

Japan-Australia Defense Ministers' Teleconference

On May 19, 2021, commencing at 1300-1400 for approximately 1 hour Minister KISHI held a teleconference with Minister of the Australian Department of Defence, the Hon Peter DUTTON.

- 1 At the outset of the meeting, Minister Kishi congratulated Minister Dutton on his appointment, and Minister Dutton expressed his appreciation.
- 2 The two Ministers concurred on deepening the Special Strategic Partnership through extensive discussion on Japan and Australia's defense cooperation. Furthermore, the Ministers agreed to continue maintaining the communication between our defence authorities to uphold and reinforce a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific and continue to vigorously promote bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges.
- 3 The two Ministers also exchanged views on the regional issues in the Indo-Pacific. Regarding the East China Sea and the South China Sea, they once again expressed strong opposition to any attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by coercion, and any activities that escalate tensions. They concurred that a maritime order based on international law particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is important. In this context, they expressed their concerns over China's Coast Guard Law.
- 4 . Regarding North Korea, the two Ministers referred to the launches of two ballistic missiles by North Korea on the 25th of March, and strongly condemned them as a threat to the peace and stability of the region as well as a violation of UNSC resolutions, and shared the view that the repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea pose a serious challenge to the international community as a whole. The two Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to closely coordinating toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of all of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges, including collaboration on responses against "ship-to-ship transfers."
5. The Ministers exchanged views on reinforcing the rules-based international order, including working together to counter disinformation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. They also exchanged views on approaches of promoting cooperation in third countries to build regional resilience. The two ministers affirmed they would continue to work together on these approaches.
6. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to active trilateral defence cooperation and exchanges with our common ally, the United States, to uphold and reinforce a free and open Indo-Pacific. They also underscored the importance of close cooperation with regional partners.
7. The two Ministers have affirmed the need for holding a face-to-face meeting at the earliest possible opportunity.