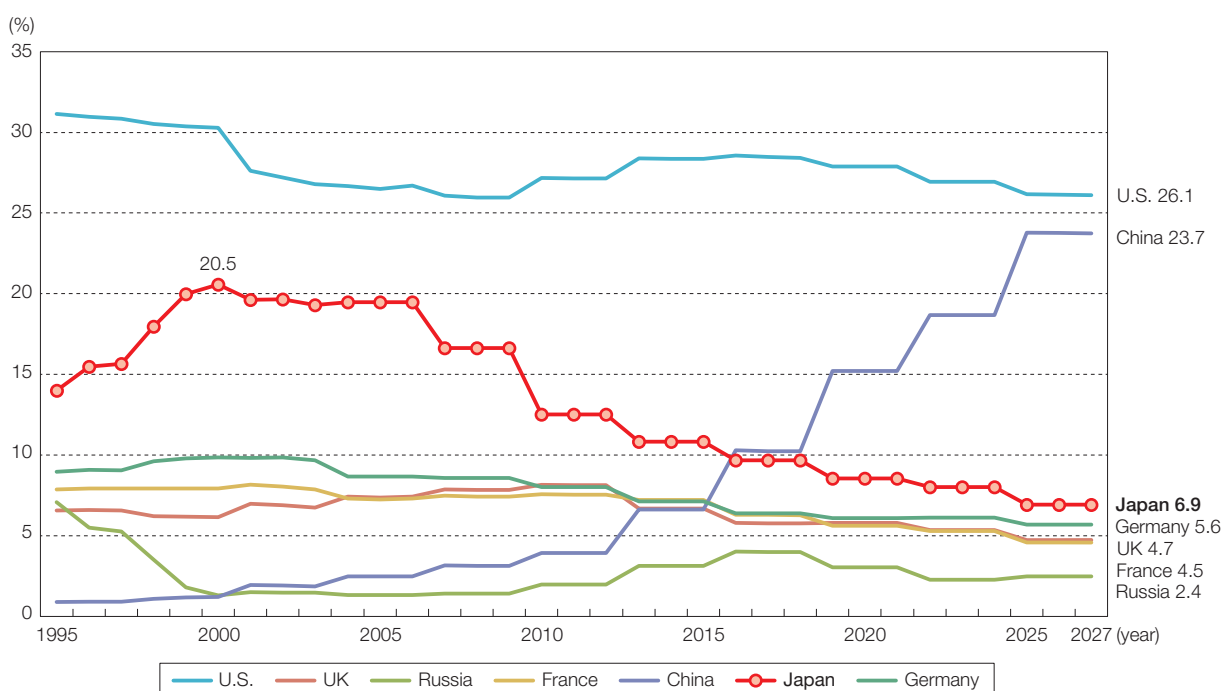
of assessments, which provides the basis for calculating the amount of assessed contributions, is revised every three years based on the capacities to pay of the Member States. Japan's scale of assessment, revised at the end of 2024, is 6.930% (2025-2027), behind the U.S. and China.

Key bodies that address administrative and budgetary matters of the UN are the Advisory Committee on

■ Trends in UN Regular Budget Scale of Assessments of Top Contributors (%)



■ Trends in UN PKO Budget Scale of Assessments of Top Contributors (%)



Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Committee on Contributions. Both 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 an essential cornerstone of a fair and just society within a country. At the same time, it contributes to peace and stability in the international community and constitutes the basis of the international order that consists of friendly and equitable relations between states. In the international community, under the rule of law, we must not allow rule by force, and all countries must observe international law in good faith, and there must be no unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion. Japan promotes strengthening of the rule of law as one of the pillars of its foreign policy and promotes rule-making in various fields as well as ensuring their proper implementation.

### (1) Japan's Diplomacy to Strengthen the Rule of Law

Japan makes use of various opportunities, including international conferences, to affirm with other States the importance of a free and open international order based on the rule of law. In addition, Japan participates actively in rule-making in various sectors, contributing to the formation and development of a new international legal order. In order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of legal order, Japan also actively cooperates with international judicial organizations to strengthen their functions via both human resource and financial contributions, and makes proactive efforts on international cooperation in relation to the rule of law by supporting the improvement of legal systems and organizing events on international law.

In light of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East, it is becoming more

important to strengthen the rule of law. In January, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held meetings with Judge Joan E. Donoghue, President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ); Judge Piotr Hofmański, President of the International Criminal Court (ICC); and Prosecutor of the ICC in The Hague (Netherlands) Karim A. A. Khan KC. She also met with Judge Tomas Heidar, President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg (Germany). Foreign Minister Kamikawa shared a sense of crisis on the current situation in the international community with its deepening divisions and confrontations, expressed Japan's unwavering support for the role that international courts play for the rule of law and human dignity, and stated that Japan will advance diplomacy comprehensively based on dialogues and cooperation, so as to strengthen the rule of law in the international community. As a part of these efforts, Japan submitted a written statement in July 2023 regarding the request for advisory opinion of ICJ on Occupied Palestinian Territory, and participated in the public sitting to deliver its oral statement in February. The statements set out Japan's views on the legal issues surrounding the principle of the prohibition on acquisition of territory by force, an important element of the rule of law in the international community. (See the Special Feature on page 251.) Concerning the request for advisory opinion for the ICJ on the Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change, Japan also submitted its written statement in March and participated in the public sitting to deliver its oral statement in December. This written statement presented Japan's basic stance on climate change measures as well as its initiatives, and set out its views on the obligations and legal consequences under international law in the area of climate change.



SPECIAL  
FEATUREAttending the Oral Proceedings for the Request for  
Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice  
(ICJ) Concerning Occupied Palestinian Territory

In December 2022, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the ICJ on “Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.” This request for an advisory opinion could hold great significance in garnering broader support on the importance of “the rule of law among nations,” as well as the “prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force,” the core element of the rule of law, which Japan has been advocating to the international community through its G7 Presidency and as a member of the Security Council. Against this backdrop, Japan participated actively in both written statements and oral proceedings to present its legal position. In general, the ICJ’s advisory opinion is not legally binding, but it carries great weight from the perspective of the rule of law, as the contents of the advisory opinion may contribute to clarifying principles and rules under international law.

Japan submitted a written statement to the ICJ in July 2023 and participated in the public sitting to deliver its oral statement in February 2024. In this process, Japan conducted intensive deliberation with the cooperation of Dapo Akande, Professor of the University of Oxford. This was the first time in 29 years that Japan participated in the oral proceedings for an advisory opinion at the ICJ, after it did so in November 1995 on the “Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.”

In its statement, Japan reiterated its basic position on the Middle East peace process and set out its views on the legal issues concerning the principle of the “prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force,” which is the core element of the rule of law. Japan addressed questions such as which territory this principle applies to, whether an action which lacks clear indication of intention for annexation could amount to acquisition of territory by force, and whether the use of force for self-defense could justify acquisition of territorial title.<sup>1</sup>

When the advisory opinion was issued in July 2024, some ICJ judges, while referring to Japan’s statements, appreciated Japan’s approach as being consistent with the main considerations in the advisory opinion. Based on this, Japan’s statements can be considered to have contributed to a certain degree to the discussions and deliberations at the ICJ. For Japan, which is facing a severe security environment including unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, it is important to continue making its voice heard, so that the importance of adhering to the principle of the “prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force,” which is a corollary of Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter that prohibits the use of force, becomes more deeply rooted in the international community.

Japan will actively engage in the efforts to promote the rule of law in the international community by continuing its contribution to the activities of the ICJ.



Japanese Delegation at the oral proceedings (February 22, the Hague, Netherlands; Photo: ICJ)

<sup>1</sup> Refers to the basis for the legitimate exercise of rights under international law

## 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<sup>(41)</sup> of the ICJ, 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. For example, Japan is a major financial contributor to the ICC and the Permanent Court

<sup>(41)</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 74 countries, including Japan, have made such declaration to date (as of February 28, 2024).

of Arbitration (PCA). In terms of human resources, a number of Japanese judges serve on international judicial bodies as of 2024, such as ICJ Judge IWASAWA Yuji (incumbent since 2018), Judge HORINOUCI Hidehisa to ITLOS (incumbent since 2023), and ICC President AKANE Tomoko (ICC judge since 2018 and elected as the President of ICC in March 2024). Also, Japan strives to enhance the effectiveness and universality of international courts and tribunals. With the aim of fostering human resources capable of playing an active role in international litigations in the future, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) provides active support to Japanese nationals interning at international judicial organizations and other related organizations through the Support Program for Internships at International Courts and other International Organizations.

At the same time, in order to further strengthen its capacity in dealing with international litigations, MOFA is engaged in efforts to enhance expertise on international judicial proceedings, and to create a strong organization that can perform well in international litigation by strengthening relationships with legal experts and law firms in and outside Japan, that are mainly active in proceedings at major international courts and tribunals. In the field of economy, the importance of dispute settlements based on World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), and investment agreements has been growing in recent years. Against this backdrop, in the handling of dispute settlements under the WTO agreements and others, Japan engages in litigation work, such as preparation of written submissions, handling of evidence, and preparation and participation in oral proceedings, in close cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies as well as academic experts and practitioners specializing in international economic law both in Japan and abroad. It also advances initiatives such as analyzing case law and academic theories, and engages in dispute prevention. In these ways, Japan strives to strengthen its capacity for strategic and effective dispute settlement.

## **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, including the codification 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, ASADA Masahiko, Professor of Doshisha University and Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, serves as a member (incumbent from 2023) and is contributing to the development of international law by participating in the debates on draft articles. Japan also sends government representatives to various meetings of the HCCH, UNCITRAL and UNIDROIT, taking an active lead in the discussions. In particular, Japan has been showing its presence as a member state of UNCITRAL since the founding of the commission, such as by proposing and realizing the enlargement of the membership of UNCITRAL as well as projects in the field of dispute settlement, acceding to the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation negotiated at UNCITRAL in 2023, and being elected at the election of UNCITRAL members in 2024.

In UNIDROIT, KANDA Hideki, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, serves as chair of the Working Group on the Legal Nature of Voluntary Carbon Credits (incumbent from 2014), and contributes to leading-edge discussions on carbon credits.

## **C International Cooperation and Human Resource Development**

Japan is also actively engaged in international cooperation on the rule of law, not only to promote the rule of law in the international community, but also

to strengthen it within various countries. For example, to further develop the rule of law, Japan provides support for the development of legal systems, especially in Asian countries. It also participates constructively in the discussions and provides human and financial cooperation to the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the only inter-governmental organization in the Asia/Africa region on issues related to international law. In addition, Japan participates actively as an observer in the Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI), which examines questions related to public international law under the Council of Europe (CoE). In August, following on from 2023, MOFA organized the Tokyo International Law Seminar, a training program for practitioners in the field of international law for officials and legal experts from the Indo-Pacific region, as well as Japanese lawyers and international law scholars as an effort to foster professionals in the field of international law. As part of the Tokyo International Law Seminar, 2024 Asia Cup, an international law moot court competition for students in Asia including Japan, was also held, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes and to nurture future international lawyers and enhance exchanges among them.

## (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. Therefore, Japan has consistently advocated for the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” to be followed by every nation ((a) making and clarifying claims based on international law; (b) not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims; and (c) seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means).

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) serves as a foundation for such rule of law at sea. The Convention has been ratified by 169 countries (including some regions not officially recognized as nations by Japan; as of December 2024) including 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 (EEZ) are widely accepted among the international community, and the recognition that activities conducted on the seas ought to be carried out according to the provisions of the Convention is widely shared. 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.

To achieve the objectives of UNCLOS, several international organizations have been established based on UNCLOS. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), established in 1996, fulfills an important role in the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes and the preservation and advancement of law and order at sea. ITLOS deals with a wide range of cases, including the delimitation of maritime boundaries and the protection of the marine environment in recent years in particular, and the importance of the Tribunal has been growing. Japan attaches importance to the role played by ITLOS and has successively produced Japanese judges to ITLOS since its establishment. Former Ambassador for UNCLOS HORINOUCHI Hidehisa is currently serving as a judge (nine-year term starting from October 2023).

The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) plays an important role in the operation of the system for establishing the outer limits of the continental shelf. Since its establishment, 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 is YAMAZAKI Toshitsugu, Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo and Guest Professor at Kochi University (term ends on June 15, 2028)). In the International Seabed Authority (ISA) established for the primary purpose of administering mineral resources in the Area (international deep seabed zone), during the Council's Session held twice in 2024, deliberations were held on regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area. Japan participates actively in negotiations to ensure that its position is reflected in the regulations. Japan has consistently

served on the ISA's Council since its establishment and was re-elected at the Assembly convened in August (for a new four-year term from January 2025).

Concerning the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) adopted in June 2023 (yet to enter into force as of December 2024), a Preparatory Commission was established in June to prepare for the convening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement. Japan participates actively in the activities of the Preparatory Commission from the position of emphasizing the balance between conservation and sustainable use.

### **(3) Initiatives in the Political and Security Fields**

Japan is actively engaged in concluding international agreements in the political and security field in order to strengthen its legal basis for diplomatic activities. Regarding the Reciprocal Access Agreements (RAA) that establish procedures when the defense force of one country conducts activities while visiting another country as well as define the status of the visiting force, Japan announced the start of negotiations with France in May, and signed an agreement with the Philippines in July.

With regard to Agreements concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services ("Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements," or ACSA), which establish a framework such as the settlement procedures for the reciprocal provision of supplies and services between the Self-Defense Forces and the military forces of other countries, Japan's ACSA with Germany entered into force in July, while negotiations with Italy commenced in June that led to the signing of an agreement in November.

In addition to these, Japan has also further advanced efforts to conclude Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, which set out provisions on the handling of defense equipment and technologies to be transferred, as well as Agreements on the Security of Information, which serve as the basis for sharing classified information on security with the relevant countries.

With regard to Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, the agreement signed with the United Arab Emirates in May 2023 entered into force in January, while an agreement was signed with Mongolia in December. Japan also announced the start of negotiations on an agreement with Finland in December. As for Information Security Agreements, Japan reached an agreement in principle in negotiations with New Zealand in June, and also signed an agreement with Ukraine in November.

### **(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 remain 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 has negotiated and signed or concluded 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.

With regard to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the Protocol on the Accession of the United Kingdom to the CPTPP entered into force in December, and it participated actively in discussions toward the General Review of the CPTPP. As for the Japan-EU EPA, the Protocol Amending the Agreement, including provisions on the free flow of data, entered into force in July. The Protocol Amending the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia for an Economic Partnership was also signed in August.

Furthermore, Japan, with a view to protecting and enhancing the livelihoods and activities of Japanese citizens and companies, is utilizing the dispute settlement system of the WTO and other means to ensure the proper implementation of existing international agreements.

In social areas such as human rights, labor, social security, environment, health, fisheries, aviation, and



culture, 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 social security sector, the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of Austria on Social Security was signed in January, along with the conclusion of the Agreement between Japan and the Italian Republic on Social Security during the same month. In the aviation sector, the Japan-Czech Republic Air Services Agreement and the Japan-Luxembourg Air Services Agreement was each signed in February and in June. In the cultural sector, the Japan-Italy Film Co-production Agreement was concluded 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 15% of the entire assessed contributions to the Court as of 2024. Moreover, Japan has consistently produced judges since its accession to the ICC, and Judge 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) was elected as the President of the ICC in March. Japan also cooperates on the activities of the ICC in the aspect of human resources, with YAMADA Jun, Deputy Secretary-General of the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) elected as a member of Committee on Budget and Finance, among others. In the ICC's work to promote the rule of law in the international community, it is becoming increasingly important 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 through fora such as the working groups of the Assembly of States Parties. In February 2025, the U.S. announced sanctions on ICC officials. Japan has consistently supported the ICC from a position that places importance on ICC conducting its activities safely while maintaining its independence.

Furthermore, to address cross-border crimes, Japan is further working on ensuring judicial cooperation in criminal matters, such as providing necessary evidence for other countries. 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>(42)</sup> the Treaty on Extradition,<sup>(43)</sup> and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.<sup>(44)</sup> In January, Japan and Brazil signed the MLAT.

## 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 is the foundation for peace and stability in the international community. Japan recognizes that human rights are universal values and that the protection of human rights is the basic responsibility of all countries,

regardless of differences in the method of achieving this goal and their cultures. While 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 of each country through bilateral dialogues and cooperation with countries that are working

<sup>(42)</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>(43)</sup> A legal framework having comprehensive and detailed provisions regarding the extradition of criminals to enable more effective cooperation for repressing crime.

<sup>(44)</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.

toward democratization and the protection of human rights. In addition, while advocating the standpoint of bridge-building in Asia and protection of 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. With regard to bilateral dialogues, Japan and the U.S. launched the new Japan-U.S. Strategic Dialogue on Democratic Resilience in 2023, and the second session of this dialogue took place in March 2024. In this dialogue, the two sides discussed their collaboration in international fora, and also exchanged views on the promotion of an inclusive society and women's empowerment, as well as the improvement of democratic resilience in the international community and within each country.

### **(1) Initiatives within the UN**

#### **A UN Human Rights Council**

The Human Rights Council holds sessions throughout the year in Geneva (three regular sessions per year) to discuss issues and make recommendations concerning the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Japan has served as a member of the Council for five terms until 2023. Most recently, it was elected in the election of the Human Rights Council members held in October 2023 and serves on the Council for the term from January 2024 to December 2026 (sixth term).

At the high-level segment of the 55th Session of the Human Rights Council held in February and March (a meeting of the key representatives from each country), Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs FUKAZAWA Yoichi delivered a statement. He stressed that it was important for the international community to continue dialogue and cooperation amid the increasingly dire circumstances facing many people in countries across the globe, including in Ukraine and the Middle East including the Gaza Strip. He also spoke about Japan's continued determination to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in Asia and the world, and stressed the importance of the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. Furthermore, he expressed Japan's deep concerns over the human rights situation in China, including

the situation in Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and urged China to take concrete actions. He also introduced Japan's latest initiatives, including the promotion of respect for human rights in corporate activities under its National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, and initiatives on gender issues led by Japan as Chair of the G7. The resolution on the Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at the same session (adopted for 17 consecutive years). This resolution strongly demands again that North Korea sincerely listen to the victims and their families, clarify the fate and whereabouts of disappeared persons, and faithfully provide accurate, detailed, and full information promptly to the families of victims, and in particular, realize the immediate return of all Japanese abductees.

#### **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 79th session of the General Assembly, the resolution on the Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at a session of the Third Committee in November and at a plenary session of the UN General Assembly in December (adopted for the 20th consecutive year). The resolution reiterated the urgency and importance of the abductions issue, which involves a serious violation of human rights, and of the immediate return of all abductees, as they and their family members are ageing and there is no time to lose, and also strongly demands again that North

Korea sincerely listen to the voices of the victims and their families, faithfully provide accurate, detailed, and full information to their families on their fates and whereabouts, and, in particular, realize the immediate return of all Japanese abductees. At the same session, Australia, on behalf of 15 countries, delivered a joint statement expressing concern about the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and serious concern about credible reports detailing human rights abuses in Tibet. Japan was the only participating country from Asia.

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 countries such as Syria, Iran, and Myanmar, as well as on various human rights issues that include social development and the rights of the child.

### **C Implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights**

In response to the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)” endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council, Japan has been promoting respect for human rights in the context of business activities. These include the Government of Japan’s formulation of the NAP on Business and Human Rights in 2020 and the cross-industry Guidelines on Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains in 2022, as well as its decision on a government policy on human rights consideration in public procurement in April 2023. At the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Policy Promotion for the Implementation of Japan’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights held in May 2024, a decision was made to commence work on revising the NAP with the approaching deadline in FY2025, and revision work is currently ongoing (as of the end of 2024). Furthermore, MOFA carries out publicity and promotional activities through seminars targeting companies in Japan and overseas, and cooperates with international organizations, mainly in countries where Japanese enterprises are operating, to provide support to local governments on the formulation and implementation of National Action Plans, to conduct training for Japanese companies and their suppliers in these countries. MOFA, in cooperation

with the relevant ministries and agencies, will steadily implement the NAP and revise it going forward, while continuing to engage in dialogues with stakeholders.

### **D Summit for Democracy**

In March, the Republic of Korea hosted the third Summit for Democracy, and Prime Minister Kishida participated in the Leaders’ Plenary held in online format. Prime Minister Kishida explained Japan’s stance and initiatives to protect democracy and promote human rights in the world, from the standpoint of emphasizing universal values, including democracy.

### **E 1st Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children, held in Colombia**

In November, the 1st Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children was held in Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, in which Japan participated. In addition to explaining Japan’s initiatives toward eradicating abuse and sexual violence against children, Japan endorsed the Bogotá Call to Action, which was adopted as the outcome document of the conference.

### **(2) Initiatives Concerning International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

#### **A International Human Rights Law (IHRL)**

In June, the election of the members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held at the 17th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the UN Headquarters in New York, and Japan’s candidate, TAMON Hiroshi, was elected. He is the second member from Japan elected to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, following former member ISHIKAWA Jun (term of office from 2017 to 2020).

#### **B International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

Japan has actively been engaged in efforts to strengthen the national implementation of IHL. In September, a meeting of the National IHL Committee was held jointly with the Japanese Red Cross Society. Japan participated in the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held in October, where

it delivered a statement and made a joint pledge with the Japanese Red Cross Society regarding the importance of strengthening the promotion of IHL. As part of its efforts to raise awareness of IHL, Japan, as it does every year, dispatched its officials to serve as judges in the IHL Moot Court and Role-Play Competitions in December, organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

### **(3) Contribution to Refugee Issues**

From the perspective of international contribution and humanitarian aid, Japan became the first country in Asia to accept refugees in 2010 under a resettlement program (the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to a third country that agrees to accept them for long-term settlement). Japan has been accepting

refugees from Thailand until 2014 and from Malaysia since 2015. As of the end of 2024, a total of 323 refugees from 133 households have arrived in Japan.

Refugees arriving in Japan undergo a six-month training program, which includes language studies for daily life and employment support services. Those who have completed the training program live independently in their respective areas of resettlement. Initially, local governments in the Tokyo Metropolitan area played a central role in operations concerning the resettlement of refugees. However, from the perspective of promoting national understanding of the refugee issue, active efforts have been made to resettle refugees in municipalities outside the Tokyo Metropolitan area since 2018.

## **8 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has been ongoing since 2022, as well as the situation in the Gaza Strip since October 2023, have seriously affected women and girls in particular, as represented by the increase in the number of reports on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). Furthermore, large-scale natural disasters such as typhoons, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, and large fires, caused by climate change, are occurring frequently around the world regardless of the country, and there are growing anxieties about health-care, food, and energy. These problems further highlight existing gender inequalities. For this reason, it is necessary to prioritize the realization of gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment as one of the most important issues for peace and prosperity in Japan and the world. It is vital to focus on various policies and measures for women and girls in order to realize a more peaceful and prosperous society. Gender mainstreaming, which is to incorporate the gender perspective into all policies, is becoming increasingly important in the international community. In particular, it is important to adapt the perspective of "Women, Peace and Security" (WPS), the foundational concept that the international community has a better chance to achieve sustainable peace by the equal and full participation of women in all stages of decision-making

leading up to post-conflict peacebuilding.

The Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2024, which serves as the basis for Japan's budget, covered WPS for the second consecutive year since 2023. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) established a task force in January under the Minister for Foreign Affairs in January to promote WPS across MOFA by using every available tool, including ODA. Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of gender equality including WPS, and the promotion of women's empowerment by hosting international conferences on women, vigorously supporting developing countries through development assistance as well as international cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

### **(1) G7**

The Apulia G7 Leaders' Communique issued at the G7 Apulia Summit held in June 2024 reaffirmed commitment to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity, through full, equal, and meaningful participation in all spheres of society. It also set out the recommitment to preventing and addressing hate and discrimination, and to eliminating sexual and gender-based violence, including that facilitated by technology and trafficking



in persons. Furthermore, the leaders reiterated their commitment in the Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué to universal access to adequate, affordable, and quality health services for women, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, and to collectively increase ODA for gender equality. In October, the Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment was held in Matera.

## (2) G20

The Empowerment of Women Working Group (EWWG) was convened for the first time after the decision to launch the Working Group was made under India's G20 Presidency in 2023. The Chair's Statement on the G20 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Ministerial Meeting, held in Brasilia in October, reflected the concept of WPS by recognizing the role of women as agents of peace. Furthermore, the Leaders' Declaration issued at the G20 Rio de Janeiro Summit in November recognized that the participation and leadership of women in all sectors and at all levels of the economy is crucial to the growth of global GDP, condemned every form of discrimination against women and girls, and confirmed the commitment to end gender-based violence including sexual violence, and combat misogyny online and offline. It also declared the leaders' commitment to implementing the G20 Roadmap Towards and Beyond the Brisbane Goal, formulated in 2021, and expressed that they look forward to developing proposals with a view to establishing new G20 commitments for the post-2025 period, in particular regarding closing the gender pay gap.

## (3) International Cooperation for the Empowerment of Women in Developing Countries

Through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (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 Global Education Summit held in July 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi announced in his video message that Japan will provide education support of more than 1.5 billion U.S. dollars over a five-year period, and support the provision of opportunities for quality education and human resource development to at least 7.5 million girls in developing countries. These efforts are now ongoing. Consistent with the concept of "investment in people" described in Japan's Development Cooperation Charter (Cabinet decision in 2023), Japan will continue to promote cooperation on efforts in the education sector while also taking into consideration the perspectives of providing quality education, building capacity for women, children, and youths, and securing educational opportunities under situations of conflict and disaster.

### B Supporting Women Through JICA

To promote the economic empowerment of women, Japan has conducted training in Japan based on the theme of promoting business and entrepreneurship among women, attended by participants from nine countries in Africa. It has also provided support for promoting entrepreneurship and business among women in Sri Lanka. To promote peace and security for women, it also provides support to strengthen coordination as well as the capacity of organizations involved in addressing trafficking in persons in the Mekong region. Furthermore, in Kenya and Pakistan, Japan has conducted training with participants from 14 countries on the themes of cooperation aimed at protecting the survivors of gender-based violence and supporting them to gain independence, and eradicating sexual and gender-based violence.

### C Approach to Sexual Violence in Conflict

Sexual violence as tactics of war is a problem that cannot be overlooked. It is vital to put an end to impunity and to support victims. Japan has been actively working in this field to eliminate human rights violations against women 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 (OSRSG-SVC), and

participation in discussions at international fora. In 2024, Japan provided financial support of approximately 0.66 million U.S. dollars to the OSRSG-SVC, providing various services including access to health-care and justice to victims, improving livelihoods, and providing training on prevention in the regions, with the aim of protecting refugees and internally displaced women in Sudan from sexual and gender-based violence, as well as preventing such violence. In the same year, Japan contributed an additional 2 million Euros to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF), founded by 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureates Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad, bringing Japan's total contributions to 10 million Euros by 2024 (as of December 31, 2024). As a member of the board, Japan is also actively involved in the management of GSF. 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 Women, Peace and Security (WPS)**

Japan is strongly promoting WPS as one of its major diplomatic policies. WPS is an idea that the international community has a better chance to achieve sustainable peace by the equal and full participation of women in all stages of decision-making, from the protection of women and girls in conflict and conflict prevention to peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding. It was first stipulated in the UN Security Council resolution 1325 adopted in 2000.

Since assuming her position, Foreign Minister Kamikawa has taken a wide range of approaches to roll out initiatives for promoting WPS, and used various opportunities, including at bilateral and multilateral fora, to bring up WPS and call for cooperation with international efforts. In January, the cross-organizational Taskforce on WPS was established within MOFA, developing a cross-sectoral system to promote WPS. In

February, a WPS Session was convened as part of the Japan-Ukraine Conference for Promotion of Economic Growth and Reconstruction. At this Session, Foreign Minister Kamikawa introduced Japan's WPS-related efforts in support of Ukraine, and engaged in discussions on WPS efforts and challenges in Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction from the perspectives of government, business, and civil society. Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Nigeria in April, where she attended an exchange of opinions and a working lunch on WPS. She exchanged views with senior officials including women from international organizations and internally displaced women, who are working at the forefront of peacebuilding in North-East Nigeria, and listened to explanations of WPS efforts by international organizations in North-East Nigeria and the positive impact that Japan's support has on improving the status of women. During the UN General Assembly High-level Week in September, Foreign Minister Kamikawa delivered a statement at the WPS Focal Points Network<sup>(45)</sup> High-Level Side Event, and announced that Japan, together with Norway, will be serving as co-chairs of the WPS Focal Point Network in 2025.

For Japan to elevate WPS to the next level, and from the perspective that it is important to listen to the opinions of experts on the frontlines and from different sectors, Foreign Minister Kamikawa launched the policy forum, "WPS+I (Women, Peace, and Security + Innovation) symposium," and in February, participated in an exchange of opinions in Rio de Janeiro with Erika Takimoto, Member of the State Assembly of Rio de Janeiro, Joyce Trindade, Director of the Women's Advancement Promotion Bureau of the City of Rio de Janeiro, Suzana Kahn, Dean of Engineering Department of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and Silvana Nagai, judo instructor. In March, a meeting entitled "WPS + Innovation from the United Nations" was held in New York, where she engaged in a lively discussion with Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN Women, Ambassador Merete Brattested, Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN, NAKAMITSU Izumi, UN Under-Secretary-General

<sup>(45)</sup> WPS Focal Point Network is the largest WPS-related network among UN Member States, and lessons drawn as well as good practices are shared within the network. In addition to governments, regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) also participate. As of December 2024, there are a total of 103 members, including 93 countries and 10 regional organizations.

and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Ambassador Melanne Verwee, Executive Director of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, on the progress regarding WPS in the Security Council and others in recent years, as well as the need to protect women in conflicts and greater participation by women in various fields. Similarly in March, during an exchange of views with 19 female Ambassadors to Japan held at the Embassy of Mexico in Tokyo, the Ambassadors made remarks on women's participation and gender policies including WPS in their countries, as well as their own experiences from a woman's perspective, and exchanged candid views on the possible manners of cooperation with Japan.

In line with the Third Edition of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2023-2028) (an action plan toward implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and the related resolutions) revised in 2023, Japan contributes to international organizations such as UN Women and OSRSG-SVC, and implements WPS projects in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

### **B Cooperation with UN Women**

Japan strengthened its cooperation with UN Women and increased its contribution from approximately 2 million U.S. dollars (2013) to 20 million U.S. dollars (2024). In particular, for women and girls in developing countries, Japan is implementing projects related to WPS, such as capacity building to participate in the peacebuilding and reconstruction processes. It is also working on the economic empowerment of women such as livelihood and entrepreneurship support, and support for women victims of gender-based violence. Japan also supports women's economic empowerment through providing daily necessities to women and girls who have been affected by conflict and natural disasters, and job creation and vocational training.

### **C United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

The 68th session of CSW (CSW68) convened in March was held as an in-person meeting following up from 2023. At the meeting, discussions were held on the priority theme of “accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.” Minister in Charge of Women's Empowerment and Minister of State for Gender Equality, KATO Ayuko, delivered a video message at the General Discussion on behalf of Japan. In her message, she explained Japan's complex and multifaceted approaches toward realizing gender equality in society, including economic independence for women. In addition, OSAKI Asako (Director of Gender Action Platform, a specified nonprofit corporation) delivered a statement at the Ministerial Roundtable on behalf of Japan. In her statement, she introduced Japan's initiatives, including domestic policies to promote the economic independence of women, and poverty reduction support implemented through international cooperation for women in and outside Japan.

### **D Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

Since 1987, Japan has continued sending committee members to the CEDAW (comprising 23 members (individual capacity)). In October, a review was conducted in Geneva (Switzerland) on the Ninth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (submitted in September 2021). The government delegation, consisting of representatives from the relevant ministries and agencies and headed by Director General Okada of the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office, explained the status of implementation in each area since the Ninth Periodic Report.<sup>(46)</sup>

<sup>(46)</sup> For Comments from Japan on the Concluding Observations on the ninth periodic report of Japan, see MOFA's website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100773663.pdf>

