

(Press Release)

October 19, 2026
Ministry of Defense Japan

Japan-Malaysia Defense Ministers' Meeting

On 19 October 2026, Minister of Defense Koizumi held a meeting with Minister of Defence Dato' Seri Haji Mohamed Khaled of Malaysia, who is visiting Japan. The summary of the meeting is as follows:

1. At the outset, Minister Koizumi stated that Malaysia is an indispensable partner in realizing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and welcomed the deepening of bilateral relations under the Comprehensive and Strategic Partnership, which was elevated in 2023. Minister Koizumi also expressed his appreciation for the Malaysia's significant contributions to regional peace and stability, recognizing its strategic location along vital sea lanes of communication, including the Strait of Malacca. As fellow maritime nations, the Minister Koizumi stated Japan's intention to further strengthen defense cooperation with Malaysia and contribute together to regional peace and stability. Minister Khaled concurred with these remarks.
2. The two Ministers welcomed the steady progress in defense cooperation, including maritime security cooperation such as the MALPAN exercise and port visits, as well as personnel exchanges, including study at the National Defense Academy of Japan. In order to elevate bilateral maritime security cooperation to a higher level and further promote its comprehensive and long-term development, Minister Koizumi proposed, in light of the progress in cooperation between the two navies, to build upon the Memorandum signed in 2018, and the two Ministers concurred on the need to develop a comprehensive cooperation plan on maritime security for the common interests of both countries.
3. The two Ministers welcomed the progress made in discussions under the Director-level Joint Working Group on defense equipment transfer. Minister Khaled expressed his welcome for the Government of Japan's revision of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and their Implementation Guidelines, noting that it would expand the scope for cooperation between the defense institutions of the two countries. Building on this, the two

Ministers discussed the future direction of practical cooperation and agreed that, under their guidance, the Joint Working Group would expedite the consideration and development of potential cooperation projects that are mutually beneficial to both countries.

4. The two Ministers also exchanged views on regional situations, including the situations in the East China Sea and the South China Sea. They reaffirmed the importance of respecting the freedom of navigation and overflight and adhering to international law, as reflected in, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They further concurred on continuing close coordination to uphold a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law and contribute to regional peace and stability.

5. The two Ministers agreed to seize various opportunities to hold meetings and further promote these areas of cooperation in order to swiftly implement the cooperation initiatives discussed today into concrete outcomes.