

(Press Release)

March 25, 2021
Japan Ministry of Defense

Japan-UK Defense Ministers' Teleconference

On March 25, 2021, commencing at 21:45 for approximately 30 minutes Minister KISHI held a teleconference with Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Ben Wallace.

1 Secretary Wallace explained the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy which the Government of the UK announced on March 16. Minister Kishi expressed his appreciation for receiving the explanation from Secretary Wallace.

2 Minister Kishi highly commended UK's strategic decision on the "tilt to the Indo-Pacific region," which was expressed in the Integrated Review. Minister Kishi welcomed the Integrated Review as something that explicitly maps out the direction of strengthened Japan-UK cooperative relationship in the mid - to long - term toward maintaining and reinforcing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." In addition, the two Ministers renewed their commitment to elevating the Japan-UK defense cooperation to a new level, taking full advantage of the deployment of the carrier strike group including the UK carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth to the region including East Asia this year, and to work together toward maintaining and reinforcing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

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 their will to strongly oppose any action which attempts to change the facts on the ground, coercion, or any activities that escalate tension regarding the situation. They concurred that a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, is important. Minister Kishi also expressed the Japanese serious concerns over China's Coast Guard Law.

4 . Regarding North Korea, the two Ministers referred to the launching of two ballistic missiles by North Korea today (25th), and strongly condemned the launches as threat to the peace and stability of the region that violates UNSC resolutions, and shared the view that the repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea thus far is a serious challenge to the international community as a whole. Upon that, the two Ministers 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."