

## Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (Summary)

September 15, 2022

Ministry of Defense

On September 14, Defense Minister Hamada and Defense Secretary Austin held discussions from 11:10 (local time) for approximately 95 minutes at the U.S. Department of Defense. The summary is as follows.

### 1. Regional Affairs

The Ministers had a wide range of discussions on the challenging security environment surrounding the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

The Ministers once again strongly condemned China's ballistic missile launches in early August including the landing of missiles inside Japan's EEZ as a grave issue related to the security of Japan and the safety of its people. The Ministers reiterated the importance of peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait and concurred that they would call for the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues. The Ministers confirmed that they would not condone unilateral change to the status quo by force in the Indo-Pacific region, and that both sides would cooperate closely and seamlessly to that end.

The Ministers confirmed that Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an outrage that undermines the foundation of international order. They confirmed that Japan and the United States would continue to work together to carry on support for Ukraine.

Regarding North Korea's nuclear and missile issues, the Ministers welcomed the Japan-U.S.-ROK exercise during the missile warning exercise Pacific Dragon in August. The Ministers confirmed that they would further advance even closer Japan-U.S. bilateral and Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral cooperation in order to promptly respond to North Korea's provocative actions in a concerted manner.

The Ministers concurred that they would strengthen cooperation with partner countries in the region and beyond to maintain and strengthen a free and open Indo-Pacific.

### 2. Bilateral Defense Cooperation

Minister Hamada expressed his determination to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities through formulation of new National Security Strategy, etc., examining all options including the so-called "counterstrike capabilities." Minister Hamada also stated that the MOD was working to secure substantial increase of the defense budget needed to effect it. Secretary Austin expressed his strong support for these efforts. The Ministers confirmed that the strategies of Japan and the United States share the same direction and that they would align their respective strategies even more closely to strengthen the Alliance.

Secretary Austin reaffirmed that the U.S. commitment to providing extended deterrence including nuclear capabilities to Japan remains unwavering. The Ministers confirmed that Japan and the United States would deepen discussions including at the ministerial level on efforts to ensure that nuclear deterrence of the U.S. including nuclear capabilities remains credible and resilient.

The Ministers agreed upon the importance of strengthening intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities as part of strengthening the Alliance's capabilities to deter and respond. From such perspective, the Ministers welcomed the progress towards the temporary deployment of USAF MQ-9s to MSDF Kanoya Air Base. Minister Hamada stated that the temporary deployment of MQ-9s contributes to the deepening of ISR activities by unmanned aerial vehicles of SDF. The Ministers concurred that Japan and the United States would jointly analyze information acquired by Japanese and the U.S. assets including MQ-9s.

The Ministers concurred that Japan and the United States would further accelerate cooperation in the area of equipment and technology to ensure technological edge of the Alliance. From such perspective, the Ministers agreed to continue joint analysis on counter-hypersonic technology and based on its progress, to begin consideration of joint research on technologies and components. The Ministers also concurred to further accelerate cooperation in unmanned aerial vehicles that have the potential to collaborate with manned aircraft such as F-X, as well as efforts to strengthen supply chains, etc.

The Ministers concurred that information security and cyber security is crucially important to deepening Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. Minister Hamada explained that Japan would work to fundamentally strengthen cyber security.

### 3. Realignment of U.S. forces/ U.S. Forces in Japan

The Ministers confirmed that the understanding and cooperation from local communities as well as safe and environment-friendly operations of the U.S. forces are important for the stable stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan and their daily activities. The Ministers concurred that Japan and the United States would continue to work closely together for the steady progress of the realignment initiatives of the U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko-saki as well as facility development of Mageshima. The Ministers affirmed that they would continue to work together to mitigate impact on local communities including Okinawa.