

March 30, 2025  
Ministry of Defense

## Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (Summary)

On March 30, Defense Minister Nakatani and Defense Secretary Hegseth held discussions from 09:50 for approximately 85 minutes at the Ministry of Defense. The summary is as follows.

### 1 Overview

The Ministers shared the views on the increasingly severe and complex security environment. The Ministers confirmed that they will demonstrate strong leadership to reinforce defense capabilities of their respective countries and work closely with each other to further strengthen the Alliance capabilities to deter and respond in order to realize a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” based on the concurrence between the two leaders at Japan-U.S. summit meeting on February 7, 2025. The Ministers underscored U.S. unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan, using its full range of capabilities, including nuclear capabilities.

### 2 Regional Security Environment

The Ministers exchanged candid views on increasingly severe security situation in the Indo-Pacific. Especially, with regard to China, the ministers confirmed their opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion including in the East and South China Seas.

The Ministers took note of activities by the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) including the military situation around Taiwan, and emphasized the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

### 3 Further Strengthening the Alliance Capabilities to Deter and Respond

The Ministers concurred to promote various initiatives to further strengthen

the Alliance capabilities to deter and respond, with a sense of urgency and speed, in order to respond to challenges posed by the changing security environment. The key points of the discussion are as follows:

- (1) With regard to upgrading respective command and control frameworks, the Ministers welcomed tangible progress including the establishment of JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) and commencement of upgrade of U.S. Forces Japan as Joint Force Headquarters, and discussed to make continued efforts to realize further effective cooperation on bilateral activities from peacetime to contingency.
- (2) To work on expansion of bilateral joint presence in the southwestern region of Japan as one of the highest priorities of the Alliance, including enhancement of more advanced and practical bilateral training
- (3) To mutually complement and strengthen the defense industrial base of Japan and the U.S. with regard to defense equipment and technology cooperation by accelerating initiative on missile co-production such as AMRAAM and co-sustainment of vessels and aircraft of U.S. forces towards the next iteration of Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS), while effectively utilizing its framework.
- (4) To advance collaboration in fields of space, cyber security, and extended deterrence.

In addition, the Ministers concurred that they will continue to advance multilateral cooperation including information sharing and operational collaboration with regional partners namely Australia, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, with Japan and the U.S. at the center of such cooperation, to realize a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific”.

#### 4 Realignment of U.S. Forces etc.

In order to maintain deterrence and mitigate the impact on local communities, the Ministers reiterated the vital importance of the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan in accordance with the Okinawa Consolidation Plan and other existing bilateral arrangements, such

as the return of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma including the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko as the only solution that avoids the continued use of MCAS Futenma. The Ministers also concurred to advance cooperation to prevent recurrence of incidents and accidents involving U.S. forces in Japan.