

Japan-UK Defense Ministerial Meeting

On July 20, 2021, commencing at 13:00 for approximately 60 minutes Minister KISHI held a Defense Ministerial Meeting with Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Ben Wallace.

1 The two Ministers welcomed their first face-to-face meeting and Minister Kishi welcomed the accompanying of the 1st Sea Lord and the Chief of Air Staff to Japan. Secretary Wallace welcomed the recent deepening of Japan-UK defense cooperation and stated that the UK would like to strengthen cooperation with Japan that shares the same values. Minister Kishi stated that Japan and the UK, as countries who share fundamental values, should address together challenges that we are facing in the Indo-Pacific.

2 With respect to the Carrier Strike Group 21 (CSG21) led by HMS Queen Elizabeth on its way to Japan, the two Ministers shared the recognition that through bi/multilateral exercises and the CSG21's visit to Japan:

- ① the defense cooperation between Japan and the UK—standing on a long history and tradition—has elevated to a “new level;”
- ② the UK's commitment to realize a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” is a robust and an irreversible one; and
- ③ Japan-UK defense cooperation serves not only for the security of Japan but for securing the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region and the international community, and that it will also tackle global challenges.

3 The two Ministers confirmed that, during the CSG21 visit to Japan, HMS Queen Elizabeth would berth at the U.S. naval base in Yokosuka, and that the other escort ships would dispersedly berth at the following ports: JMSDF Yokosuka, JMSDF Maizuru, JMSDF Kure, U.S. naval base Sasebo and the White Beach area.

4. The two Ministers affirmed accelerated discussion to explore FX/FCAS collaborations at sub-system level, with a special focus on Power and Propulsion System. Furthermore, both Ministers also agreed to intensify efforts toward a bilateral arrangement between both ministries that is necessary for implementing that collaboration of Power and Propulsion System, if it is agreed to be conducted. They welcomed that a new cooperative research on chemical and biological protection technology was started this month.

5 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 unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, and any activities that escalate tension regarding the situation. They concurred the importance of a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

6 Regarding North Korea, the two Ministers condemned the launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea which violate UNSC resolutions and pose a threat to the peace and stability of the region, and shared the view that, including the repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea thus far, those posed a serious challenge to the international community as a whole. Upon that, the two Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to closely coordinate

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."

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