

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

1. Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, and Australian Minister for Defence Kevin Andrews held trilateral defense ministerial talks in Singapore on May 30, 2015, on the margins of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue. This was the fifth meeting of its kind among the three nations' top defense officials.
2. The Defense Ministers from Japan and Australia reaffirmed the strength of their respective Alliances with the United States as essential to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, and underscored their enduring support for the U.S. rebalance to the region. In this sense, the Japanese and U.S. Defense Ministers confirmed close collaboration based on the new Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation and affirmed their shared intent to promote trilateral and multilateral security and defense cooperation with Australia, regional allies, and partners. Recalling Japan's path as a peace-loving nation for the last 70 years, the U.S. Secretary of Defense and Australian Defense Ministers welcomed and supported Japan's recent efforts to play a greater role in regional and global security, including its efforts to develop legislation for peace and security under the banner of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. The US also welcomed the strengthening of bilateral relations between Australia and Japan.
3. The Secretary of Defense and Defense Ministers exchanged views on the regional security situation. On North Korea, they reiterated their call for North Korea to abide by United Nations Security Council Resolutions, to engage constructively with the international community, and to take concrete steps toward its denuclearization. They underscored their shared interest in the maintenance of peace and stability; respect for international law; commitment to upholding freedom of navigation and overflight; unimpeded commerce in the East China and South China Seas. They expressed strong opposition to the use of coercion or force to alter the status quo in the East China and South China Seas unilaterally and their serious concern over Chinese land reclamation activities in the South China Sea. They urged all South China Sea claimants to exercise self-restraint, halt reclamation activities, take steps to ease tensions and refrain from provocative actions that could escalate tensions. They called on governments to clarify and pursue territorial claims and accompanying maritime rights in accordance with international law. They also called for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China to reach early agreement on a meaningful Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.
4. Ensuring the value of multilateral cooperation in response to regional contingency, the Defense Ministers confirmed that the three countries are to continue to enhance practical trilateral defense

cooperation and welcomed the trilateral anti-submarine warfare exercise held in August 2014, the trilateral exercises “Michinoku ALERT 2014” in November 2014, “Cope North Guam” in February 2015, and “Southern Jackaroo” in June 2015. They also welcomed the planned participation of Japan Self-Defense Forces elements’ in the U.S.- Australia Joint Exercise “Talisman Sabre” scheduled for this July. The U.S. Secretary of Defense welcomed the involvement and leadership Japan and Australia have shown in recent “Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC)” exercises that have been important to enabling this exercise's continued success and maturation to ever higher degrees of combined operations and broader participation.

5. The Secretary of Defense and Defense Ministers confirmed their commitment to continued trilateral cooperation in defense capacity-building on maritime security and continued discussions on defense equipment and technology. They welcomed various opportunities for the three countries to discuss missile defense issues on a regular basis. The Secretary of Defense and Defense Ministers reaffirmed collaboration on maritime security assistance to Southeast Asia. They also shared the intention to coordinate and cooperate closely in the fields of regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and maritime security together with other regional countries.
6. The Defense Ministers welcomed the contribution of ASEAN-led regional security architecture to security and stability in the Asia-Pacific. They welcomed continued progress in fostering practical defense cooperation within the ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) framework and looked forward to the conduct of the third ADMM-Plus in November 2015.
7. The Defense Ministers reaffirmed their strategic goals for trilateral cooperation and pledged to further enhance trilateral defense cooperation.