

## Japan-U.S.-Australia Defense Ministers Meeting Joint Statement

1. Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, and Australian Defence Minister David Johnston, held trilateral defense ministerial talks in Singapore on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014, on the margins of the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue. This was the fourth meeting of its kind among the three nations' top defense officials.

2. The Defense Ministers exchanged views on the regional security situation, including major threats to regional stability such as North Korea. They reaffirmed the importance of working together to build a rules-based regional architecture that supports the peaceful resolution of disputes. On North Korea, they underscored their concern that North Korea's provocative behavior undermines the stability of the entire region and urged North Korea to take concrete steps toward its denuclearization. In discussing maritime security, the Ministers underscored their shared interest in the maintenance of peace and stability; respect for international law and unimpeded lawful commerce; and upholding freedom of navigation and overflight in the East China and South China Seas. They also expressed their strong opposition to the use of coercion or force to unilaterally alter the status quo in the East China and South China Seas. They called on claimants to refrain from actions that could increase tensions to clarify and pursue claims in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); and they reaffirmed their support for the rights of claimants to seek peaceful resolution of disputes, including through legal mechanisms, such as arbitration, under the Convention. They also called for ASEAN and China to reach early agreement on a meaningful Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

3. The Japanese and Australian Defense Ministers reaffirmed that their Alliances with the United States are essential to peace and security in the region and reaffirmed the importance of strong U.S. engagement in the Asia-Pacific region, and they underscored their strong support for the U.S. rebalance. In this sense, the Japanese and U.S. Defense Ministers confirmed close collaboration in revising the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation and decided to share updates with the Australian Defence Minister and other regional allies. The U.S. and Australian Defense Ministers welcomed and supported Japan's recent efforts to play a greater role in regional and global security, including through examining the relations between the right of collective self-defense and Constitution as well as adopting the new principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology.

4. The Defense Ministers affirmed the value of multilateral coordination in response to regional crises, and noted the excellent cooperation surrounding the international response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines and the search and rescue operation for the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 in the southern Indian Ocean involving 26 countries including Malaysia and China. The Defense Ministers confirmed that the three countries will continue to enhance practical trilateral cooperation and welcomed the trilateral exercise Cope North conducted in Guam in

February 2014. They also welcomed the Republic of Korea's participation in the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief portion of the training for the first time this year.

5. The Defense Ministers confirmed their commitment to continued trilateral cooperation in defense capacity-building, especially in Southeast Asia and Oceania. They also shared the intention to closely coordinate and cooperate in the fields of regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and maritime security together with other regional countries. The Defense Ministers affirmed the value of frameworks such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus in helping to coordinate regional maritime and disaster relief training. Noting the importance of ASEAN the Ministers from Australia and the U.S. expressed their intention to support Japan's leadership with Laos to develop practical military-to-military cooperation in the HA/DR field through the ADMM-Plus HA/DR Working Group.

6. The Defense Ministers reaffirmed their strategic goals for trilateral cooperation and pledged to further enhance trilateral defense cooperation. Building on these strategic goals, the Defense Ministers decided to develop the Action Plan to promote a dynamic and flexible trilateral defense relationship in order to enhance the security and prosperity of the region.