

(Press Release)

July 6, 2021
Japan Ministry of Defense

Video Teleconference between Defense Minister Kishi and President Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka

On July 6, 2021, commencing at 1410 for approximately 30 minutes, Minister Kishi held a video teleconference with H.E. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President (Ministry of Defense under jurisdiction of President) of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

1 Both sides exchanged views on bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges and welcomed the steady progress being made in a broad range of areas, including naval cooperation and aerial cooperation. In this context, both sides welcomed the bilateral exercise “JA-LAN EX” which was successfully conducted in September 2020, Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel’s first participation in Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise hosted by Sri Lanka and the U.S., which took place last week, as well as the successful delivery of the online Air Rescue seminar in May 2021. Both sides confirmed that they will share knowledge and lessons learned from infectious disease control measures taken by the defense authorities. Furthermore, both sides concurred that Japan and Sri Lanka will further promote bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges based on the Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges signed in 2019.

2 Both sides also exchanged views on the recent regional security issues, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea. In this context, Minister Kishi expressed strong opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by coercion in the East and South China Seas. Both sides affirmed that they will send a clear message about the importance of free, open, and rules-based maritime order.

3 Both sides also concurred in maintaining close communication between respective defense authorities and proactively promoting defense cooperation and exchanges to uphold and reinforce a free and open Indo-Pacific.