

Defense Minister Nakatani's attendance to the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting and Meeting with Defense Ministers of Various Countries

On October 17, commencing at 15:00 (local time) for approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, Minister of Defense NAKATANI Gen visited Brussels, Belgium, and attended the Partners Session of the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting.

1. NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting

Defense Minister Nakatani attended the Partners Session of the NATO Defense Ministers Meeting. The session was attended by H.E. Mr. Mark Rutte, Secretary General of the NATO and defense ministers from 32 NATO member states as well as Indo-Pacific Four (IP4: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea) and EU. The discussion at the session covered the global security environment including Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the situation in the Indo-Pacific, as well as future cooperation between NATO and IP4.

During the meeting, Defense Minister Nakatani made the following remarks:

(1) Minister Nakatani expressed that he is honored to participate in the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting for the first time as Japan's Minister of Defense. Japan has participated in NATO Summit, Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and NATO Military Chiefs of Defence Meeting, and being able to participate in this meeting is the proof that many countries now share the recognition that the security of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is inseparable. This fact is highly significant as it indicates that the cooperation between NATO and like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific is deepening unprecedentedly amid the increasingly severe security environment.

(2) Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an outrageous act of violence in which the principles of the UN Charter have been overtly trampled on. We, as the like-minded countries, need to unite even more firmly and continue to provide stable support to Ukraine in response to the prolonged aggression. We will continue cooperation between Japan-NATO as well as IP4 and NATO. The Ministry of Defense of Japan (JMOD) and the Self-Defense Forces have also been providing non-lethal equipment and supplies, accepting injured Ukrainian soldiers and participating in the Coalitions. Earlier this year, JMOD provided 101 vehicles and plans to provide additional vehicles.

(3) In the Indo-Pacific region as well, unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion are continuing and intensifying. Japan once again emphasizes its stance to oppose such attempts. In addition, the expansion of cooperation between China and Russia as well as Russia and North Korea not only exacerbate the situation in Ukraine, but are also pose serious concern from the perspective of its impact on the regional security surrounding Japan, and we should not allow our efforts to support Ukraine to be offset.

(4) In such a severe international situation, it is all the more important to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries that share basic values and strategic interests, and to further promote cooperation between Japan and NATO as well as NATO and IP4. Based on Japan-NATO Individually Tailored Partnership Programme (ITPP) (*1) formulated last year, we have made steady progress in practical security and defense cooperation in areas such as cyber, space and strategic communications. Specifically, we made great strides in continuous participation in multilateral cyber defense exercises and strengthening the system for sharing classified information with NATO. Moreover, JMOD is coordinating to newly dispatch an expert in military intelligence analysis to NATO's Strategic Communications Center (STRATCOM COE) starting from next January.

(5) Progress has also been made in improving interoperability. We welcome that in August, joint training was conducted with the Standing NATO Maritime Groups when the Maritime Self Defense Force Training ships made a port call in Naples, providing an opportunity to strategically communicate the will and capabilities of Japan and NATO. In addition, Japan welcomes the flagship projects (*2) agreed at the NATO summit in July, and intends to promote cooperation between IP4 and NATO.

(6) Japan will continue to cooperate with the like-minded countries including NATO allies, to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law from Europe to the Indo-Pacific region.

(*1) ITPP: Individually Tailored Partnership Programme

(*2) IP4-NATO flagship projects:

Projects for pursuing practical cooperation in four areas: (1) support to Ukraine, (2) Cyber Defense, (3) hostile information including disinformation, and (4) Technology.



NATO Defense Ministers'
Meeting Partner Session NATO
Defense Ministers' Meeting
Partner Session

2. Meeting between Defense Minister Nakatani and NATO Secretary General, and Minister of Defense of other countries.

(1) Meeting with NATO Secretary General Rutte

On Thursday, October 17, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with NATO Secretary General Rutte for about 20 minutes from 12:15 (local time).

Courtesy call on NATO Secretary General Rutte Courtesy call on NATO Secretary General Rutte

(2) Japan-Ukraine Defense Ministerial Meeting

On Thursday, October 17 for about 25 minutes from 13:30 (local time), Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Ukrainian Defense Minister Umerov.

(3) Japan-Netherlands Defense Ministerial Meeting

On Thursday, October 17 for about 25 minutes from 14:30 (local time), Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Dutch Defense Minister Brekelmans.

(4) IP4 Defense Authorities' Meeting

On Thursday, October 17 from 19:00 (local time) for about 1 hour, Defense Minister Nakatani held a Defense Authorities' Meeting among the Indo-Pacific Four (IP4: Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Republic of Korea) with Hon Judith Collins, Minister of Defense of New Zealand; Hon Pat Conroy MP, Minister for Defence Industry and Capability Delivery, Minister for International Development and the Pacific of Australia; and Mr Kim Seo Ho, Vice Minister, Ministry of National Defense of Republic of Korea.