

## **Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Telephone Conference (Summary)**

December 12, 2023

Ministry of Defense

On December 12, Defense Minister Kihara and Secretary of Defense Austin held a telephone conference. The summary is as follows.

At the outset, Minister Kihara offered his condolences for the eight service members who lost their lives in the U.S. Air Force CV-22 Osprey incident, as well as their family members. He stated that the Japan Ministry of Defense and Self Defense Forces would do what it can to cooperate to ensure the swift recovery of the service members. In addition, he once again requested the US side resume flight operations of the Japan-deployed V-22s after flight safety is confirmed, and also requested sharing of information about the incident and safety measures. Secretary Austin thanked Minister Kihara for Japan's support in the search and recovery mission, and he reaffirmed that the safety of U.S. service members and Japanese communities is a top priority for the Department of Defense.

The Ministers shared their recognition that flight safety is the top priority regarding future flight operations of the V-22s, and reaffirmed that they will continue to work closely together in addressing this matter.

The Ministers exchanged views on the situation of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and concurred that they will work together to ensure maritime security and peace and stability in the international community.

The Ministers concurred to accelerate the Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral security cooperation initiatives which were affirmed at the historic Camp David Summit in August 2023 and their Trilateral Ministers Meeting in November 2023.

The Ministers welcomed the deepening of substantial discussions on extended deterrence between the two countries, including bilateral Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD) this month, and concurred to continue to hold in-depth discussions on extended deterrence.

The Ministers affirmed that they will continue to closely collaborate and work on further strengthening Alliance deterrence and capabilities to ensure a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.