

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's aggression against Ukraine, which began in February 2022, is also ongoing. 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 and cross-border cyberattacks on critical civilian infrastructures are occurring. Furthermore, information warfare in the cognitive domain through information manipulation, including the spread of disinformation, etc., is constantly taking place. As the boundary between contingency and peacetime has become increasingly blurred, 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, addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, as well as

international terrorism, continues 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 the new "National Security Strategy" decided at the National Security Council and by cabinet decision in December 2022, while a wide range of security measures were set forth (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), diplomatic capability was established first among the main elements of comprehensive national power for Japan's national security. Based on this Strategy, 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, as also noted in the "National Security Strategy," 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 2024, 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 United Kingdom (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 2024.

Furthermore, Official Security Assistance (OSA) was established in 2023, providing equipment and supplies as well as assistance for infrastructure development to the armed forces and related organizations of like-minded countries. The number of partner countries have been expanded, with a primary focus on the Indo-Pacific region, and Japan has decided to provide assistance to 10 countries by the end of 2025.

Regarding cybersecurity, while intelligence collection and analysis capabilities have been strengthened, the Cyber Response Capability Strengthening Act and Necessary Arrangement of Relevant Acts, which enable the introduction of Active Cyber Defense, were enacted and promulgated in May 2025. Based on these laws, the public and private sectors will work together to detect and respond to cyberattacks more promptly and effectively, and it will become possible to implement remote access and neutralization measures to prevent serious harm from cyberattacks.

(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 2024, Japan escorted the U.S. Forces and other troops a total of 150 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, cooperation has been deepening not only with the U.S. but with various countries. Going forward, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) will also make efforts to maintain and develop diplomatic relations that contribute to the further advancement of mutual cooperation with each country, in order to secure 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 and complex 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.

In February, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Washington, D.C. and 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 of Mutual Cooperation and Security applies to the Senkaku Islands.

In October, Prime Minister Takaichi held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Trump, who was visiting Japan. The two leaders concurred to advance a broad range of security cooperation in order to further enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Prime Minister Takaichi stated that she has consistently emphasized the necessity of fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities amidst the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, and that she has taken actions immediately after assuming office, and expressed her commitment to continue working on fundamentally reinforcing Japan's defense capabilities and increasing defense spending as its own initiative. President Trump stated that he knows that Japan is increasing defense capabilities very substantially. On the same day, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The two foreign ministers concurred that they would advance concrete security cooperation to further strengthen Japan-U.S. Alliance deterrence and response capabilities.

In 2025, Japan continued to engage in personnel exchanges with senior U.S. defense officials, including successive visits to Japan by Admiral William J. Houston, Director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, in January; General Eric M. Smith, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, in March; Secretary Pete Hegseth in March and October; General Randall Reed, Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command and Lieutenant General Joshua Rudd, Deputy Commander of the U.S.

Indo-Pacific Command, in June; Secretary of the Air Force Troy E. Meink in July; Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, in September; Secretary of the Army Daniel P. Driscoll in October; and Admiral Daryl Caudle, Chief of Naval Operations, in November.

Discussions on extended deterrence⁽¹⁾ through the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD) continue to be held. 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. The two governments held the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD) at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana in June.

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 the Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI). In May of the same year, Japan and the U.S. signed the Project Arrangement for the cooperative development of GPI. In the Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement issued in April 2024, 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

At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in February, the two leaders expressed their intent to expand bilateral security cooperation in cyberspace by leveraging new technologies such as artificial intelligence and secure and resilient cloud services to deepen information sharing. Subsequently, in June, the two countries held The 10th Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue. At this Cyber Dialogue, based on the necessity for whole of government efforts by both Japan and the U.S., participants had discussions on a wide range of issues regarding Japan-U.S. cooperation on cyber, including domestic cyber policies, bilateral cyber cooperation, international and regional cooperation and capacity building, and countering malicious cyber activities.

Japan and the U.S. 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 cybersecurity strategy and the cyber policies of the U.S.

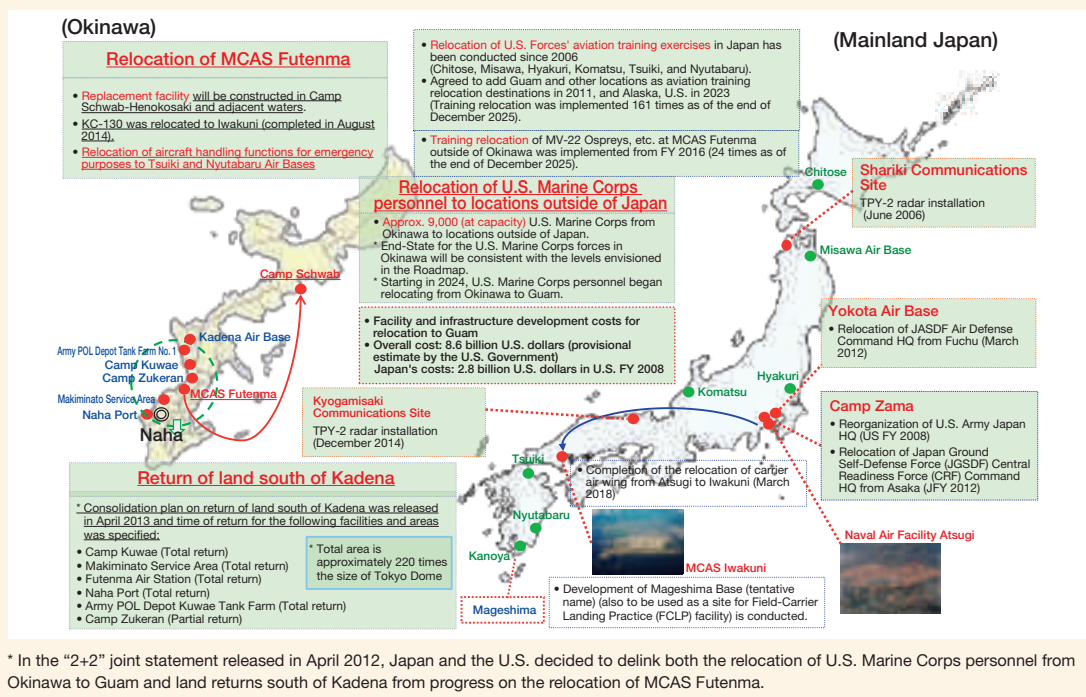
D Space

At the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (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, including through 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 a satellite constellation⁽²⁾ for

(1) 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.

(2) Satellite constellation: A system in which a large number of small artificial satellites are deployed in coordinated orbits and operated in an integrated manner.

Realignment of USFJ – An Overview



the detection and tracking of hypersonic glide vehicles (HGV) and other threats.

E Information Security

Information security plays a crucial role in advancing cooperation within the context of the Alliance. Both countries continue to hold discussions designed to enhance their cooperation regarding information security.

(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 2024, 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. 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, 2024.

In particular, with regard to the return of lands in Okinawa, in addition to the return of a major portion of the Northern Training Area (NTA, approximately 4,000 hectares) in December 2017, the return of lands has been moving forward based on the April 2013 "Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa" ("Okinawa Consolidation Plan"). The return of all areas indicated as "Immediate Return" under the Okinawa Consolidation Plan was achieved with the return of a portion of the Facilities and Engineering Compound in Camp Zukeran in March 2020. In May 2022, which marked the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, Japan and the U.S. concurred to enable the public use of the Lower Plaza Housing Area of Camp Zukeran as a greenspace, ahead of its return to Japan, and the start of general use commenced in March 2024. Moreover, at the former site of the Camp Zukeran West Futenma

Housing Area, which was returned in 2015, development of the “Okinawa Health and Medical Hub” progressed as a model case for future utilization of former base sites. In January 2025, the University of the Ryukyus Hospital relocated and opened, and in April, the Faculty of Medicine of the University of the Ryukyus was relocated and commenced operations. In addition, at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in February, the two leaders confirmed their commitment to the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan in accordance with the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, including the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko and the return of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma.

(4) Host Nation Support (HNS)

With a view to ensuring the effective operations of U.S. Forces in Japan amidst the growing severity of the security situation surrounding Japan, Japan bears a part of costs, such as the costs of Facility Improvement Programs (FIP), within the scope provided for under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). In addition, Japan has also borne the labor costs for U.S. Forces working in Japan, utilities costs, and training relocation costs, by concluding the Special Measures Agreements (SMAs) which set out special measures relating to the SOFA. Under the New SMA signed on January 7, 2022, and entered into force on April 1, it was decided that Japan will also bear the expenditures related to the procurement of training equipment and materials which will contribute, not only to the readiness of U.S. Forces in Japan but also to the enhancement of the interoperability between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the U.S. Forces. Based on the SOFA and the New SMA, the Government of Japan will bear the HNS costs from FY2022 to FY2026. In consultations on the New SMAs, as both parties concurred that the costs borne by Japan should be used to build a foundation upon which the Japan-U.S. Alliance will be further strengthened, the Japanese side decided to refer to this budget by a Japanese phrase that points to its goal of enhancing Alliance readiness and resiliency. During 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 personnel, abating the noise of U.S. Forces' aircraft, and dealing with environmental issues at U.S. Forces' facilities and areas. U.S. Forces in Japan have been steadily implementing the countermeasures against recurrence of incidents and accidents announced in July 2024. At the Japan-U.S. “2+2” convened in July of the same year, 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.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (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, MOFA 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. In addition, in Okinawa where there is a concentration of U.S. Forces' facilities and areas, the “TOFU: Think

Column

Japan-U.S. Exchange Student Ambassadors

Approximately 170 high school and university students from Okinawa have participated to date in the “TOFU: Think of Okinawa’s Future in the United States” program, through which participants visit Tokyo, Washington, D.C., and New York and deepen mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. through exchanges of opinions with key government officials and other activities. In 2025, in order to further enhance the TOFU community, four “Japan-U.S. Exchange Student Ambassadors” were appointed from among the participants. This column introduces the voices of these “Student Ambassadors.”



Students participating in the TOFU program
(March, Washington, D.C., U.S.)

■ YASUNAGA Keiichi

Through the TOFU program, I had dialogues with experts on Japan-U.S. relations and came to understand the diverse perspectives on Okinawa and the U.S. military base issue, in particular, realizing that the matter is too complex to be treated in terms of simple pros and cons. Visiting Japanese and U.S. government institutions and experiencing the front lines of diplomacy first-hand was a powerful inspiration. Learning from diplomats the importance of understanding culture and history gave rise to my dream of contributing to the international community as a diplomat in the future. After returning from the U.S., I have been participating in base visits and student exchanges as a “Japan-U.S. Exchange Student Ambassador,” appreciating the value of cooperation that transcends borders. TOFU not only taught me the importance of confronting Japan’s challenges and forming my own opinions, but also opened the door for me to the new world of diplomacy.

■ EDA Hiro

The reason I joined the TOFU program was that I was strongly drawn to the philosophy expressed in the program’s name, “Think of Okinawa’s Future in the United States.” I felt the need to engage with Okinawa — the region closest to me — also from an outside perspective. Through the program, I had the precious opportunity to visit government institutions that I would not normally have access to, to engage in dialogue with experts on base-related issues and diplomatic challenges whom I would not ordinarily meet, and to directly ask the questions that had been on my mind. Furthermore, deepening discussions while encountering the perspectives of fellow participants from diverse backgrounds was a significant learning experience. After returning to Japan, we discussed what we ourselves could do in Okinawa and put our ideas into concrete action. Through this experience, I came to realize that dialogue and collaboration grounded in an understanding of the background form the very foundation of mutual understanding.

■ OKUMA Mitsuki

Having grown up in an environment where U.S. military bases occupy 80% of my town, I joined the TOFU program out of a desire to directly understand the realities of Japan-U.S. relations and to contribute to the future of Okinawa. As I listened to officials from both Japanese and U.S. government institutions speak about the Japan-U.S. Alliance and the current situation in Okinawa, I learned the importance of viewing matters from a global perspective and came to appreciate the significant role that “people-to-people exchanges” play in diplomacy. I was further inspired by interactions with my fellow participants, visits to local schools, and encounters with people from Okinawa who are active in various fields. In order to translate the lessons learned through training in Japan and abroad into the next steps for thinking about Okinawa’s future, I will cherish the connections built through this program and continue to consider what I can do going forward.

■ SHO Rumi

“Why can’t I go beyond the fence?” That was the first question that came to my mind back in kindergarten. It was then that I learned that Japan had lost the war to the U.S. and that, as a result, large military bases had been built in Okinawa. Until I traveled to the U.S. through the TOFU program, I had thought of the U.S. as strong and invincible. However, when I visited the Arlington National Cemetery and saw the vast grounds filled with the graves of fallen soldiers, I realized that even the victorious nation had countless war dead, and that while I had learned about my own country’s war dead, I had never before stopped to think about the sacrifice of the U.S. Thanks to this program, which offers the fresh perspective of “thinking about Okinawa’s future in the United States,” I learned that in any matter, one must never neglect the perspectives and realities of the other side.

Column

Thirty Years of “Yokosuka Community Patrol”

In Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, home to U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, of the U.S. Forces in Japan, community patrols have been conducted in the central downtown area for more than 30 years since 1994. This activity has steadily expanded its circle of participants, now involving not only local neighborhood associations but also a wide range of stakeholders. This column introduces the voice of UEDA Shigeru, Chairman of the Odaki Neighborhood Association (territorial juridical person), who has led the activity.

■ UEDA Shigeru, Chairman, Odaki Neighborhood Association, Yokosuka City

Our local community is adjacent to U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka.

In 1994, three local neighborhood associations joined forces and decided to launch night patrols as part of efforts to build a safer, more secure, and more comfortable community, with patrols held on the third Friday of every month. The main focus of the activity was greeting passers-by with words such as “Good evening, please take care.” At the outset, participation was limited to about 10 to 15 people, but we agreed that, since we were greeting people, no one should join after drinking alcohol.

In 2005, we decided to incorporate cleanup activities into the patrols. We were concerned that there might be complaints, but once we began, everyone cooperated wholeheartedly.

Around that same time, we received an offer that the U.S. Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force wished to participate as volunteers. Greater participation means greater momentum for the activity. The number of participants has grown to include the U.S. Navy, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, the Yokosuka Police Station, Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, the South Kanto Defense Bureau, the citizen volunteer group Guardian Angels, local neighborhood associations, etc, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with each patrol now drawing more than 50 participants.

At first, passers-by were surprised to see us, but they gradually came to call out to us with words like “Thank you, keep up the good work.” Through our monthly activities, various groups have become friends close enough to put their arms around each other’s shoulders, and we continue to enjoy the activities together with smiles. Greeting people and cleaning up are very straightforward activities. After the activity, it is deeply rewarding to see that the once-littered streets have been transformed into clean ones.

In the past, the then-Deputy Commander of U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka participated every single time for a full year without missing a single occasion, leading the cleanup activities from the front. He was the one who collected the largest amount during the sorting work at each patrol. When he started conducting cleanup activities around the base during his lunch breaks as well, his staff began to join him as a group. When we heard the news of his departure from Yokosuka, we spontaneously agreed to “hold a farewell party,” and each of us gathered with a gift in hand. I still remember his words: “I had a truly wonderful time engaging in activities with all of you over the past year,” and “I am a citizen of Yokosuka.”



Group photo of members who participated in Yokosuka patrol

Through this activity, I have come to know many friends. I am convinced that nurturing relationships with friends whose faces we know contributes to the peace and safety of our community. In August 2025, members of the Royal Navy and the Royal Norwegian Navy, part of the United Kingdom’s Carrier Strike Group that called at the Port of Yokosuka, also joined our activity. It was the first time that European personnel had taken part. I find it heartening that bonds of trust are steadily expanding in this way, with Yokosuka as the stage. I am convinced that it is important to carry this activity forward into the next 30 years.

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. Furthermore, at a post-visit debriefing session held in Okinawa Prefecture in April, four "Japan-U.S. Exchange Student Ambassadors" who will promote further Japan-U.S. exchange were appointed, and efforts have been made to expand the effects of the program through follow-up activities and other measures. (See the Column on page 206.)

(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 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 May, General Xavier T. Brunson (Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea) paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Iwaya. Foreign Minister Iwaya expressed that he highly values the role of the United Nations Command (UNC) and the U.S. Forces in the ROK amidst an increasingly severe security environment in the region, and that he appreciates the activities of the UNC-Rear, which supports efforts by the UN Forces, including the surveillance and monitoring activities by the UNC Sending States against illicit ship-to-ship transfers⁽³⁾, and further stated that the Japan-U.S. Alliance and the U.S.-ROK Alliance, and their strategic coordination, are indispensable for peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, and that Japan looks forward to continuously enhancing the relationship with the UNC.

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.

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

Japan and Australia concurred, at the leaders' and foreign ministerial levels, to elevate the "Special Strategic Partnership" between the two countries to even greater heights, and to continue to play a leading role in realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" as the central pillar of coordination among like-minded countries. At the 12th Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") convened in September, Japan and Australia concurred, in line with the "Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation"⁽⁴⁾ issued in 2022, on further developing cooperation to strengthen collective deterrence, and, while sharing strategic assessments, on enhancing discussions between their foreign and defense authorities on possible contingencies that may affect their sovereignty and regional security interests. Operational cooperation and joint exercises are expanding under the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) that entered into force in 2023, with over 40 activities having taken place under the RAA, including Exercise TALISMAN SABRE 2025 and Exercise ORIENT SHIELD, while defense equipment and technology cooperation is also deepening, including the selection of the Japanese upgraded Mogami-class frigate as Australia's next general-purpose frigate. With regard to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers⁽⁵⁾, with North Korea-flagged vessels prohibited by the relevant UN Security Council Resolution, the destroyer HMAS *Sydney* conducted monitoring and surveillance operations from mid- to late May, while aircraft conducted monitoring and surveillance activities from late March to mid-April and from early to mid-October.

Japan and New Zealand have concurred on strengthening the "Strategic Cooperative Partnership" across many fields including security. In December, concrete initiatives to deepen security cooperation have advanced, including the signing in Tokyo of an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and an Agreement on the Security of Information. With regard to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, Royal New Zealand Navy sustainment vessel HMNZS *AOTEAROA* conducted

monitoring and surveillance activities from early to mid-November, while aircraft conducted monitoring and surveillance activities from late April to late May and from early to late 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 security, in order to further develop the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." In August, Prime Minister Ishiba held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was visiting Japan, during which the two leaders concurred on revising the "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India" announced in 2008, and on supporting the early realization of the transfer of "Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN)" to the Indian Navy. In addition, in order to strengthen coordination between the two countries including the building of resilient supply chains for critical materials, Japan and India launched the "Japan-India Economic Security Initiative." The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to fulfilling greater responsibilities jointly between Japan and India toward the common goal of achieving peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and in the international community at large.

With the Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan and the ROK have affirmed that they will continue strategic communication on security area to respond in coordination amid the increasingly severe strategic environment. 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. In addition, Japan is advancing further trilateral cooperation to address regional security issues, including through Freedom Edge, the multi-domain joint exercise among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK conducted for the third time in September 2025 (following June and November

(4) A document that sets out the direction for the next 10 years of Japan-Australia security cooperation, signed at the Japan-Australia Leaders' Meeting in October 2022.

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

2024), and other trilateral joint exercises (January, March, April, June, and July 2025). Furthermore, 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, and August 2025, during which the three countries reaffirmed their commitment to continue to work closely together, including in the cyber domain.

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 August, the UK's Carrier Strike Group 25 (CSG25), with the aircraft carrier *HMS Prince of Wales* as its flagship, made a port call in Japan. On that occasion, based on a request from the UK Armed Forces, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force escort vessels provided asset protection to *HMS Prince of Wales* and other vessels — the first time such protection had ever been extended to the UK Armed Forces. In September, Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-15 fighter aircraft and others made their first-ever visit to the UK, further advancing cooperation through mutual asset deployments by both countries. With regard to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers, the patrol vessel *HMS Spey* conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in early June, and the frigate *HMS Richmond* — a vessel that formed part of CSG25 — conducted monitoring and surveillance operations from early to mid-September. In June, EdgeWing, a joint venture company responsible for the airframe design and development of the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) being jointly developed by Japan, the UK, and Italy, was established in the UK.

With France, which is Japan's "Exceptional Partnership" partner, the track record of the Japan-France Foreign and Defence Ministers' Meeting ("2+2"), the Japan-France Cyber Dialogue, port calls by frigates, and joint exercises continues to accumulate. At the Japan-France Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Paris in May, the two foreign ministers highly valued Japan-France security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and concurred on continuing to work closely together. At the Japan-France Foreign Ministers'

Meeting held in November, they reconfirmed cooperation as "Exceptional Partners" sharing values and principles. Furthermore, at the Japan-France leaders' exchange of views held in the same month, based on the recognition that the security of Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable, the two leaders concurred that Japan and France, as "Exceptional Partners" sharing values and principles, will continue to cooperate closely across all areas including security, economy, economic security, and space. In addition, with regard to illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers, French Armed Forces vessels conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in mid-February and late October, and aircraft conducted monitoring and surveillance operations from mid-October to mid-November.

With Germany, the Japan-Germany Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) entered into force in July 2024, and in the same year, asset deployments and joint exercises took place between the two countries. In September 2025, Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-15 fighter aircraft and others made their first-ever visit to Germany, further advancing cooperation through asset deployments. Both Japan and Germany welcomed these advances in cooperation, and through the Japan-Germany Summit Meeting on the occasion of the G7 Kananaskis Summit in June, the meeting between Prime Minister Ishiba and President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in the same month, the 1st Japan-Germany Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue in August, and the Japan-Germany Summit Meeting on the occasion of the G20 Johannesburg Summit in November, Japan and Germany concurred on further strengthening cooperation in the field of security.

With Italy, defense cooperation has advanced based on the "Japan-Italy Action Plan" announced between the leaders on the occasion of the G7 Apulia Summit in June 2024. With regard to illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers, Italian Navy frigate *Antonio Marceglia*, which made a port call in Japan from March to April, conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in late April. In September, the Japan-Italy Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), which had been signed between Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of Defense Guido Crosetto in November 2024, entered into force.

The stability and prosperity of Southeast Asia, which is located at the geopolitical nexus of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific and is becoming a “growth center” of the world, is also of extreme importance to the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region and the international community as a whole. With the Philippines, the Japan-Philippines Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) entered into force in September, and was immediately applied in October to the bilateral HA/DR exercise “Doshin-Bayanihan” conducted in the Philippines and to the transport of relief supplies by Japan Air Self-Defense Force aircraft in response to the earthquake on Cebu Island. Furthermore, in January 2026, an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) was signed. Regarding Southeast Asian countries, in addition to continuing support for enhancing maritime security capabilities of coast guard authorities — including from the perspective of ensuring the rule of law at sea — Japan is also strengthening cooperation through Official Security Assistance (OSA). Japan has already realized the delivery of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and rescue boats to Malaysia, and has also decided to provide high-speed patrol boats to Indonesia and RHIBs (rigid-hulled inflatable boats) to the Philippines. Japan is also expanding the number of partner countries in FY2025.

Canada, an important “strategic partner” in the Indo-Pacific region, announced in June its achievement of the defense expenditure target of 2% of GDP ahead of schedule — brought forward from 2032 to within FY2025. Canada also announced an additional defense expenditure of 9.3 billion Canadian dollars and increased its FY2025-26 defense-related budget to 62.7 billion Canadian dollars. Thereafter, Prime Minister of Canada Mark Carney, attending the NATO Summit held in The Hague in the same month, announced a plan to reach 5% of GDP in defense expenditure by FY2035. In Japan-Canada relations, security cooperation is steadily advancing based on the “Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) region” announced between the two countries in 2022. For example, the Japan-Canada Agreement on the Security of Information, on which Japan and Canada had been conducting negotiations, was announced to have reached agreement in principle at the Japan-Canada

Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in March 2025, was signed between Foreign Minister Anita Anand, who visited Japan in July, and Foreign Minister Iwaya, and entered into force in January 2026. Furthermore, regarding the Japan-Canada Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, agreement in principle was announced at the Japan-Canada Summit Meeting in June, and the Agreement was signed in January 2026, among other advances in deepening security cooperation between Japan and Canada. In September 2025, Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-15 fighter aircraft and others paid their first-ever visit to Canada, and, with regard to illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers, the Canadian Armed Forces dispatched naval vessels and aircraft to conduct monitoring and surveillance activities, advancing mutual cooperation between the defense authorities of Japan and Canada.

In relation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in April, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte paid his first visit to Japan since taking office and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba, during which a joint statement was issued reaffirming the strategic importance of the Japan-NATO partnership to both the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific regions. Foreign Minister Iwaya attended the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in the same month, making it the fourth consecutive year that Japan’s foreign minister has attended. At the NATO Summit in June, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a meeting with Secretary General Rutte and concurred on working together to elevate the Japan-NATO cooperation to a new height in various fields, including the launch of the Japan-NATO Dialogue on Defense Industrial Cooperation and Capability. Furthermore, at the meeting between Secretary General Rutte and Indo-Pacific Partners (IP4: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the ROK) held on the occasion of the same Summit, the participants confirmed NATO’s further engagement in the Indo-Pacific and the importance of concrete cooperation between NATO and the Indo-Pacific partners. At the telephone meeting between Prime Minister Takaichi and Secretary General Rutte in December, the two concurred on working together to elevate cooperation to a new level through concrete forms of cooperation.

The 1st Japan-EU Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue was convened in November 2024, during which the Japan-EU Security and Defence Partnership was released, making Japan the first country in the Indo-Pacific region to announce the Partnership with the EU. In April 2025, the 2nd Japan-EU Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue was convened, at which Foreign Minister Iwaya and High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas reaffirmed their shared recognition that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable, and concurred on strengthening concrete cooperation and dialogue in areas such as the defence industry, maritime security, cyber, space, and responses to hybrid threats.

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, by vessels belonging to the China Coast Guard, 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) 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. Furthermore, Japan signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on cybersecurity with Jordan in November 2025. In addition, 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 2025.

In addition to the above, Japan has actively participated in and contributed to multilateral frameworks in the region, in particular the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), which are regional cooperative frameworks in which ASEAN plays a central role, 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 32nd ARF Ministerial Meeting was held, and the participants exchanged views mainly on regional and international affairs, including the East China Sea and South China Sea, Taiwan, North Korea, and Myanmar. 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 Cybersecurity.

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) 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: promoting the rule of law, taking measures to deter attacks, providing capacity building support to like-minded countries, and leveraging cyber consultations and other forms of dialogue with relevant countries and organizations for information exchange and policy coordination related to these efforts.

As an initiative to promote the rule of law, 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, in 2015, adopted the UN norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace,⁽⁶⁾ which set 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 participated 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. At the final session held in July 2025, the application of international law, including the UN Charter, to cyberspace was reaffirmed, and the final report — including the future mechanism following the conclusion of the OEWG — was adopted by consensus. In December, a UN General Assembly resolution endorsing this report was adopted by consensus. 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,⁽⁷⁾ and has been emphasizing the importance of clarifying basic positions through various venues.

As an initiative to deter attacks, Japan has carried out “public attribution,” which is to publicly condemn or express concerns about groups conducting cyberattacks. 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, and in August, Japan joined — as one of 13 national authorities including Japan and the U.S. — in co-signing and releasing an international advisory prepared by the U.S. that technically describes the attack methods of the cyberattack group commonly known as “Salt Typhoon,” working with allies and like-minded countries to advance such efforts.

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, and based on this thinking that doing so contributes to protecting the security of the world as a whole including Japan, relevant ministries and agencies, including MOFA, are engaged in capacity building support with a focus on ASEAN, which is a cornerstone for realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” based on the rule of law, including through initiatives via international organizations. Specifically, Japan conducts training at the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC), provides training programs and

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

(7) See the MOFA's website for Japan's position:
https://warp.ndl.go.jp/web/20240702061609/https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page3e_001114.html

(7)



equipment through 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 cyber consultations and other forms of dialogue with relevant countries and organizations is of utmost importance in advancing these initiatives in cyberspace. Japan is promoting international cooperation through cyber consultations and dialogues with many countries and regions, and in 2025, held inter-governmental consultations in frameworks including Japan-U.S., Japan-Australia, Japan-U.S.-ROK, and Japan-Brazil. 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. In addition, Japan also participates actively in discussions within the International Counter Ransomware Initiative, a multi-lateral framework for combating the rapidly growing threat of ransomware,⁽⁸⁾ 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.

(3) Maintaining and Developing the International Maritime Order

Japan is a maritime nation surrounded by the sea on all four sides, blessed with long coastlines and a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which 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, drawing on the Fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy formulated in April 2023 and the Ocean Development Strategy formulated in April 2024, 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 and other areas. In cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries, Japan is advancing efforts to realize FOIP and, in particular, working 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 tension arising from friction between countries over issues surrounding the seas. In this context, at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) convened in March 2023, Prime Minister Kishida reaffirmed the importance of the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea,” which Prime Minister Abe set out in 2014, in his introduction to 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, page 24.) In particular, Japan has been reaffirming the importance of the maritime order with its ally and like-minded countries at every level, and at the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in Charlevoix, Canada in March 2025, the “G7 Foreign Ministers’ Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity” was issued.

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 the maritime order governed by the rule of law. Japan regards the maritime

⁽⁸⁾ Cyberattacks carried out for ransom purposes.

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 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 6(2), page 255.)

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), page 45.)

In the East China Sea, the number of days China Coast Guard vessels navigating in the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands reached a record high of 357 days in 2025, and in March the number of hours of intrusion into the territorial sea reached a record of 92 hours and 8 minutes. In addition, incidents in which China Coast Guard vessels that intruded into the territorial sea and approached Japanese fishing boats have occurred repeatedly, and, as evident when in May an incident occurred in which a helicopter carried by a China Coast Guard vessel violated Japanese airspace, the situation remains severe. The Chinese military is also becoming increasingly active and expanding their operations, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in the waters of and the air above the East China Sea, and China has been continuing with unilateral resource development in areas where the EEZ and the continental shelf have not yet been delimited. Additionally, in recent years, Japan has found research projects being frequently conducted by China in the EEZ surrounding Japan, such as the East China Sea, without Japan's consent.

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 ASEAN Japan Summit Meeting in October, Prime Minister Takaichi stated that in the East China Sea, activities that infringe upon Japan's sovereignty as well as provocative military activities continue and are intensifying.

D Response to Challenges to Maritime Order in the South China Sea (See Chapter 2, Section 2, 7(2), page 92.)

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. In particular, since 2023, collisions between Chinese vessels and coastal state vessels and use of water cannons by Chinese vessels have frequently occurred. In 2025, incidents involving Scarborough Shoal, Sabina Shoal, and Thitu Island resulted in damage to Philippine vessels including fishing vessels, as well as injuries to multiple crew members. Furthermore, in September, China unilaterally designated a "nature reserve" around Scarborough Shoal and declared the enhancement of its supervision and law enforcement capacity against "all illegal activities" in the vicinity, attempting to legitimize its actions in the South China Sea.

Issues regarding the South China Sea are directly related to the peace and stability of the region and constitute a legitimate concern of the international community as a whole, not only for the parties to the dispute. The peace and stability of the South China Sea, which is an important sea lane, as well as the upholding of the rule of law at sea, are important for Japan, which relies heavily on maritime transport for much of its resources and energy. From this perspective, Japan has strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion and any actions that increase tensions in the South China Sea, and has consistently emphasized the importance of all the concerned parties related to the South China Sea to work toward peaceful

■ Uotsuri Island (Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture)



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

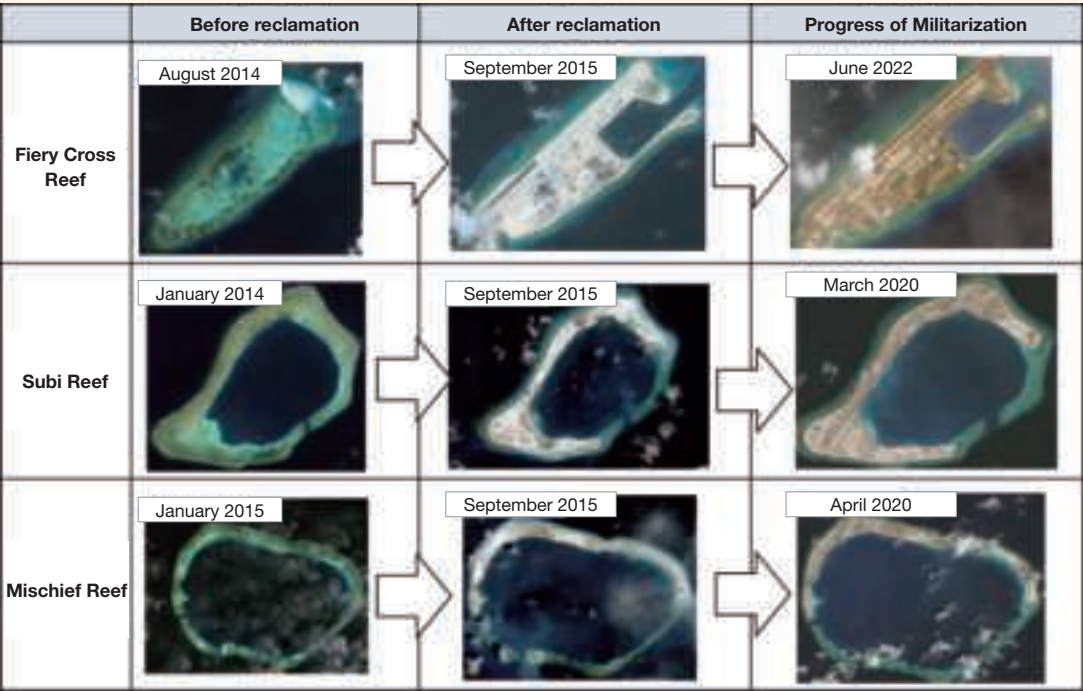
settlement of disputes based on international law, as reflected in UNCLOS. Japan has also repeatedly pointed out that the Arbitral Tribunal's award as to the disputes between the Philippines and China regarding the South China Sea is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute, that China's assertions in the South China Sea are not based on relevant provisions of UNCLOS, and the importance of adherence to freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea.

In July, which marked nine years since the issuance of the Arbitral Tribunal's award as to the disputes between the Philippines and China regarding the South China Sea, Japan issued a statement by the Foreign Minister reiterating its strong hope that the parties to the dispute, as States Parties to UNCLOS, comply with the Arbitral Tribunal's award and that this will lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea. In September, at the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly, under the initiative of the Philippines as host and with Japan and other countries as co-hosts, the Foreign Ministers' Meeting: "Reinforcing Maritime Cooperation to Achieve a Secure and Stable Maritime Domain" was held with the participation of many foreign ministers from like-minded countries. At the meeting, Foreign Minister Iwaya stated that compliance with

international law, in particular UNCLOS — which sets out the universal and unified legal framework governing all activities in the oceans and the seas — is of critical importance for maintaining maritime order, and that Japan will continue to cooperate with the international community toward ensuring maritime safety and stability in order to uphold the free and open international order based on the rule of law. At the ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in October, Prime Minister Takaichi expressed serious concern about the continuing and intensifying militarization and coercive activities in the South China Sea, and emphasized that unjust claims of maritime interests and maritime activities that are not based on UNCLOS are unacceptable. At the East Asia Summit (EAS) in October, Foreign Minister Motegi also expressed serious concerns over intensification of dangerous and coercive activities that heighten regional tensions in the South China Sea, and strongly hoped that Japan, from the perspective of supporting the full enforcement of the rule of law at sea, including freedom of navigation and overflight, that the parties to the disputes will comply with the Arbitral Tribunal's award and that the disputes will be settled peacefully.

Japan will continue to work with the international community, such as ASEAN member states, and the

China's Reclamation and Militarization of Disputed Features



Source: CSIS/AMTI (<http://amti.csis.org/island-tracker/>)



U.S. to uphold and strengthen a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law. (For the international community's responses to issues surrounding the South China Sea, see 7, "Regional and Inter-Regional Cooperation," (2) South China Sea Issues, in Section 2, page 92.)

E Measures against Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships

Japan actively contributes to ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and the safe maritime traffic 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 67 in 2023, and 70 in 2024, and 80 in 2025, 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 IMB, the number of cases of piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, which are important sea lanes linking Asia and Europe, has remained relatively low compared to the peak of 237 cases in 2011, as a result of sustained efforts by the international community. However, the situation remains precarious, with 8 cases of piracy in 2024 and 5 cases in 2025. 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 neighboring countries such as Somalia and Djibouti, and ensuring the stability of Somalian 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 22 in 2023, 18 in 2024, and 21 in 2025, and the Gulf of Guinea continues to be one of the sea areas with the largest number of serious incidents in the world, including cases with multiple casualties. Strengthening the maritime law enforcement capabilities of coastal states remains a key issue. To that end, Japan provides capacity building assistance to coastal states 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 2025, Japan commenced the technical cooperation project “Project for Enhancement of Maritime Safety and Security Capability of Philippine Coast Guard,” aimed at improving capabilities in operation and maintenance of vessels and criminal investigation. Through the Maritime Law Enforcement Capacity Building Project implemented under the Global Maritime

Crime Programme (GMCP) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Japan also supports the development and implementation of training courses and workshops on combating maritime crime for countries in the Indo-Pacific and West Africa.

To provide capacity building support to coast guard agencies 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 agencies with capacity building (including through the GMCP framework). The Japan Coast Guard also trains personnel of coast guard agencies of other countries through domestic training, including through the “Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program,” and conducts training on board Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) vessels for young naval officers of ASEAN member states and other countries. Furthermore, Japan provided capacity building assistance in areas such as vessel maintenance and underwater medicine to the militaries of countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

Official Security Assistance (OSA), established in 2023, positions maritime security as one of its priority areas, with a view to strengthening security and deterrence capabilities of like-minded countries by providing equipment and supplies as well as assistance for infrastructure development to the armed forces and related organizations of those countries, particularly Indo-Pacific countries. In FY2025, Japan decided to provide Malaysia with a diving support vessel, Sri Lanka and Tonga with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), among other items.

G Coordination among Coast Guard Agencies

Japan is also strengthening coordination among coast guard agencies through international organizations and multilateral frameworks. In May, the Japan Coast Guard, as part of Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperative efforts, dispatched personnel to a joint seminar and tabletop exercise on search and rescue conducted by the coast guard agencies of Japan, the U.S., and the ROK, thereby strengthening coordination among the three countries' coast guard agencies and jointly providing capacity

building support to ASEAN coast guard authority officials on a Japan-U.S.-ROK basis. In June of the same year, as part of Japan-U.S.-Philippines cooperative efforts, the first-ever Japan-U.S.-Philippines joint search and rescue exercise in Japan was conducted in Kagoshima Prefecture. Furthermore, in the same month, as part of Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) efforts, the coast guard agencies of the four countries conducted the first “Ship Observer Mission” with the aim of sharing knowledge and promoting confidence-building among members of the coast guards of the Quad countries, with Japan Coast Guard officers boarding a U.S. Coast Guard cutter together with officials of the Australian and Indian coast guard agencies. In terms of MDA efforts, 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 cooperation.

(4) Outer Space

In June 2023, Japan revised its Basic Plan on Space Policy for the first time in three years and formulated a 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 the diversification of use and an increasing number of countries using space. In addition, the increase of space debris 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 measures to address space debris, initiatives such as strengthening Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and mission assurance for space systems, as well as 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, in 2024 Japan, the U.S., and Argentina jointly submitted a draft United Nations General Assembly resolution emphasizing, among other things, the importance of compliance with international law obligations including the Outer Space Treaty, and calling on member states not to develop nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction intended for placement in outer space. 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. At the COPUOS Committee convened from June to July, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy and Space Policy, KIUCHI Minoru, proactively communicated Japan's public and private sector efforts in the space domain to the international community, including Japan's initiatives on space debris.

COPUOS has, apart from the Committee which engages in comprehensive discussions, 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 in 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 May, discussions were held 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 on Space Resources, established under the Legal Subcommittee since 2021, on a draft set of recommended principles for space resource activities.

Regarding the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), based on a decision of the UN General Assembly in 2024, an "Open-Ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in

All Its Aspects" was established and held active discussions among participating countries, including Japan, in Geneva, Switzerland, in April and July 2025. This working group is scheduled to continue its discussions until 2028.

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 has been continuously providing legal capacity building support with a focus on the authorization, licensing, and continuing supervision of space activities. Japan, together with the UNOOSA, held workshops for Thailand in January and for Viet Nam in November respectively, on the legal frameworks for the supervision and authorization of space activities and the safety of space activities, inviting domestic and international experts.

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. With the U.S., Japan has maintained a strong partnership in the civil, security, and commercial space domains, and space cooperation was incorporated into the United States-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement in February and the "Memorandum of Cooperation Regarding the Technology Prosperity Deal Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States of America" signed in October (between Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, ONODA Kimi, and the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Michael Kratsios). Furthermore, the "3rd Meeting of the Japan-India Space Dialogue," the first in four years, was held in Tokyo in April, and the "6th Meeting of the Japan-EU Space Policy Dialogue," the first in two years, was held in Tokyo in May. In addition to an exchange of information on the space policies of each side, wide-ranging exchanges of views took place on topics including security cooperation and inter-agency cooperation.

With regard to multilateral initiatives, the 31st Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-31) was held in Cebu, Philippines, in November, co-organized together with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA). At this Forum, discussions were held regarding regional revitalization through the practical applications of space ecosystems.

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 mission 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 have signed the Artemis Accords, and the number of signatories increased to 59 countries as of the end of October 2025.

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 and this Agreement entered into force in June. In an Implementing Arrangement prepared under this Framework Agreement and signed in April 2024 states that Japan will provide and maintain the operation of the Pressurized Rover on the lunar surface, while the U.S. will provide astronaut two flight opportunities on the lunar surface to Japanese astronauts in future Artemis missions. In April 2025, an Implementing Arrangement on the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope Mission was signed, and in December an Implementing Arrangement

on cooperation related to the Hayabusa2 Extended Mission was signed, and multiple Implementing Arrangements have been signed or are under consideration regarding various Japan-U.S. space cooperation projects across a range of fields.

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⁽⁹⁾, a collaborative framework implemented with the UNOOSA. In 2025, the program marked its 10th anniversary since launch. This program is the first UN-promoted initiative to have reached space, and to date eight rounds of open calls have been issued, with satellites from five organizations deployed using “Kibo.” Currently, the Central American Integration System (SICA) and Tanzania and Côte d’Ivoire (both countries jointly) are developing satellites for deployment. Mexico’s satellite is in orbit and will be deployed soon.

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 163 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

⁽⁹⁾ 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.

Asia-Pacific region. To date, this project has responded to more than 540 emergency requests from 37 countries and regions. 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 response to the magnitude 6.9 Cebu Island earthquake (Philippines) that occurred on September 30, JAXA conducted emergency observations of the damaged areas using the Advanced Land Observing Satellite-2 “DAICHI-2” (ALOS-2) and provided satellite data, for which a letter of appreciation was sent by the Philippine Foreign Minister to the Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), also in coordination with JAXA, hosted 9 officials from space-related agencies of 7 countries in Japan in August and conducted training to enhance their ability to utilize space technology in ways that contribute to the SDGs. In addition, in the technical cooperation projects on improving capacity related to the utilization of space-related technologies in Paraguay and Rwanda, which commenced in FY2023, multiple rounds of training in Japan were conducted with the support of Japan's academia, industry, and government in the space sector. Furthermore, at the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) in August, JICA co-organized a thematic event titled “Space Technologies for Boosting Transformation of Africa” with JAXA and cross U (a general incorporated association). The main objectives of this event were to explore the challenges and potential of space technologies and related technologies and to explore pathways to accelerate Africa's development, and it included keynote speeches and panel discussions by senior officials of space agencies of Kenya, Senegal, Ghana, and Egypt as well as the African Space Agency, representatives of Japanese space-related companies, and members of the JICA International Intellectual Circulation Program for Space Development Steering Committee.

(5) 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 peacekeeping efforts including the dispatchment of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), peacebuilding efforts laying the foundation for development have become important for preventing conflicts, realizing post-conflict nation-building and sustaining peace.

In recent years, an integrated approach has become critical due to the concerns of the impact of the emerging risks such as climate change and infectious diseases triggering instability. In the time of complex and diverse challenges faced by the international community, strengthening peacekeeping and peacebuilding has become increasingly important. This is clearly incorporated into the “New Agenda for Peace” and the outcome document of the Summit of the Future entitled “Pact for the Future,” adopted at the UN General Assembly in September 2024.

A On-the-Ground Initiatives

(A) UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO)

As of December 31, 2025, 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 68,000 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, as well as the shortage of PKO budgets, 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 carried out infrastructure improvement, water supply activities for displaced persons, and other activities, and concluded their activities in May 2017. At UNMISS Headquarters, the two Self-Defense Forces (SDF) officers, including the post of Deputy Chief of Staff additionally dispatched in May 2024, completed their terms and returned home, and as of December 31, 2025, four SDF officers are on active duty, contributing to 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, 2025. Leveraging its own strengths, Japan will continue to contribute proactively in the field of international peace cooperation by means such as enhancing capacity building support and dispatching units and individuals.

(B) Cooperation through Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Other Means for 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 around 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)”⁽¹⁰⁾ 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.

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.⁽¹¹⁾

b Africa

Japan held the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) in Yokohama in August, under the theme “Co-creation of Innovative Solutions,” and held discussions on peace and stability as one of the important areas. The “TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration” adopted to summarize the outcomes of the discussions expressed the need to promote cooperation within the framework of the HDP Nexus, a commitment to advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and a determination to cooperate toward achieving UN Security Council reform. It also reaffirmed the importance of promoting human security, the importance of good governance, democracy, and the rule of law, and a commitment to the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, among other matters.

For example, Japan made a contribution of 500,000 U.S. dollars to the African Union (AU) Commission and provided support to Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Tanzania, and Malawi for the promotion of women's

⁽¹⁰⁾ 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.

⁽¹¹⁾ Human security refers to the concept of advancing nation- and society-building so that every individual can be free from fear and want and live with dignity and happiness.

participation in peacebuilding and political negotiations, with the aim of accelerating the realization of the WPS Agenda among AU member states.

In addition, Japan has been providing criminal justice training to countries in the Sahel region since 2014, and has been supporting the stabilization of the region through strengthening the capabilities of investigative and judicial agencies. Japan also provides security equipment and capacity building support to law enforcement agencies in African countries to address the frequent terrorist attacks and transnational crimes, as well as advancing demining support. In connection with TICAD 9, in cooperation with various mine action organizations including the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), Japan announced the establishment of an “Africa Mine Action Platform” with a view to further promoting efforts related to mine action in Africa.

Furthermore, in the “Horn of Africa” region, the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa works to secure humanitarian access and promote a cease-fire. Japan also contributes to the peace and stability of this region by providing support in elections, support for DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration) of ex-combatants in Ethiopia, and humanitarian assistance, among other efforts. Furthermore, Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has disbursed a total of 66 million U.S. dollars between 2008 and 2025 to Peacekeeping Training Centers located in 14 African countries, contributing to strengthening Africa's capacity for peacekeeping activities.

B Initiatives at the United Nations

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 2025, Japan served as the Vice-Chair of the PBC, leading discussions particularly on strengthening cooperation with the Asian Development Bank in peacebuilding efforts, and also contributing to strengthening cooperation between the PBC and the UN General Assembly by serving as an informal coordinator between the two bodies.

Japan has contributed a total of 71.33 million U.S. dollars to the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)⁽¹²⁾ as of December 31, 2025, and thereby actively supports the execution of projects implemented by UN agencies in Africa and other regions as a major donor country.

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 2025, 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. A survey on the current status of Japanese participants who completed the entry-level training course (Primary Course) for junior human resources found that more than half serve in international organizations (as regular staff,

⁽¹²⁾ 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 dialogue, economic revitalization, institution building for nations, and the participation by women and youth in nation-building, among other initiatives.

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 2025, 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 226.)

(B) Training of Peacekeeping Personnel 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 366 personnel from 10 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, where the shortage of appropriately trained personnel in UN PKO has become a serious problem, while support for the introduction of telemedicine into UN PKO missions was launched in 2021. A total of 420 SDF personnel and other individuals have contributed to the training programs by serving as instructors in these fields. 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 addition, also in 2024, in Cambodia, Japan 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.

(6) 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 becoming increasingly complex and severe in tandem with social changes including the advancement of science and technology and in particular the proliferation of various emerging technologies, 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 extremist ideology online and to disseminate harmful content that could incite terrorism and other damaging acts. There is a prominent trend of misuse of the Internet, social media, and emerging technologies such as AI by terrorist organizations for financing, recruitment, and propaganda activities. There has also been growing incidence of indiscriminate terrorist attacks using simple, low-cost weapons 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, Japan contributes to projects by international organizations including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and has been continuously supporting capacity building for law enforcement organizations in Southeast Asian countries and beyond. Japan has also participated actively in relevant meetings and discussions held by the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), an international counter-terrorism

Column

Peacebuilding on the Ground through Governance and Electoral Assistance – The Gambia –

LEUNG Emi, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) The Gambia Country Office

I am LEUNG Emi, 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. I am currently working as a Governance Officer (United Nations Volunteer) at the UNDP The Gambia Country Office.

The Gambia is the smallest country on the African continent, located in the West African region. Known as the “Smiling Coast of Africa,” it is a country full of warm-hearted people. At the same time, almost 10 years after the end of a 22-year regime, the country’s democratic transition remains a work in progress, facing challenges such as the stagnation of democratic reforms and political polarization. Strengthening approaches to both institutions and society is therefore indispensable for building sustainable peace. In the Governance Unit to which I belong, we are implementing projects aimed at establishing more inclusive and democratic governance, including strengthening the rule of law, Security Sector Reform (SSR), and support for the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC).

I am in charge of managing electoral assistance projects, and in cooperation with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of The Gambia, I support the establishment and capacity building of its Legal Department and its Gender and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) Department, toward the 2026 presidential election and the parliamentary and local elections scheduled for the following year. As of November 2025, approximately 562 local residents (including 325 women and 113 PwDs) had participated in the “Strengthening Inclusive and Participatory Elections” training conducted in 10 regions across the country, where lively discussions took place on topics such as the electoral system and gender equality in political participation. Seeing participants from diverse backgrounds share their views and challenges, I realized firsthand that inclusive political participation is directly linked to peacebuilding.

In addition, as I am also in a position to provide cross-cutting support for projects implemented by the Unit, I am engaged in an SSR project under the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), to which the Government of Japan also contributes. Restoring trust in security institutions that were involved in the suppression of citizens under the long-term regime is an urgent task, and UNDP supports the Ministry of Justice, the National Police, the military, the Immigration Department, civil society organizations, and the media in promoting their understanding of SSR policy, gender mainstreaming,



With my supervisor and colleagues at the Sahel Governance Forum (the author is second from the left)

and dialogue on the legal framework. Through supporting stakeholders from different positions as they come together toward a common goal, I have learned that taking sufficient time and accumulating dialogue is indispensable for building sustainable peace.

Furthermore, at the “Sahel Governance Forum,” which brought together senior-level officials from countries across the Sahel region, I served as the lead focal point of the UNDP The Gambia Country Office. In this capacity, I coordinated with the host government and international organizations and contributed to preparing briefing materials for the UNDP Regional Director for Africa. The Forum was a significant occasion to reaffirm the importance of rebuilding social cohesion and trust toward the stability of the rapidly changing Sahel region, and through this experience, I once again recognized the importance of reflecting the voices of local communities in policy dialogue.

Now, as I have the opportunity to learn from multiple perspectives about the challenges that remain in our pursuit of a more democratic society, I find it truly meaningful and rewarding to be able to engage in governance and electoral assistance on the front lines of peacebuilding, working with UNDP, which has the ability to provide assistance to countries from a truly neutral standpoint. As a Japanese UN Volunteer, I would like to continue to do my best to contribute to the democratic development of The Gambia.



Group photo taken during the implementation of the electoral assistance project training in the capital, Banjul (the author is second from the left in the front row)

framework, and in particular in recent years has been advancing cooperation on the project level with the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJ), which are inspired institutions of GCTF.

Furthermore, as part of Japan's efforts to promote the spread and entrenchment of the "rule of law" in the international community, in February, MOFA, IJ, the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France co-hosted the "Central Asian Counter Terrorism Workshop: Building Cooperation and Coordination to Promote the Rule of Law" in Tokyo. The workshop invited prosecutors and law enforcement officials from five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and held discussions on topics including the conduct of investigations and prosecutions of terrorism-related cases under fair and independent criminal justice procedures, as well as the repatriation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of former terrorist fighters.

Subsequently, in December, MOFA, UNODC, UNAFEI, and the European Union (EU) co-hosted the "Workshop on Counter-Terrorism and the Rule of Law in South Asia" in Tokyo, where participants discussed, from the perspective of public-private cooperation, the role of youth in preventing violent extremism and responses in the digital space.

Furthermore, through bilateral counter-terrorism consultations, the Quad (Japan-Australia-India-U.S.) Counterterrorism Working Group, and other initiatives, Japan exchanges information on terrorism situations and affirms the strengthening of partnerships, while developing practical cooperation with other countries.

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 UN 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 prevention and criminal justice, was adopted. Continuing to demonstrate leadership thereafter, Japan has been working in cooperation with UNODC and others on: (a) the regular convening of the "Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific (Crim-AP)" as a platform for criminal justice practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region to share information and exchange views; (b) the regular convening of the "Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness" aimed at enabling youth to discuss issues themselves and have their voices reflected in policy; and (c) work toward formulating UN standards and norms to promote efforts by the international community toward recidivism prevention; while also actively following up on the Kyoto Declaration by supporting the thematic discussions on the Kyoto Declaration conducted by UNODC. Furthermore, at the CCPCJ held in May, Japan submitted a draft resolution to continue following up on the Kyoto Declaration, and the draft resolution was adopted by consensus. As a result, the outcomes of the Kyoto Congress will be carried forward to the 15th UN Congress in 2026 (to be hosted by the United Arab Emirates). In December, the United Nations Model Strategies on Reducing Reoffending (the Kyoto Model Strategies), whose formulation Japan has led, were adopted by the UN General Assembly. Furthermore, through UNODC, INTERPOL, and the Council of Europe, Japan supports the strengthening of prosecutorial and other criminal justice functions in Southeast Asian countries, capacity building related to prison management, and cybercrime countermeasures. In addition, through the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime

and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI),⁽¹³⁾ Japan conducts training courses in Japan on offender treatment, crime prevention, and crime countermeasures, contributing to capacity building for criminal justice officials in various countries. As a State Party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which establishes an international legal framework to more effectively prevent and combat transnational organized crime, including terrorism, Japan promotes international cooperation through mutual legal assistance based on the Convention and efforts to review the status of its implementation. Furthermore, as cybercrime has today become a cross-border threat, in order for the international community to address cybercrime in a unified manner, 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, negotiations on which commenced at the UN in 2019, was adopted at UN Headquarters in New York in December 2024. With the aim of ensuring “free, fair, and secure cyberspace,” Japan worked toward the conclusion of negotiations, including by serving as Vice-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee established to draft the Convention. Subsequently, a signing ceremony for the Convention was held in Hanoi, Viet Nam, on October 25 and 26, 2025, and while Japan deferred signature at the ceremony in order to scrutinize the Convention, the Ambassador of Japan to Viet Nam attended and conveyed the significance of the Convention and Japan's contribution to enhancing international capacity to combat cybercrime.

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 United Nations 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 implementation 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 the formulation of an outcome document of the Working Group on the administration of seized and confiscated assets linked to corruption. Furthermore, in October 2025, Japan attended the ministerial meeting in Mpumalanga, South Africa, held for the fourth 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. 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 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Working Group on Bribery, which engages in the prevention of bribery of foreign public officials through peer reviews among state parties of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, to monitor the implementation of this convention.

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), a multilateral framework, establishes the international standards for measures that countries should implement and conducts peer

⁽¹³⁾ 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 participation invited from overseas.

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 statements calling for the eradication of illegal financial activities by North Korea. As a founding member, Japan has actively participated in these discussions. At the FATF Plenary held in October 2024, Japan achieved upgraded ratings for all recommendations identified as needing improvement in its Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation, and is currently advancing preparatory work toward the Fifth Round Mutual Evaluation of Japan, for which an on-site visit is scheduled for the summer of 2028. In addition to these efforts through FATE, 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⁽¹⁴⁾ and designations by the UN Security Council Taliban Sanctions Committee and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. As of November 30, 2025, Japan has implemented asset freezing and other measures, based on the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act and international terrorist asset freezing laws, on 387 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 40 individuals and 31 entities designated in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1373, making a total of 416 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 hidden 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 2025 as well, Japan continued to conduct

training programs through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to deepen mutual understanding on human trafficking countermeasures (especially prevention, victim protection and support for self-reliance of victims) of stakeholders in various countries, including Japan, and to promote more effective regional cooperation. For example, Japan implemented a technical cooperation project with the Government of Thailand via JICA from January 2022 to January 2025, and with the Government of Cambodia from March 2022. Furthermore, since fiscal year 2025, Japan has been implementing a third-country training program on “Enhancing the Capacity of Transnational Collaboration for Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Persons in the Greater Mekong,” aiming to enhance the capacity of relevant organizations to support victims of trafficking in persons. With respect to cooperation with international organizations, Japan continued in 2025, through funding to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to provide assistance for the safe return 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 home countries. Japan also provided support to strengthen response capacity, including training programs for law enforcement authorities, by funding projects organized by the 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 Drug Control Measures

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

⁽¹⁴⁾ 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 on UN Member States to take comprehensive measures against those who commit or involved in terrorist acts, such as by freezing their assets.

also strengthening practical capabilities for cross-border international 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 in developing countries with particularly unstable political situations and rural areas with poor border

controls from becoming involved in organized crime, as well as advancing efforts to strengthen maritime law enforcement capabilities including crackdowns on trafficking. At the same time, Japan is engaged in global efforts to combat drugs, 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 in a substantive manner.

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”⁽¹⁵⁾ 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 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), promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education, and further, discussions towards the realization of effective nuclear

⁽¹⁵⁾ 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 risk: (1) 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.

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 States 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 to the maintenance and strengthening of the NPT regime, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The NPT Review Conference, held every five years to ensure the achievement of the treaty's objectives and compliance with its provisions, has conducted discussions reflecting the international situation of each era since the NPT's entry into force in 1970.



Foreign Minister Iwaya delivering a statement at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference (April 28, New York, U.S.)

The Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference, scheduled to be held in 2026, was convened at United Nations Headquarters from April 28 to May 9, with Foreign Minister Iwaya attending from Japan. Foreign Minister Iwaya delivered a statement at the General Debate, in which he stated that, at a time when the international order based on the rule of law is being challenged and multilateral frameworks for international cooperation, including the NPT, also face difficulties, efforts are needed to ease divisions in the international community and to restore and strengthen the functioning of multilateral cooperation frameworks based on multilateralism. He called on all State Parties to cherish and exercise the spirit of dialogue and cooperation to this end and work together toward the 2026 NPT Review Conference. He also appealed to all countries to fulfill their responsibility to find common ground in order to maintain and strengthen the NPT architecture, which is the only universal framework for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to advance toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, while introducing the recommendations of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons as a positive example of how engaging in sincere dialogue and constructive discussion can create wisdom even in a world of deepening divisions. At this Preparatory Committee, the Chair, under his own responsibility, submitted a working paper "Recommendations by the Chair," which reflected a wide range of elements that Japan regards as priorities, including enhancing the transparency regarding States' nuclear arsenal, the immediate commencement



Foreign Minister Iwaya delivering remarks at the sixth meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (March 30, Tokyo)

of negotiations on an FMCT, the promotion of the entry into force of the CTBT and disarmament and non-proliferation education. Furthermore, the joint statement on disarmament and non-proliferation education, initiated by Japan, received the highest number of participation to date from 96 countries, including Japan, and demonstrated the high level of interest in and broad support for disarmament and non-proliferation education. In addition, the side event on the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP) was held, at which Foreign Minister Iwaya delivered opening remarks, followed by a panel discussion. 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 of views 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 to engage 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), the third meeting (December 2023, Nagasaki), the fourth meeting (May 2024, Yokohama), and the fifth meeting (November 2024, online), the sixth and final meeting was held in Tokyo on March 30 and 31. In addition to three Japanese members, including Chair SHIRAISHI Takashi (Professor Emeritus of the Prefectural University of Kumamoto), 11 non-Japanese members from both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States also attended the meeting, making 14 members in total. Federica Mogherini, the Rector

of the College of Europe (former High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission) also participated. From the Government of Japan, Foreign Minister Iwaya attended the opening session and stated there is absolutely no wavering in Japan's stance of making steady progress toward the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons, and that the Government will take seriously the recommendations to be compiled at this meeting and continue to work on realistic and practical efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons. Subsequently, Rector Mogherini of the College of Europe delivered remarks, and video messages were introduced from António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, Hans Blix, former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Amina Mohamed, former Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, followed by remarks from Chair Shiraishi. At the meeting, the IGEP members engaged in discussions on concrete measures to achieve a world without nuclear weapons based on the deliberations accumulated to date, and issued recommendations for 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 Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

The NPDI, a group of 12 non-nuclear-weapon States⁽¹⁶⁾ from various regions established under the leadership of Japan and Australia in 2010, has served as a bridge-builder 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 third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026 held from April to May, NPDI delivered a joint statement and submitted joint working papers on transparency and accountability, disarmament and non-proliferation education, FMCT, and CTBT.

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 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 2025 draft resolution took into consideration discussions at the third session of the Preparatory

Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026, and called on the international community to implement concrete measures — including the continued non-use of nuclear weapons, enhanced transparency, an early commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), and disarmament and non-proliferation education related to promoting understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings — in order to further develop and promote the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” while reaffirming that the NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The resolution was adopted with the support (votes in favor) of 145 countries at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in October, and 147 countries at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in December. The states voting in favor include nuclear-weapon State, and countries representing a wide range of positions, including 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 have been submitted to the General Assembly in addition to Japan's draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, Japan's resolution has received the highest number of supporting states among them. Every year, Japan's resolutions continue to enjoy the broad support of states with divergent views in the international community.

F 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 14th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT was held during the UN General Assembly High-Level Week in September. In his statement, Foreign Minister Iwaya noted that the CTBT, which prohibits nuclear testing and thereby

(16) Japan, Australia, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Nigeria, and the Philippines.

prevents the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, remains a crucial treaty for realizing a world without nuclear weapons, and stated that, even before the treaty enters into force, implementing its substance through upholding a moratorium on nuclear testing is critically important, and called on all States that have not yet signed or ratified the treaty to promptly sign and ratify the treaty. He also emphasized that strengthening the verification regime and providing capacity-building support are necessary to ensure the Treaty's effectiveness. At the conference, a final declaration was adopted by the ratifying States and other States Signatories that consented, which calls on non-signatory and non-ratifying states — in particular by the remaining States listed in Annex 2 — for early signature and ratification, calls for the maintenance of the moratoria on nuclear weapons test explosions, confirms support for the build-up of the verification regime, and condemnation of nuclear tests by North Korea.

G Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT⁽¹⁷⁾: Cut-off Treaty)⁽¹⁸⁾

An FMCT is a treaty concept that aims at prohibiting the production itself of fissile materials such as highly-enriched uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons. Regulating the production itself of raw materials for nuclear weapons prevents the emergence of new states possessing nuclear weapons and limits the production of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States, and therefore would have great significance from both disarmament and non-proliferation perspectives. However, since the adoption of a UN General Assembly resolution in 1993 recommending negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices that is non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable, no consensus has been reached on the commencement of negotiations on such a treaty despite decades of discussion in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Against this backdrop, various initiatives were undertaken during the 2010s with a view to creating political momentum toward negotiations,



First Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the "FMCT Friends" (September 24, New York, U.S.)

including the High-Level Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament convened by the UN Secretary-General (2010), the Expert Meeting on the FMCT co-hosted by the Governments of Japan and Australia (2011), the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the FMCT (2014–2015), and the FMCT High-Level Experts Preparatory Group (2017–2018); Japan actively participated in the discussions at each of these meetings. However, consensus among the relevant states on commencing negotiations was not reached.

In light of the 30th anniversary in 2023 of the adoption of the UN FMCT resolution, the "G7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament" issued at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May of that year called for renewed political attention to an FMCT. Japan co-hosted a Commemorative High-Level Event on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) with Australia and the Philippines in September of that year, raising the international community's interest in the treaty concept. In March 2024, at the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council on "Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation" chaired by Japan, Japan announced the launch of "FMCT Friends" in order to maintain and enhance political momentum for an FMCT, and at the High-Level Launch Meeting of the Friends of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) hosted in September of that year, the launch of "FMCT Friends" was confirmed. In September 2025, the First FMCT Friends Ministerial Meeting, attended by Foreign Minister Iwaya, was held, and a joint ministerial

⁽¹⁷⁾ FMCT: Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or other Nuclear Explosive Devices / Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty

⁽¹⁸⁾ A treaty concept that aims to prevent the increase in the number of nuclear weapons by prohibiting the production of fissile material (such as highly enriched uranium and plutonium) that are used as material to produce nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Special Feature

“80 Years since the Atomic Bombings: Testimonies to the World” Program

From June 12 to 19, two atomic bomb survivors (*hibakusha*) and three youths engaged in efforts to pass on the testimonies and experiences of the *hibakusha* were dispatched to France, the United Kingdom (UK), and Poland under the program titled “80 years since the atomic bombings: testimonies to the world.” This program was implemented to mark the 80th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and is one of the concrete measures, under the three pillars of initiatives to promote understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings that was announced in September 2024: “dispatch of atomic bomb survivors and others overseas,” “visits to the atomic-bombed cities,” and “strengthening of outreach communications.”

During the visit, the *hibakusha* served as Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons and the youths as Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons, and delivered testimonies of their atomic bomb experiences and engaged in exchanges with local young people (Special Communicators: YAHATA Teruko and IIDA Kunihiko; Youth Communicators: INOUE Tsugumi, MASUMOTO Natsumi, and YAHATA Megumi McGowan).

■ Testimonies of Atomic Bomb Experiences

At the testimony sessions by *hibakusha* that were held in France, the UK, and Poland, venues in all three countries were filled to capacity each with audiences of well over one hundred people. The Special Communicators delivered lectures on their own experiences of the atomic bombings, while the Youth Communicators spoke about their activities, including their efforts to pass on the experiences of the *hibakusha* to future generations. The audience listened intently and asked questions about the experiences of the *hibakusha*, including the circumstances at the time of the bombings and the hardships that were endured in the aftermath. They also asked questions such as how the Special Communicators had found the courage to speak publicly after coming to terms with their experiences of atomic bombings, and how youths, despite not having directly experienced the atomic bombings themselves, pass on the testimonies of the *hibakusha*. These questions reflected the strong interest in testimony and outreach activities of the Special Communicators and Youth Communicators. Following the sessions, a long line of audience members formed to express their appreciation personally to the five Communicators, and the Communicators actively interacted with local residents.



Testimony of atomic bomb experience (June 16, London, UK)

■ Exchanges with Local Youths

The three Youth Communicators interacted with university students in France and the UK and with high school students in Poland, and gave presentations on peace activities such as the passing on of the experiences of atomic bombings. They also took part in discussions with the participation of the Special Communicators.

The local young people asked questions about the conditions of the atomic-bombed cities at the time of the bombings, and there was an instance where a participant asked the Special Communicators for a message for the younger generation. There was also interest expressed in the peace activities of the Youth Communicators, who are of the same generation as the participants, including the passing on of the experiences of atomic bombings, and frank exchanges of views took place among them.

The Government of Japan attaches importance to passing on the realities of the atomic bombings to the international community and future generations, and regards this as the starting point of all efforts toward nuclear disarmament, and its responsibility as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war.

As reflected in many comments received from local audiences, such as “the strongest message I took away was that nuclear weapons must never be used against anyone,” this program served as an opportunity to deepen understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings across borders and generations.

Going forward, Japan will continue to advance initiatives to promote understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings, in cooperation with *hibakusha* and youths engaged in efforts to pass on the testimonies of the *hibakusha*.

statement calling for coordination toward an early start of negotiations on an FMCT was adopted.

H Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan attaches great importance to education on disarmament and non-proliferation. Specifically, Japan is actively engaged in conveying the reality of the atomic bombings both domestically and internationally through such efforts as the translation of atomic bomb survivor testimonies into multiple languages, the invitation of young diplomats and others from various countries to Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme,⁽¹⁹⁾ and support for the organization of atomic bomb exhibitions overseas.⁽²⁰⁾

More than 330 atomic bomb survivors who have delivered testimonies on their atomic bomb experiences have been bestowed with the title of “Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons,”⁽²¹⁾ and in light of its growing importance — as atomic bomb survivors continue to age — of passing down the reality of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki across generations and national borders, more than 830 young people both domestically and internationally have been bestowed with the title of “Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons.”

In June, on the occasion of the 80 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and from the perspective of further strengthening efforts to promote understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings, two atomic bomb survivors and three youths involved in inheritance activities were dispatched to France, the United Kingdom, and Poland under the program entitled “80 years since the atomic bombings: testimonies to the world.” During their visit, the atomic bomb survivors acting as Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons, and the youth acting

as Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons conducted activities such as delivering testimonies on their atomic bomb experiences and lectures as well as engaging in exchanges with local younger generations. (See the Special Feature on page 235.)

Regarding the “Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons,” established through Japan's contribution of 10 million U.S. dollars to the UN with the goal of creating 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 — in August 2024, 49 young leaders selected among those who completed the training courses participated in a week-long study tour in Japan, during which they visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In July 2025, an event was held at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations to commemorate the start of the Fund's second cohort, at which Foreign Minister Iwaya delivered a video message, stating that the role of younger generations in passing on the realities of the atomic bombings and conveying them broadly throughout the world is becoming even more significant, while strongly encouraging the participants to build a global network of future leaders who share the common goal of freeing humanity from nuclear weapons.

I 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 bilateral arms control treaties. For example, the Treaty between the U.S. and Russia on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty), which provides for reductions in nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles, among other measures, demonstrates important progress in

⁽¹⁹⁾ 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 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.

⁽²⁰⁾ Opened as a permanent exhibition about atomic bomb in New York, U.S., Geneva, Switzerland, and Vienna, Austria, in cooperation with Hiroshima City and Nagasaki City.

⁽²¹⁾ From 2010 to 2025, more than 330 atomic bomb survivors have been named as “Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons.”

nuclear disarmament between the U.S. and Russia. Japan welcomed the five-year extension of the Treaty announced in February 2021. 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. However, in February 2026, the New START Treaty reached the end of its extension period and expired. In view of the recent situations surrounding nuclear weapons, it is important to establish a new arms control framework 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 engaging with the relevant countries at various levels on this issue. Furthermore, the aforementioned Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons also refers to the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States to commence arms control dialogues on effective measures to prevent a nuclear arms race, as well as to good-faith negotiations among the three states possessing the largest number of nuclear weapons on a future nuclear arms control framework to cap increases in their nuclear weapons.

(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 and regions such as North Korea and Iran. 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 diversion of civilian 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 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 ensuring nuclear non-proliferation, which is one of three pillars of the NPT, and strengthening safeguards is essential to promote nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As a designated

member of the IAEA Board of Governors,⁽²²⁾ 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)⁽²³⁾ 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,⁽²⁴⁾ and the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) for conventional weapons, lists dual-use goods and technologies that could contribute to the development of the weapons subject to control. To ensure the non-proliferation of goods and technologies of concern, participating countries 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),⁽²⁵⁾ 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,⁽²⁶⁾ 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 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

(22) 13 countries designated by the IAEA Board of Governors. The designated member states include Japan and other countries with advanced nuclear energy capabilities.

(23) A protocol with the IAEA that State Parties conclude in addition to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) that Non-nuclear-weapon NPT States Parties are required to conclude and is applied on all nuclear materials pertaining to the peaceful nuclear activities in the States Parties with the IAEA pursuant to Article III Paragraph 1 of the NPT. 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.

(24) 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 2025, 145 countries subscribe to the HCOC.

(25) Launched in 2003. As of the end of 2025, 116 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/SDF, Japan has hosted PSI maritime interdiction exercises in 2004, 2007, 2018, and 2025, 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.

(26) Adopted in April 2004. UN Security Council Resolution 1540 obliges all countries to: (1) refrain from providing support to terrorists and other non-state actors attempting to develop weapons of mass destruction; (2) adopt and enforce laws prohibiting the development of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-state actors; and (3) implement domestic controls (protective measures, border control, export controls, etc.) to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution also establishes, under the UN Security Council, the 1540 Committee — comprising Security Council members and with a mandate to review and report to the Security Council the level of resolution 1540 implementation by member states.

Special Feature

Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Japan-Hosted Exercise “Pacific Shield 25”

The PSI is an initiative launched in 2003 by 11 countries, including Japan, at the proposal of the United States (U.S.). Under the initiative, participating countries jointly consider and implement measures to interdict the transfer or transport of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), ballistic missiles, and related materials in order to prevent their proliferation. Since 2014, Japan, the U.S., the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore — major participants in the PSI in the Asia-Pacific region — host PSI training exercises on a rotating basis within the region annually. Following maritime interdiction exercises in 2004 and 2007, an air interdiction exercise in 2012, and a maritime interdiction exercise in 2018, Japan hosted its fifth such exercise — the maritime interdiction exercise “Pacific Shield 25” — from December 2 to 5, 2025, together with an Operational Experts Group (OEG) Meeting to discuss the future direction of the PSI.

In addition to the six countries above, 20 countries and one related organization participated in the exercise as observers. On the Japanese side, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), National Police Agency, Ministry of Finance / Customs, Coast Guard, and Ministry of Defense / Self-Defense Forces (SDF) participated in coordination with one another. Specifically, the SDF, the U.S., Australia, and the ROK conducted live exercises involving the detection, pursuit, and boarding of a suspected vessel carrying WMD-related materials, while the National Police Agency, Customs, and Coast Guard conducted port exercises that included the inspection of chemical substances. In addition, an academic session was held to exchange views aimed at raising awareness of non-proliferation, a simulation-based tabletop exercise was conducted on responding to the proliferation of WMD-related materials, and an OEG Meeting was held with the participation of 21 countries to discuss the future direction of the PSI.

This series of exercises was the first hosted by Japan in seven years. Through it, Japan contributed to enhancing the capabilities of relevant authorities of each country to interdict the proliferation of WMD and related items, strengthening mutual coordination among the law enforcement agencies, military and defense authorities, and intelligence agencies of each country, and deepening the understanding of the PSI among non-participating countries.



Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department conducting preliminary inspection of suspect substances during the port exercise (December 3, Tokyo)



Group photo of representatives of participating countries at the opening ceremony (December 2, MOFA)

■ 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 safeguards — that is, verification activities carried out in accordance with agreements concluded between such States and the IAEA — with a view to preventing the 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 and regions 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-power 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 in the 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 water¹ 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 five occasions, Japan is strengthening cooperation with the IAEA in both nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.



Foreign Minister Iwama with IAEA Director General Grossi on his visit to Japan as a guest of MOFA (February 18, Tokyo)

¹ ALPS treated water refers to water that contains radioactive substances from inside the buildings of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station (FDNPS) and has been purified and treated through multiple treatment facilities, including ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System), until the concentrations of all radioactive substances besides tritium satisfy the safety regulatory standards. As for tritium, the water is significantly diluted with seawater before the discharge into the sea so that it fully satisfies safety regulatory standards.

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)⁽²⁷⁾ and the Asian Export Control Seminar⁽²⁸⁾ 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 2025, North Korea continued its nuclear and missile development, including through repeated ballistic

⁽²⁷⁾ 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, the Netherlands, 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.

⁽²⁸⁾ 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.)

missile launches. This series of actions by North Korea is a flagrant violation of relevant UN Security Council 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 region and 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 program is a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, at the IAEA General Conference in September, a resolution calling strongly on North Korea to take concrete actions toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of all of its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, as well as the prompt suspension of all related activities, was adopted by a majority vote, demonstrating the united position of 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 Third Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference held in April through May, as well as at the IAEA General Conference in September and at IAEA Board of Governors meetings.

It is crucial that the international community makes concerted efforts to fully implement the UN Security Council resolutions for the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, by North Korea. 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 such as, 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.

Iran has continued actions to reduce its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)⁽²⁹⁾ since the withdrawal of the U.S. (during the first Trump administration) from the JCPOA in 2018 and the reimposition of independent sanctions on Iran. 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.

In June, Israel and the U.S. attacked Iranian nuclear facilities including Natanz and Fordow. In August of that year, the E3 (France, Germany, and the UK) notified the President of the UN Security Council of Iran's significant non-performance of its JCPOA commitments, and on September 19, a draft resolution in the UN Security Council to continue the termination of sanctions measures against Iran was rejected. Consequently, on September 28, sanctions against Iran under previous UN Security Council resolutions (including Resolutions 1737, 1747, 1803, and 1929) as provided for in operative paragraph 12 of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 were re-imposed, and Iran was once again obligated to cease certain proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities including uranium enrichment.

The IAEA is continuing its engagement with Iran with a view to resolving Iran's nuclear issue, including the series of safeguards issues (in which nuclear materials that had not been declared to the IAEA were found in Iran; in June, the IAEA Board of Governors found Iran's non-compliance with its safeguards obligations in light of this unresolved issue). Following the attack on Iran by Israel and the U.S. in June, Iran has suspended its cooperation with the IAEA, and Japan is strongly urging Iran to immediately resume full cooperation with the IAEA. From the standpoint that resolving the

(29) 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▶

Limitation on uranium enrichment-related activities

- Limitation on the number of centrifuges in operation to 5,060 units

- Keeping its uranium stockpile under 300 kg of up to 3.67%, 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.

nuclear issue through dialogue is important, Japan is also emphasizing the importance of diplomacy, including the early resumption of consultations between the U.S. and Iran. (For developments following the attack by Israel and the U.S. on Iran on February 28, 2026, see Chapter 2, Section 7, 2(5) Iran, page 171.) 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. Progress is expected through engagement with the new government going forward. To address this outstanding issue, Japan has called upon Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA. It is important for Syria to sign, conclude 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 counter-terrorism measures. 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 also been 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 the 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) in 2024 and held its inaugural meeting, at which measures to enhance nuclear counter-terrorism capabilities were discussed, among other matters. It also called for efforts to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

In recent years, amid growing energy demand in each country and a global trend toward decarbonization, international interest in nuclear power generation has been increasing. In this context, countries advancing the peaceful use of nuclear energy need to raise awareness of nuclear security issues — such as the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear materials to non-state actors — and to work toward ensuring the highest level of nuclear security standards. Japan will also continue to contribute, in coordination with the IAEA and relevant countries, toward ensuring the highest level of nuclear security standards in the international community under the leadership of the IAEA Director General.

(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.⁽³⁰⁾

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";⁽³¹⁾ that is, (a) Safeguards, (b) Nuclear Safety (e.g. measures to ensure safety to prevent nuclear accidents), and (c) Nuclear Security. Japan has, through bilateral and multilateral frameworks,

⁽³⁰⁾ According to the IAEA, 415 nuclear reactors are in operation worldwide and 62 reactors are under construction (IAEA website; as of December 2025).

⁽³¹⁾ "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.

been conducting diplomacy aimed at establishing as a shared understanding among the international community the importance of ensuring the “3S,” and also carries out human resources development support programs that contribute to strengthening the “3S.” 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. From this perspective, Japan will continue to contribute, in cooperation with the IAEA, to capacity building in the field of emergency preparedness and response through the “IAEA Response and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC),” which was designated in Fukushima Prefecture in 2013.

In Ukraine, the nuclear safety and security of nuclear facilities, including the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which has remained under prolonged Russian occupation as a result of Russia’s aggression, are under threat. Japan strongly condemns Russia’s aggression, and will continue to support the IAEA’s efforts to ensure the nuclear safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including the seven pillars⁽³²⁾ and the five principles⁽³³⁾ set out by the IAEA Director General.

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.

In this context, Japan is actively supporting the IAEA’s activities through technical support under the “Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development, and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA),” as well as financial support through contributions to the “Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF)” and the “Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI),” with a view to spreading the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy primarily to developing countries, underpinning the NPT — which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime — and contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. 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.

B Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreements

Bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements are concluded to establish a legal framework required for ensuring a legal assurance from the recipient country on nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear-related material and equipment that are transferred between the two countries, so as to realize cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between 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

(32) 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.

(33) 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 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 Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant should be protected from attacks or acts of sabotage;

5. No action should be taken that undermines these principles.

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 (UAE), and India.

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

The work of decommissioning, contaminated water and treated water management, at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, as well as decontamination and environmental remediation are 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 of that year, 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 and assessments by the IAEA.

After the start of the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea, the IAEA conducted five safety and regulatory review missions in October 2023, April 2024, December 2024, May 2025, and December 2025. In the published reports on the First through Fourth Review Missions conducted after the start of the discharge into the sea, the IAEA 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, 2024. On the same day, Japan and China 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. From October of that year onward, the missions of additional measures have been conducted on multiple occasions with the participation of experts from third countries including China, and the published results reports have confirmed the safety of the discharge of ALPS treated water into the sea. The Chinese government has also announced that all results of analyses of samples completed to date have been normal. At the end of June 2025, the Chinese government issued a public notice to restore imports of aquatic products from certain regions of Japan. It remains important to continue implementing the "Shared Recognition between Japan and China," and the Government will continue to request China to facilitate exports, including through the prompt re-registration of Japanese export-related facilities, while strongly calling for the lifting of import restrictions on aquatic products from the remaining 10 prefectures.

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 and treated 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)⁽³⁴⁾ 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 Ninth 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)⁽³⁵⁾ 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 2024, 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. Furthermore, on the occasion of the 108th Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW in March 2025, and marking the 30th anniversary of the Aum Shinrikyo Tokyo sarin gas attack in March 1995, a joint Japan-U.S. side event on chemical terrorism was held to raise awareness of the threat of chemical terrorism and to promote discussion in the international community on countering chemical terrorism. In addition,

(34) Entered into force in March 1975. As of December 2025, 187 countries or regions are parties to the BWC.

(35) Entered into force in April 1997. As of December 2025, 193 countries or regions are parties to the CWC.

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.

(5) Conventional Weapons

Conventional weapons generally refer to arms other than weapons of mass destruction and include a wide variety of weapons ranging from tanks, artillery, and landmines 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 “de facto 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)⁽³⁶⁾

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 11th Conference of States Parties (CSP11) to the ATT held in August 2025, in its statement, Japan explained its efforts including outreach and information sharing to States not Parties in the Asia-Pacific region toward the universalization of the Treaty, and called on all States Parties to continue the strict implementation of the Treaty. Japan also made active contributions to discussions on transparency and reporting, promotion of implementation, and other matters.

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)⁽³⁷⁾

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

⁽³⁶⁾ As of December 2025, there are 117 countries or 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.

⁽³⁷⁾ As of December 2025, 128 countries and regions are parties to the CCW.

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)⁽³⁸⁾ 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 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 law and the restriction of other weapons systems was adopted unanimously. Furthermore, in May 2024, in light of the UN General Assembly resolution on LAWS, a working paper summarizing Japan's views on LAWS was submitted 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)⁽³⁹⁾ was held in the ROK in September 2024. In addition, in April, in light of the UN General Assembly resolution on “Artificial Intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security,” Japan submitted a working paper summarizing its views on this field.

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)⁽⁴⁰⁾ 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.”

In December, Japan presided over the 22nd Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention held in Geneva (Switzerland). Foreign Minister Motegi delivered a video message, calling on participants to make the meeting an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to the Convention, and stated that Japan would continue to work in close cooperation with other countries to lead efforts to develop the Convention and promote international mine action toward the realization of a “mine-free world.”

E Cluster Munitions⁽⁴¹⁾

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.⁽⁴²⁾ Japan is also continuing its efforts to increase the number of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions⁽⁴³⁾ (CCM). At the 13th Meeting of States Parties to the CCM held in September, Japan participated in discussions concerning these issues and shared its proactive efforts.

(38) LAWS: Lethal Autonomous Weapons System

(39) REAIM: Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain

(40) 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 2025, there are 166 countries and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

(41) 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.

(42) See the White Paper on Development Cooperation for specific efforts on international cooperation regarding cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines.

(43) Entered into force in August 2010, it prohibits the use, possession, or production of cluster munitions, while mandating the clearance of cluster munitions in contaminated areas and the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions. As of December 2025, there are 111 countries and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

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 2025). 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 the universality and expertise of the UN to realize policy aims through multilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, including the three pillars of UN activities—peace and security, development, and human rights. Japan has served as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) a record 12 times among all UN Member States, actively contributing to the realization and maintenance of international peace and security—a prominent example of such efforts. 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. 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 multilateralism with the UN at its core, as well as the functions of the UN, including UN Security Council reform.

(2) Major Events in 2025

The High-Level Week of the 80th UN General Assembly convened in September. Prime Minister Ishiba and Foreign Minister Iwaya attended from Japan.

In his address at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Ishiba reflected on the founding of the UN and made a strong call for the urgent need to reform the Security Council. He also expressed Japan's resolve to strengthen its efforts



Prime Minister Ishiba delivers a general debate speech at the UN General Assembly (September 23, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)



Meeting between Prime Minister Ishiba and UN Secretary-General Guterres at the UN General Assembly High-Level Week (September 23, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

toward peace and stability in the Middle East region, called for the realization of “a world without nuclear weapons,” and communicated Japan's approach to international cooperation in co-creating solutions to challenges with other countries. He further pointed to the importance of healthy and robust democracy, and called for “solidarity and tolerance, not division and confrontation.”

Prime Minister Ishiba also took the opportunity of the UN High-Level Week to meet with UN Secretary-General Guterres and other leaders of countries and international organizations, and exchanged opinions actively on various issues in the international arena and bilateral relations. In his meeting with UN Secretary-General Guterres, Prime Minister Ishiba once again pointed out the urgent need of Security Council reform, and expressed the intention to continue

Special Feature

United Nations 80th Anniversary

In 2025, the United Nations (UN) marked the milestone of its 80th anniversary. Since its founding in 1945, under humanity's pledge never to repeat the scourge of war, the UN has continued to serve as the central forum for multilateral cooperation across a wide range of fields including international peace and security, development, and human rights.

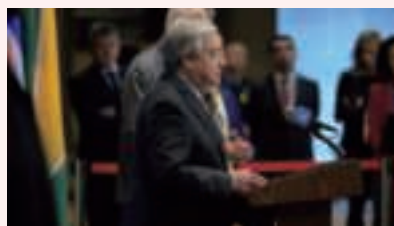
■ The Path to the Founding of the UN

The UN was born out of reflection on the failure of the League of Nations to prevent World War II. From April to June 1945, representatives of 50 countries gathered in San Francisco, United States (U.S.), to attend the “United Nations Conference on International Organization.” At the conference, the Charter of the United Nations, which proclaimed the determination “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,” was drafted and signed on June 26 of the same year. The UN Charter entered into force on October 24 of the same year, which became the day of the founding of the UN and is still celebrated in countries around the world as “United Nations Day.” The UN Charter sets forth, as the purposes of the UN, the achievement of international cooperation in maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, solving international problems, and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and at the same time stipulates principles including the sovereign equality of states, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and the non-use of force.

While the UN had 51 Member States at its founding, it has 193 Member States as of 2025, and continues to address international peace and security and global issues as the sole universal international organization of its kind. It has carried out wide-ranging activities, including peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, and sustainable development, expanding and deepening its role with each era.

■ The 80th Anniversary of the UN and UN Reform

Having marked its 80th anniversary in 2025, the UN has embarked on fundamental reform of its organization in order to respond to the rapidly changing international situation and increasingly complex global issues. At the center of this effort is the “UN80 Initiative.” This is a reform of the entire UN system proposed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on March 11. It is an initiative aimed at realizing an even stronger and more effective UN befitting the 21st century. The UN80 Initiative consists of three workstreams: “efficiency improvement,” “mandate implementation review,” and “structural changes and programmatic realignment,” and discussions on reform are being advanced by the UN Secretariat and Member States toward realizing a more functional UN.



UN Secretary-General Guterres announces the UN80 Initiative (March 12, New York, U.S.; Photo: UN)

Efforts toward UN reform are not limited to the UN80 Initiative. In order to enable the UN to respond more effectively to the various challenges facing the international community, UN Security Council reform is also necessary. As world leaders emphasized the urgent need to reform the UN Security Council at the “Summit of the Future” held during the UN General Assembly in September 2024, there is a broadly shared view that UN Security Council reform reflecting the realities of the international community should be realized at an early date so as to make the body more legitimate, effective, and representative.

Over the long span of 80 years, as the international community has undergone major changes, the UN has confronted the challenges of each era and has repeatedly reformed and evolved. Now, 80 years since its founding, the UN is being called upon all the more to transform itself for the next generation.

collaborating in terms of UN reform, including the UN80 Initiative.⁽⁴⁴⁾ He also reiterated his request for the maintenance and increase of Japanese staff employed in UN-related organizations and agencies. Secretary-General Guterres expressed high appreciation for Japan's approach to development, noting that it stands from the perspective of the partner countries.

Foreign Minister Iwaya engaged in approximately 30 meetings, discussions and other engagements, including the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries on UN Security Council Reform, which he chaired, and the High-Level International Conference on the Two-State Solution for the Israeli-Palestinian Issue. Through meetings and discussions with various countries, Japan communicated its position and commitment to advancing multilateralism with the UN at its core and to making proactive contributions to the realization and maintenance of international peace and security. Through multilateral meetings among like-minded countries and multilateral fora, as well as through meetings with foreign ministers of various countries, Japan confirmed close coordination with partner nations on the regional and international situation, including the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and the situations in Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as on urgent issues facing the international community.

(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, representative, and effective.

To play an even more proactive role toward the realization of international peace and security through the UN, Japan has been making efforts to convince other countries to pursue an early reform of the UN Security Council, with the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members 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. Six meetings took place during the 79th session of the UN General Assembly, between November 2024 and June 2025. During the 79th session, concrete discussions were held on various proposals by Member States and groups, including on the allocation of seats, the veto, and working methods, through the

⁽⁴⁴⁾ A reform of the entire UN system proposed by UN Secretary-General Guterres on March 11, 2025, aimed at realizing a stronger, more effective UN fit for the 21st century. It consists of three pillars (workstreams): "efficiency in the UN secretariat," "mandate implementation review," and "structural and programmatic realignments."



Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries (Brazil, Japan, India, and Germany) on UN Security Council Reform (September 25, New York, U.S.)

initiative of the Co-Chairs of the IGN. In October, Annalena Baerbock, President of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, appointed the Permanent Representatives of Kuwait and the Netherlands to the UN as Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (with the Permanent Representative of Kuwait reappointed).

Japan places great importance on the initiatives of the G4 (Japan, Brazil, Germany, and India), a group that cooperates on promoting UN Security Council reform. Foreign Minister Iwaya chaired 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 call by leaders from around the world set out in “Pact for the Future”⁽⁴⁵⁾ for the urgent need to reform the UN Security Council, and concurred on working with the relevant countries including Africa and the U.S. to achieve concrete progress as soon as possible, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the UN. 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 2021, he issued a report entitled “Our Common Agenda” which proposed concrete measures to adapt the UN to a new era, and in 2024, organized the Summit of the Future at his initiative. Japan supports the objectives of the reform with the hope that the UN will fulfill its mission more effectively and efficiently. In March 2025, the Secretary-General put forward the “UN80 Initiative” for UN reform, proposing reform measures including reductions in UN posts and the budget, with a view to making the UN stronger, more effective, and fit for the 21st century as it marks its 80th anniversary.

B Budget

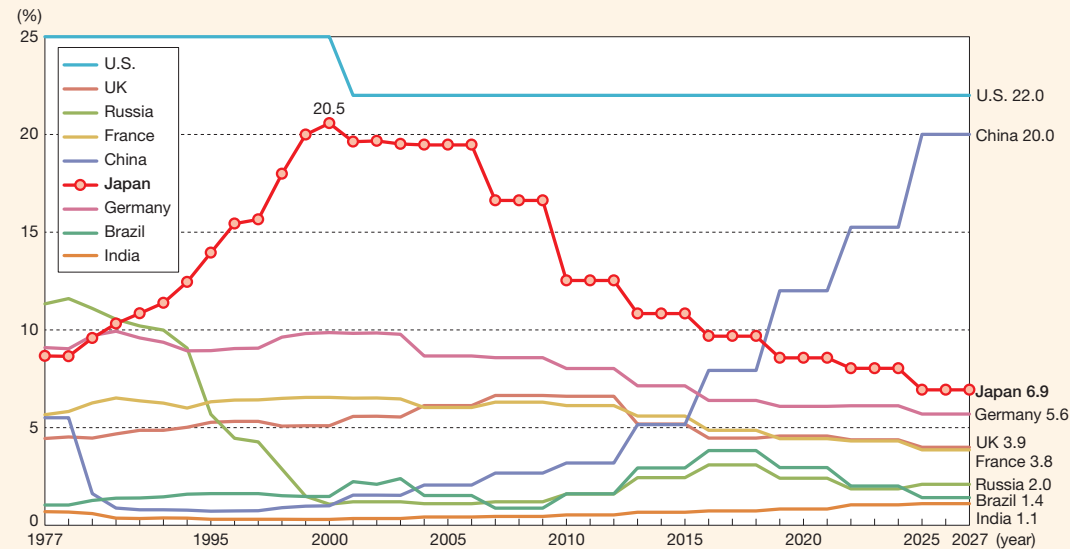
The UN budget is mainly composed of the regular budget for general programs (an annual budget for the period from January to December), and the peacekeeping budget for UN peacekeeping operations (an annual budget for the period from July to the following June).

The regular budget for 2026 amounting to approximately 3.45 billion U.S. dollars was approved at the UN General Assembly in December. As part of the “UN80 Initiative,” the budget was reduced by approximately 9.6% compared to the previous year, with about 2,600 posts eliminated. With regard to the peacekeeping budget, the budget for 2025/2026 amounting to approximately 5.39 billion U.S. dollars was approved in June.

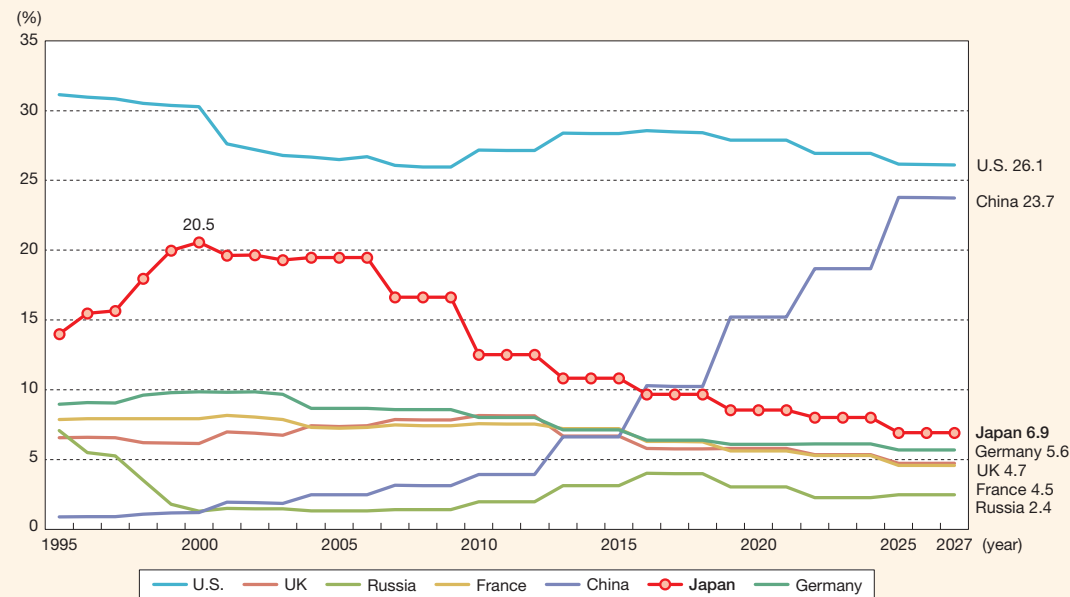
The budget to support UN activities is composed of assessed contributions mandatorily paid by Member States and voluntary contributions provided in accordance with Member States’ policy needs. For assessed contributions, Japan currently ranks third following the U.S. and China, and contributed approximately 237.23 million U.S. dollars to the regular budget for 2025, and approximately 373.26 million U.S. dollars to the peacekeeping budget for 2025/2026. 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 capacity of Member States to bear financial burden.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ “Pact for the Future”: The outcome document adopted at the “Summit of the Future” held at the UN General Assembly in September 2024. For the first time at the leaders’ level, it included concrete content on UN Security Council reform, in addition to the rule of law, human dignity, the realization of “a world without nuclear weapons,” and other matters.

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



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



Japan's scale of assessment, revised at the end of 2024, is 6.930% (2025-2027), following the U.S. and China.

Key bodies that address administrative and budgetary matters of the UN are the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Committee on Contributions (COC), both of which are standing subsidiary committees of the General Assembly and are comprised of members serving in their personal capacities. They play important

roles for decision making at the General Assembly; while the ACABQ reviews the overall administrative and budgetary issues of the UN and makes recommendations to the General Assembly, the COC makes a proposal on the scale of assessments of the regular budget to be submitted to the General Assembly. 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 toward international peace and security. In June, Foreign Minister Iwaya held meetings in The Hague (Netherlands) with IWASAWA Yuji, President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and AKANE Tomoko, President of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Foreign Minister Iwaya conveyed that Japan attaches great importance to the role of the ICJ and the ICC in strengthening the rule of law in the international community and that Japan will continue to strongly support the ICJ and the ICC. Foreign Minister Iwaya and the two Presidents confirmed to continue coordination and cooperation to maintain and strengthen the rule of law in the international community. In addition, upon the return visits to Japan by ICJ President Iwasawa, Foreign Minister Motegi (December) and Prime Minister Takaichi (January 2026) received courtesy calls by ICJ President Iwasawa; upon the return visits to Japan by ICC President Akane, Foreign Minister Iwaya (August) and both Prime Minister Takaichi and Foreign Minister Motegi (January 2026) received courtesy calls by ICC President Akane, and, on each occasion, they confirmed continued coordination toward the maintenance and strengthening of the rule of law in the international community.

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⁽⁴⁶⁾ 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 of Arbitration (PCA). In March, Judge Iwasawa was elected President of the ICJ. As of 2025, Japan has produced a number of prominent figures serving on international judicial bodies, including ICJ President Iwasawa (ICJ judge since 2018; elected President in March 2025), Judge HORINOCHI Hidehisa of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) (incumbent since 2023), and ICC President Akane (ICC judge since 2018; elected President in March 2024), and strives to enhance the effectiveness and universality of international courts and tribunals. Furthermore, 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 litigation, 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 active in proceedings at major international courts and tribunals. In the field of economy as well, 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, MOFA 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 external experts (domestic and foreign law firms, academics, etc.). 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, and being elected at the election of UNCITRAL members in 2024. In the

⁽⁴⁶⁾ 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 the end of 2025).

HCCH, TAKESHITA Keisuke, Chairperson (incumbent since 2020, Professor at Hitotsubashi University), serves as chair of the working group on international jurisdiction, including international *lis pendens*. Furthermore, 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, MOFA organized the Tokyo International Law Seminar, a training program for practitioners in the field of international law — held annually since 2023 — for officials from Asia and Africa, 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, the 2025 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 the foundation for such rule of law at sea. The Convention has 171 States Parties (including some regions not officially recognized as nations by Japan; as of February 2026) 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 recognition that all activities in the oceans and seas, including territorial seas and exclusive economic zones (EEZ), etc., ought to be carried out in accordance with the provisions of UNCLOS is widely shared and accepted in the international community. As problems concerning the oceans and seas grow more complex and diverse, it is important to preserve and strengthen the maritime order based on UNCLOS, which serves as a universal and unified 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 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 produce members of the Commission (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)), and also contributes financially through means such as providing contributions to the trust fund for the purpose of defraying the costs of participation of members from developing countries, thereby continuing to cooperate with the Commission in terms of both human and financial resources. In addition, in the International Seabed Authority (ISA), established for the primary purpose of administering mineral resources in the Area (the sea-bed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction), Japan has consistently served on the ISA's Council since its establishment. Deliberations are being held at the ISA on regulations on the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, and Japan participates actively in the negotiations, contributing constructively to discussions toward the development of exploitation regulations that give due consideration to both the preservation of the marine environment and the utilization of resources.

Furthermore, in December, Japan acceded to 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 (entered into force on January 17, 2026). Meetings of the Preparatory Commission were held in April and August to prepare for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and the convening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement. Japan participated actively in the discussions 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, the Japan-Philippines RAA entered into force in September. 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, the Japan-Italy ACSA entered into force in September, while agreements were signed with the Netherlands and New Zealand in December, and with the Philippines in January 2026. 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 Mongolia in December 2024 entered into force in January, while an agreement in principle was reached with Spain in November. Agreements were also signed with Canada in January 2026 and with Bangladesh in February 2026. As for Agreements on the Security of Information, the agreement signed with Ukraine in November 2024 entered into force in June, the agreement signed with Canada in July entered into force in January 2026, and Japan announced the start of negotiations with the EU in July.

(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 agreements, and social security agreements with various countries and regions. Furthermore, Japan also actively engaged 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 bilateral EPAs, the Diet of Japan granted its approval for the Protocol Amending the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia for an Economic Partnership in April, and the Japan-Bangladesh EPA was signed in February. In addition, the Certification of the Improvements to Schedules of Specific Commitments (Services Domestic Regulation) under the WTO Agreement entered into force for Japan in June, and the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies under the WTO Agreement entered into force in September.

Furthermore, Japan, with a view to protecting and promoting the livelihoods and activities of Japanese citizens and companies, is working to ensure the proper implementation of existing international agreements, including by seeking to make use of the WTO dispute settlement system.

In social areas such as human rights, labor, the environment, health, fisheries, maritime affairs, aviation, and tourism, which are closely linked to the daily lives of the people, Japan actively participates in negotiations of international agreements to ensure that Japan's positions are reflected and also concludes such agreements.

For example, in the aviation sector, the Agreement between Japan and the Czech Republic for Air Services was concluded in July. In the maritime sector, Japan concluded the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F Convention) of 1995 in November. In the environmental sector, Japan acceded to the BBNJ Agreement and accepted the 2009 Amendment to the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention in December.

(5) Initiatives in the Field of Criminal Justice

The International Criminal Court (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 2025. Moreover, Japan has consistently produced judges since its accession to the ICC, and Judge Akane is currently serving as the President of the ICC. Japan also cooperates on the activities of the ICC in the aspect of human resources, with YAMADA Jun, then Deputy Secretary-General of the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) elected as Chair of the 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 promote universalization and strengthening of its effectiveness. Japan actively engages in promoting the securing of cooperation with the ICC, examining issues related to the scope of jurisdiction, establishing the principle of complementarity, and ensuring efficiency in its judicial procedures, through fora such as the working groups of the Assembly of States Parties. Against this backdrop, from February onward, the U.S. announced sanctions against certain ICC officials and others. Japan has consistently supported the ICC, and is working in cooperation with the ICC and other States Parties with a view to what would be most effective in enabling the ICC to carry out its activities fully while maintaining its independence and ensuring its safety. Furthermore, in November, as part of Japan's human resource contribution to the ICC, Japan nominated YAMAUCHI Yoshimitsu, Director, the United Nations Training Cooperation Department, the Research and Training Institute of the Ministry of Justice and Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation, who is a Japanese expert in the field of criminal justice, as a candidate for the ICC judicial election to be held at the end of 2026.

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). In December, Japan and Canada signed the MLAT.

7 Human Rights

Many people around the world are in dire human rights situations. 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 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.

In 2025, Japan held the third Japan-U.S. Strategic Dialogue on Democratic Resilience in November. At this dialogue, both sides exchanged views on human rights in Asia, as well as emerging human rights challenges such as transnational repression and misuse of surveillance technology, and reaffirmed their commitment to continued cooperation in the field of human rights between Japan and the U.S. Furthermore, the 27th Japan-EU Human Rights Dialogue was held in February in Brussels (Belgium), the 15th Japan-Iran Human Rights Dialogue was held in April in Tehran, and the 13th Japan-Cambodia Human Rights Dialogue was held in August in Phnom Penh. Both sides exchanged information on their respective efforts in the field of human rights and exchanged views on cooperation in multilateral fora.

(1) Initiatives within the UN

A UN Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council holds sessions throughout the year in Geneva (Switzerland) (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 58th Session of the Human Rights Council held from February to April (a meeting of the key representatives from each country), Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs IKUINA Akiko delivered a statement. She 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. She also spoke about Japan's continued determination to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in Asia and the world, and strongly urged North Korea for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. Furthermore, she expressed Japan's deep concerns over the human rights situation in China, including Hong Kong, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and Tibet Autonomous Region, and urged China to take concrete actions. At the same session, the resolution on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), submitted by the EU and Australia and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote (adopted for 18 consecutive years). This resolution strongly demands again that North Korea sincerely listen to the voices of the abductees and their families, and clarify the fate and whereabouts of disappeared persons, and faithfully provide accurate, detailed, and full information promptly to the families of abductees, and in particular, realize the immediate return of all Japanese abductees.

At the 60th Session held in September and October, the resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia, submitted by Japan as the main sponsor, was adopted without a vote. This resolution reflects the concern of the international community over the human rights situation in Cambodia and

encourages the Government of Cambodia to put effort into improving the human rights situation. It also extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia for two years.

B The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly

The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly is, along with the Human Rights Council, the UN's main forum focused on human rights. Generally, in October and November, the Committee discusses a wide range of issues, including those concerning social development, women, children, racial discrimination, refugees, crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as the human rights situations in North Korea, Syria and Iran, among others. Resolutions adopted by the Third Committee are then adopted by a plenary session of the General Assembly, contributing to the development of international norms.

At the 80th 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 21st consecutive year). The resolution further reiterates the growing 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, the United States, on behalf of 15 countries, delivered a joint statement expressing continued deep concern about the serious human rights violations taking place in China, based on credible reports of violations against ethnic and religious minorities, including Uyghurs and Tibetans. 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 the revised NAP was approved and published at the committee meeting held in December 2025. 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 conduct training for Japanese companies and their suppliers in these countries and to provide support to local governments on the formulation and implementation of National Action Plans. MOFA, in cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies, will steadily implement the NAP going forward, while continuing to engage in dialogues with stakeholders. (See the Special Feature on page 261.)

D Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of Pathfinding Countries for Ending Violence Against Children

In November, the Regional Meeting of Asia-Pacific Pathfinding Countries for Ending Violence Against

Children⁽⁴⁷⁾ was held in the Philippines. At the meeting, participating countries shared updates on their efforts toward ending violence against children and discussed the strengthening of mutual exchange. Japan also participated as a Pathfinding Country and presented the current status and future outlook of its domestic measures.

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

A International Human Rights Law (IHRL)

The protection of human rights is the responsibility of all States, and Japan continues its efforts to realize the rights recognized under the human rights treaties to which it is party. As one of Japan's contributions under human rights treaties, the election of members of the Committee Against Torture was conducted in October at the 20th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, held at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Japan's candidate, MAEDA Naoko (Professor, Graduate School of Law, Nagoya University), was re-elected to the top position in the election. (See the Column on page 262.)

B International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Japan has actively been engaged in efforts to strengthen the implementation of IHL both domestically and internationally. In August, Japan participated in the Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference on IHL and also announced its participation in the Global Initiative on IHL. As part of its efforts to raise awareness of IHL, Japan, as it does every year, dispatched an official from MOFA to serve as a judge in the IHL Moot Court and Role-Play Competitions, organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in November.

(3) Contribution to Refugee Issues

From the perspective of international contribution and humanitarian aid, Japan became the first country in Asia in 2010 to accept refugees under a resettlement program (the transfer of refugees from a country, where they have sought temporary asylum after fleeing their countries of origin, to a third country that agrees to accept them for long-term settlement). As of the end of FY2024, Japan has accepted a total of 332 refugees from 135 households.

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.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Countries participating in the "Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (GPeVAC)" (currently the "Pathfinding Global Alliance on Ending Violence Against Children"), a voluntary initiative of countries committed to eliminating violence against children. Since 2018, Japan has been a "Pathfinding Country" (a country that commits to working toward the elimination of violence against children within its own borders), and has been actively involved in activities both domestically and internationally, including the formulation of an "Action Plan to End Violence Against Children" and contributions to the "Fund to End Violence Against Children."

Special Feature

Progress in Initiatives on “Business and Human Rights” and Revision of the National Action Plan

Amid growing interest in the social impact of corporate activities, in October 2020, the Government of Japan formulated the “National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights (2020-2025)” (hereinafter referred to as the “Previous NAP”) to steadily implement the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs),” and has been pursuing initiatives related to the three pillars of UNGPs: “the State duty to protect human rights,” “the corporate responsibility to respect human rights,” and “access to remedy.” Furthermore, the Government has supported corporate efforts for respecting human rights through measures such as the formulation of the “Guidelines on Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains” (2022), the decision on the government’s policy on human rights considerations in public procurement (2023), the preparation of various forms of guidance materials, the holding of seminars, and the establishment of consultation centers. As a result, initiatives undertaken by companies themselves have made progress, particularly among large enterprises.

Meanwhile, as human rights due diligence (HRDD) — defined as identifying, preventing, mitigating, addressing, and providing information on adverse impacts on human rights arising from corporate activities — and information disclosure are being strengthened among Western countries in particular, Japanese companies with supply chains spanning multiple countries and regions are increasingly required to take such measures. At the same time, various challenges have emerged, including the practical implementation of HRDD, raising awareness of and promoting the use of effective remedy mechanisms, and the need to expand efforts among small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and in regional areas.

Against this backdrop, the Government of Japan commenced the revision of the Previous NAP in 2024. In undertaking the revision, an outline and a draft were prepared based on various issues raised in the “Stakeholders’ Report,” which compiled wide-ranging views from representatives of various sectors including civil society, businesses, and labor unions, together with discussions at the Roundtable and Working Group meetings, and subsequent deliberations and coordination among the relevant ministries and agencies. Following a public consultation, the revised NAP was approved at the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Policy Promotion for the Implementation of Japan’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, held in December 2025.

Premised on the three pillars of UNGPs, the revised NAP maintains the four objectives set out in the Previous NAP — namely, “protection and promotion of human rights for society as a whole, including international society,” “ensuring policy coherence in relation to Business and Human Rights,” “ensuring and enhancing the international competitiveness and sustainability of Japanese business enterprises,” and “contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).” At the same time, by re-examining the measures that relevant ministries and agencies had previously implemented separately within their respective policy areas and organizing them into a cross-cutting, integrated framework from the perspective of “Business and Human Rights,” the revised NAP explicitly sets eight priority areas for Government action. The revised NAP also expanded on the descriptions for calling on companies to take concrete actions to introduce and implement HRDD.

Through the implementation of the new NAP, the Government of Japan aims to enhance the international competitiveness and achieve sustainable development of Japanese enterprises, while further contributing to the protection and promotion of human rights across the entire international community.



Cover of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (Revised Edition)

Column

The Contemporary Significance of the Work of the Committee against Torture — On the Occasion of Re-election as a Committee Member —

MAEDA Naoko, Professor of Nagoya University

I serve as a member of the Committee against Torture, which was established under the “Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment” (the Convention against Torture). In the Committee member election held in October 2021, I stood as Japan’s first-ever candidate and was elected with the highest number of votes (term: 2022-2025; Vice-Chair in 2024 and 2025). In the election held in October 2025, in which I stood as a candidate again, I was re-elected with the highest number of votes (term: 2026-2029).

The Convention against Torture was drafted in response to a major international concern that arose during the 1970s, when military dictatorships and developmental authoritarian regimes emerged in several countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Practices such as torture, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial summary executions became widespread, making it necessary to address these issues effectively. The Convention was drafted on the basis of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1975) and was adopted in 1984. Japan acceded to the Convention in 1999.

The year 2024 marked the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention against Torture. In today’s world, where various conflicts are witnessed on a daily basis, a wide range of issues relating to torture and other forms of inhumane treatment in conflict situations continue to accumulate. The Committee against Torture is expected to play an even more active role in promoting the prompt redress of human rights violations in individual countries. It does so through procedures such as the review of reports periodically submitted by the States Parties, the consideration of communications submitted by victims alleging violations of their rights, and inquiries including on-site visits.

The Convention against Torture must be applied equally to all States Parties and serve as one pillar of the universal human rights protection system. Each of the 175 States Parties (as of the end of December 2025) has its own particular circumstances in terms of culture and tradition, religion, state systems, economic conditions, and other factors. Bearing these circumstances in mind, and yet to ensure that divisions over human rights do not become further polarized, I intend, in my capacity as a Committee member, to continue efforts to deepen the international community’s understanding of the universality of human rights and the importance of the rule of law through constructive dialogue with states, civil society, and others.

As Committee members, we are required to have legal expertise and carry out our duties in our personal capacity, rather than as representatives of our respective states. Through two election campaigns, I have keenly felt the depth of trust that the international community places in Japan as a nation. Additionally, as the Committee against Torture has long been criticized for the low representation of women among its members, I intend to contribute to the Committee’s work from the perspective of promoting women’s empowerment.



The author

8 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine since 2022, as well as the situation in Gaza since October 2023, have seriously affected particularly women and girls, as evidenced by the increase in reports on conflict-related sexual violence. 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 healthcare, 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 place women and girls at the center of various policies and measures 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 adopt 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 2025 (commonly known as "Honebuto Policy 2025"), which serves as the basis for the government budget, covered WPS for the third consecutive year since 2023. 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. On January 15, 2026, Prime Minister Takaichi, at a meeting with the Group of Women Ambassadors in Japan, stated that gender equality is an indispensable element for ensuring sustainable development, and that she would like to work hard and show results for the present and future of the world to sweep away biases such as "women are not suited for leadership."

(1) G7

At the G7 Kananaskis Summit held in June, with a view to promoting gender mainstreaming, multiple Leaders' Statements included references to gender-related challenges in specific fields. For example, the G7 Critical Minerals Action Plan refers to combating gender-based violence in the mining industry, while the G7 Leaders' Statement on AI for Prosperity states that the Leaders of the G7 will drive economic growth, address talent shortages, and ensure equal opportunity, by encouraging girls, as well as members of communities left behind by globalization, to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and increasing women's representation in the AI talent pool at all levels.

(2) G20

The Chair's Statement of the G20 Empowerment of Women Ministerial Meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa in October included "recognise that the women, and peace and security agenda, including, the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation and leadership of women in all stages of peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes, is essential for the maintenance and promotion of global peace and security." The Leaders' Declaration issued at the G20 Johannesburg Summit held in November reaffirmed our full commitment to the empowerment of women and girls and to urgently remove social and economic barriers to achieve gender equality, ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, and commits to take accelerated action to eradicate all forms of violence including sexual violence and harassment against all women and girls, and violence occurring in public and private life, online and offline, and to undertake reforms to ensure women have full and equal access and rights to economic resources, access to finance and markets to support women's entrepreneurship and women-led businesses and cooperatives. It also reflected the WPS concept of recognizing the role of women as agents of peace.

(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 youth, 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 eight 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 has provided support to strengthen the capacity of organizations involved in addressing trafficking in persons in the Cambodia region. Furthermore, in Kenya and Pakistan, Japan has conducted training with participants from 13 countries on the themes of cooperation aimed at protecting the survivors of gender-based

violence and supporting them to gain independence, and eradicating gender-based violence.

C Approach to Sexual Violence in Conflict

Sexual violence as a tactic of war is a problem that cannot be overlooked. It is vital to put an end to the impunity of perpetrators and to provide support for 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 2025, Japan provided financial support of approximately 0.37 million U.S. dollars to the OSRSG-SVC to implement a project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that aimed to strengthen access to justice for survivors of sexual violence, particularly through providing legal counsel and strengthening judicial cooperation in internally displaced persons camps and areas affected by armed groups. In addition, in 2025, Japan contributed an additional 2 million Euros to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF), founded by 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureates Dr. Mukwege and Ms. Murad, bringing Japan’s total contributions to 12 million Euros (as of December 31, 2025). 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 was first stipulated in UN Security Council resolution 1325 adopted in 2000. Marking the 25th anniversary of the adoption of this groundbreaking resolution in 2025, Japan served as

co-chair of the WPS Focal Points Network⁽⁴⁸⁾ together with Norway, and has led international discussions on promoting WPS by hosting a capital-level meeting in Tokyo and a high-level side event during the UN High-Level Week, among other events. 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

Through UN Women, Japan is implementing projects related to WPS, such as capacity building for women and girls in developing countries 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 affected by 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. Furthermore, Japan is strengthening its cooperation with UN Women, including through inviting UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous to Japan in December.

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

The 69th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), held in March, was attended by more than 13,000 representatives from Member States and civil society organizations, making it the largest session in the history of the CSW. The session was convened on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration

and Platform for Action, and was held on the theme of review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century." On behalf of Japan, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya spoke at the Ministerial Roundtable, addressing Japan's efforts toward achieving gender equality, including the formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality and the Basic Policy on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, collaboration with the private sector and civil society, as well as the advancement of WPS. In the General Discussion, Japan stated it will continue to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women in cooperation with various stakeholders, including UN agencies and civil society.

(5) 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 2024, a review was conducted in Geneva (Switzerland) on the Ninth Periodic Report of Japan 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.⁽⁴⁹⁾

(6) Next Generation Networking Program for Gender Equality

With a view to promoting gender equality together with Asia and the world and realizing a flexible and resilient society rich in diversity and inclusion, MOFA

⁽⁴⁸⁾ The WPS Focal Points Network is the largest WPS-related network among UN Member States to promote the WPS commitments through sharing lessons learned and good practices among Member States and regional organizations. In addition to governments, regional organizations also participate. As of December 2025, there are a total of 106 members, comprising 96 countries and 10 regional organizations.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ For Comments from Japan on the Concluding Observations regarding the ninth periodic report of Japan, see MOFA's website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100773663.pdf>

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launched the “Next Generation Networking Program for Gender Equality” in FY2025, working to nurture the next generation of leaders in the field of gender. As part of this program, the Next Generation Forum for Gender Equality was held at the United Nations University on December 10, at which State Minister for Foreign Affairs HORII Iwao delivered the opening

remarks and UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous delivered a keynote speech. The subsequent sessions featured panel discussions on the themes of women's participation and gender bias (gender roles) respectively. In addition, reports were given by young researchers who had been dispatched to overseas research institutions in 2025 under this program.

Special Feature

Initiatives for the 25th Anniversary of Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

In 2025, which marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Japan assumed the co-chair of the WPS Focal Points Network together with Norway and has led international discussions on WPS. Japan has also launched the Next Generation Networking Program for Gender Equality with a view to promoting gender equality (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5) together with Asia and the world and achieving a flexible and resilient future society that is rich in diversity and inclusivity and able to respond to new challenges.

■ WPS Focal Points Network Meeting

At the WPS Focal Points Network 7th Capital Level Meeting held in Tokyo in February, participants, primarily WPS focal points, engaged in two days of discussions, sharing good practices and experiences from various countries and regions on three themes: “Role of Women in Peace Mediation and Peacebuilding and as Human Rights Defenders,” “Further Elaboration of the WPS Agenda, Including Advancing Its Application to Disaster Risk Reduction,” and “Significance of Development and Implementation of National and Regional Action Plans.” On the final day, based on the two-day discussions, the draft Communiqué of the WPS Focal Points Network 7th Capital Level Meeting was presented and indicated the concrete directions and actions that the international community should take. In addition, on the afternoon of the second day, a public symposium entitled “Women, Peace and Security 25th: Toward Intergenerational Initiatives” was organized and active discussion was held particularly among youth participants engaged in WPS-related efforts.

In September, a WPS Focal Points Network High-Level Side Event was held in New York, the United States, attended by Foreign Minister Iwaya and other participants including President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah of Namibia, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Espen Barth Eide, and ministers from 15 other countries, emphasizing political commitments to WPS. In his opening remarks at the meeting, Foreign Minister Iwaya stated that Japan would leverage its experience as co-chair of the WPS Focal Points Network to continue to vigorously promote WPS as one of the main pillars of Japan’s foreign policy and contribute even more to the promotion of WPS internationally.



Foreign Minister Iwaya attending the WPS Focal Points Network High-Level Side Event (September 24, New York, U.S.)

■ Convening the “Next Generation Forum for Gender Equality” — A New Initiative —

In December, as part of the “Next Generation Networking Program for Gender Equality,” the Next Generation Forum for Gender Equality was held in co-host with the United Nations University (UNU) and with the cooperation of UN Women. Following opening remarks by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Horii and a keynote address by UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous, panel discussions were held on the themes of “Women’s Participation” and “Gender Bias (Gender Roles).” Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya also attended as a panelist, and a lively discussion was exchanged among young speakers leading the promotion of gender equality in their respective fields.



Participants at the Next Generation Forum for Gender Equality (December 10, UNU)

Through the Next Generation Networking Program for Gender Equality and various other opportunities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will promote research and discussion by practitioners and youth who will be the future promoters of gender equality, reflect the gender perspective in various policies and measures, and work toward developing the next generation who will contribute to advancing the SDGs and a gender-equal society both domestically and internationally.