

Chapter 3 National Security Strategy

In December 2013, the Cabinet approved the National Security Strategy (NSS), which marks the country's first-ever document defining a basic policy on national security. The NSS stipulates how Japan as a whole will ensure its future national security, and allows Japan's powerful political leadership, based on the Government's strategy and under the direction of the National Security Council, to be leveraged to create a more government-wide strategic and systematic approach to national security policy. The NSS replaces the Basic Policy on National Defense, which served as the basis for Japan's defense policies to date.

See ▶ Reference 6 (Basic Policy for National Defense)

Section 1 Japan's National Security Policy Framework

The NSS represents Japan's first-ever basic policy on national security. The NSS defines approaches that Japan should follow based on a long-term view of its national interests. Based on the NSS, the Government of Japan established the National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), which defines basic policies for Japan's future defense, the role of its defense capabilities, and objectives for specific SDF equipment. The NDPG was prepared with a medium- to long-term outlook for building up defense capabilities because the acquisition of defense equipment, such as naval vessels or aircraft, and establishment of troop operational systems, cannot be accomplished overnight and requires many years of planning. The NSS and NDPG are mainly designed for the next decade or so.

The Medium Term Defense Program (MTDP) specifies a maximum budget and the amount of mainstay defense equipment to be acquired over the subsequent five-year period in order to achieve the defense capability targets defined in the NDPG. The fiscal year budget is drawn on the MTDP substantiated as projects, and the necessary expenses for each fiscal year will be appropriated based on relevant situations.

Previous NDPG contained mention of nation-wide basic security policies to a certain extent, but mainly focused on defense policy. The establishment of the NSS, which supersedes the NDPG, carries with it great meaning as the definitive statement of the Government's basic policy on national security, with a focus on diplomatic affairs and defense policy.

See ▶ Fig. II-3-1-1 (Relations among NSS, NDPG, MTDP and Annual Budget)