

(Press Release)

June 23, 2021  
Japan Ministry of Defense

### Japan-Laos Defense Ministers' Video Teleconference

On June 23, 2021, commencing at 1030 for approximately 60 minutes, Minister KISHI held a video teleconference with General Chansamone Chanyalath, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

1 Both Ministers exchanged views on bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges. Both Ministers welcomed that "Japan-Laos Seminar on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief HA/DR (Search and Rescue/Medic)" and "Japan-ASEAN Seminar on HA/DR" were successfully held on an online basis on June 18 and in April respectively, where the both countries shared lessons learned in the context of HA/DR and preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Both Ministers shared the view to further promote defense cooperation and exchanges, including continuing cooperation in the field of HA/DR. In addition, Minister Kishi expressed his intent to continue to contribute to strengthening resilience of ASEAN through cooperation in such fields as counter measures to infectious diseases and cyber-security in accordance with "Vientiane Vision 2.0," which Minister Chansamone welcomed.

2 Both Ministers exchanged views on the regional security issues, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea in light of the current events occurring in the region. Both Ministers confirmed the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, and reaffirmed the critical need for observing international law based primarily on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Minister Kishi expressed his view that it is important to uphold and reinforce a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," and stated his steadfast opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by coercion or any activities that escalate tensions. On that basis, both Ministers reaffirmed that the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)" has many fundamental principles with a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" in promoting peace and cooperation.

Minister Kishi also condemned the launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea including those committed in March, which violates UNSC resolutions, and he conveyed his view that North Korea's repeated launches of ballistic missiles pose a serious challenge to the international community as a whole.

Regarding the situation in Myanmar, Minister Kishi welcomed the outcome of ASEAN Leader's Meeting and both Ministers affirmed their intent to continue to cooperate closely on this matter.

3 In this context, both Ministers also concurred in proactively promoting defense cooperation and exchanges, while maintaining close communication between respective defense authorities.