

(Press Release)

October 28, 2026
Ministry of Defense

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

On October 28, 2026, while visiting the Philippines to participate in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), Defense Minister Koizumi and Secretary of War Hegseth held discussions from 8:30 (local time) for approximately 30 minutes. The summary is as follows.

1 Overview and Regional Affairs

At this milestone marking one year since their first Defense Ministerial Meeting, the Ministers concurred to advance, with greater speed and intensity than ever before, efforts to strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, in line with what the Prime Minister and the President have concurred to pursue. Minister Koizumi stated that Japan is steadily advancing its work toward the revision of its three strategic documents.

Minister Koizumi expressed his intention to strengthen denial defense capabilities that would deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force or coercion, and should invasion of Japan occur, prevent and repel the aggression, thereby denying an adversary the ability to achieve its objectives. The Ministers confirmed that they would work to align views on building a strong denial defense, a direction set out in the U.S. National Defense Strategy. The Ministers confirmed the importance of working together even more closely and demonstrating their unwavering resolve for peace and stability in the region.

The Ministers had a wide range of discussions on the challenging security environment surrounding the Japan-U.S. Alliance, including the recent buildup of nuclear and missile capabilities and attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force or coercion in the region surrounding Japan. Minister Koizumi referred to Secretary Hegseth's speech on Iwo To on March 29 last year, and the Ministers concurred that the Japan-U.S. Alliance demonstrates how yesterday's enemies have become today's friends, and that it has been, and will continue to be, a cornerstone of freedom, prosperity, security, and peace in the Indo-Pacific.

2 Bilateral Defense Cooperation

- The Ministers concurred on the need for Japan and the United States to cooperate closely in responding to any situations in peacetime and during contingencies, including by strengthening Integrated Air Missile Defense capabilities, in light of the qualitative and quantitative expansion of military capabilities and increased military activities of countries surrounding Japan;

- The Ministers welcomed the strengthening of the Alliance's posture and capabilities through progress in more advanced and realistic bilateral training across Japan during Keen Sword 27 this month, including the temporary deployment of Japanese and U.S. units on the largest scale to date. At the same time, the Ministers confirmed that, going forward, they would move forward with more advanced and realistic bilateral training efforts, including further live-fire exercises, with an even greater sense of urgency;
- The Ministers held concrete discussions and confirmed progress on initiatives to further strengthen the Alliance's capabilities to deter and respond, including: (1) promoting flexible air dispersal by Japan and the U.S.; (2) expanding access to facilities by the Self-Defense Forces and U.S. forces; and (3) further enhancing bilateral presence in the southwestern region of Japan;
- Minister Koizumi followed up on "Operation Supercharge," an initiative to further accelerate bilateral defense equipment and technology cooperation, and discussed concrete measures. In particular, the Ministers agreed to share the necessary technical information to enable increased production of the SM-3 Block IIA. They also agreed to establish an AMRAAM FACO in Japan. Minister Koizumi emphasized the importance of cooperation on naval vessels; and
- The Ministers concurred to further strengthen Japan-U.S. cooperation and coordination to prevent malicious cyber activities from having serious impacts on the lives of our citizens, economic activities, and ultimately our national security, amid a series of such activities in Japan and abroad, including large-scale breaches of personal information.

3 Prevention measures against incidents/ accidents caused by USFJ related personnel, USFJ Realignment

Regarding the robbery-murder incident that occurred in Okinawa Prefecture this month, Minister Koizumi reiterated the Japanese government's position over this incident. The Ministers acknowledged that Japan and the United States would continue ongoing discussions amongst Japan-based defense and foreign policy authorities to take effective measures to prevent the occurrence of incidents.

In order to maintain deterrence and mitigate the impact on local communities, Ministers reiterated the vital importance of the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan in accordance with the Okinawa Consolidation Plan and other existing bilateral arrangements, such as the return of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma including the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko as the only solution that avoids the continued use of MCAS Futenma.