

On the Publication of Defense of Japan 2011

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This year's white paper is the second publication since the new administration took office. As the security environment surrounding Japan changes at a rapid pace, this year the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) experienced numerous milestone events within Japan and abroad.

First, there was the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11. The earthquake, which was the largest in recorded Japanese history, caused an unprecedented level of damage. The MOD and SDF exerted around-the-clock efforts, engaging in relief activities for disaster victims and responding to the nuclear disaster.

SDF camps and bases were also damaged in the disaster. Nevertheless, despite the circumstances, the SDF responded to an order made by Prime Minister Kan by quickly establishing a posture of 100,000 personnel to respond to the situation. I am proud to know that this contributed to ensuring the safety and peace of mind not only of the disaster victims, but also of citizens across Japan. Never before have the people of Japan been in such a close relationship with the MOD and SDF. Prime Minister Kan himself even said, "As commander and chief of the SDF, it makes me proud to see each member carry out such sincerely selfless work. I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to each and every person in the SDF." This was a great honor even for me.

Next, we completed the New National Defense Program Guidelines and the Mid-Term Defense Program. In December of last year we drafted the first National Defense Program Guidelines and Mid-Term Defense Program since the change in administration. Following the change we received a one-year grace period, during which active deliberations were carried out by senior-level personnel at the MOD. Related ministers engaged in lively discussion, utilizing the report of the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era as a reference material, culminating in the successful orchestration of realistic policy measures.

The New National Defense Program Guidelines lay out the new concept of "dynamic defense forces," focusing on the operation of defense forces in consideration of the current security environment. The new Guidelines also state that Japan will work to ensure effective deterrence and response while also improving stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the global security environment. Working under the Mid-Term Defense Program with the aim of realizing "dynamic defense forces," the MOD and SDF are

promoting considerations for structural reform to improve the effectiveness of the defense forces in order to conduct fundamental revisions of the equipment, personnel, and organizations spanning the entire SDF.

Moreover, I also visited the United States in June to attend the 2+2 Meeting, which was hosted by the Japanese and United States' foreign affairs and defense authorities. At the meeting, the first of its kind in four years, comprehensive discussion was carried out on common security issues faced by Japan and the United States and a new set of common strategic objectives was announced. Furthermore, concrete developments were achieved and future directions indicated for a broad range of areas, including security and defense cooperation, realignment of the US Forces in Japan, and disaster response. The fact that the 2+2 Meeting was held by two democratic administrations was significant because it meant that more than 80% of Japan's political forces were committed to the Japan-US Alliance. Japan will promote the issues of cooperation indicated in the Meeting's joint statement and work to ensure that the Japan-US Alliance functions more effectively in responding to diverse situations in the future. Moreover, we will work to ensure that the Alliance is capable of tackling a broad range of issues over the next 50 years, always boasting an innovative sense of dynamism, by working to carry out more active roles in the Asia-Pacific region and throughout the entire international community.

Looking at the region surrounding Japan, the nuclear and missile problems of North Korea still require due caution. Tensions have increased on the Korean Peninsula due to such incidents as the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. Furthermore, China continues to rapidly expand and modernize its military forces and the activities that it conducts in the waters surrounding Japan are growing larger in scale and more intense. Russia also continues to intensify the level of its military activities.

Meanwhile, efforts to stabilize the security situation in the Asia-Pacific region are beginning to crystallize. In October of last year, for example, the first ASEAN Plus Defense Ministers' Meeting was held. Furthermore, under the awareness that the peace and stability of the international community is closely related to the peace and safety of Japan, Japan continues to carry out PKO in Haiti, Golan Heights, Sudan, and Timor-Leste. Japan also continues to deploy destroyers and P-3C patrol aircraft to the waters off of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden in order to ensure the safe maritime transport of goods. The stable use of sea, space, and cyberspace have been pointed out as global security issues, and the MOD intends to actively engage in various forms of international cooperation in order to respond to these new issues.

Against this backdrop, this year's Defense of Japan endeavors to broadly introduce response to the Great East Japan Earthquake while incorporating the voices of SDF personnel that personally engaged in activities on-site. Furthermore, as this is the first white paper following the establishment of the New National Defense Program Guidelines and the Mid-Term Defense Program, it aims to introduce these two

new documents in detail while tracing the transition of past program guidelines. Defense of Japan 2010 also explains the various activities of the MOD and SDF in accordance with the concepts laid out in the New National Defense Program Guidelines and the Mid-Term Defense Program.

National defense will not be viable and ensured without the trust and support of the people. I sincerely hope that this white paper, "Defense of Japan 2010," will be read broadly by as many people as possible and that it will help you enhance your understanding of national defense.