

(Press Release)

February 23, 2026
Japan Ministry of Defense

Japan-PNG Defense Minister's Meeting

On February 23, 2026, Defense Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro held a meeting with Hon. Dr. Billy M. Joseph, Minister of Defence of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, visiting Japan for the “3rd Japan-Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue.” The summary of the meeting is as follows:

1. At the outset of the meeting, Minister Koizumi stated that Japan and Papua New Guinea are valuable friends connected by the Pacific Ocean, and are partners that share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Minister Koizumi especially emphasized and welcomed that, through the JSDF's involvement in teaching PNG's military band, a bond is being nurtured through music. As a symbol of such bond, the JGSDF military band that performed together with the PNG military band on the occasion of the Military Tattoo that celebrated the 50th anniversary of PNG's independence made a performance to welcome Minister Joseph to Japan.
2. Both Ministers welcomed the advancement of cooperation in the defense field between Japan and PNG, and exchanged opinions on cooperation regarding maritime security and HA/DR. The two Ministers affirmed to further enhance cooperation in these areas.
3. Furthermore, Minister Koizumi proposed a new initiative: “Next-Generation Leadership Security Program.” The program is a new initiative to further facilitate human exchanges and is designed to invite young/middle-class staffers within the defense authorities of the Pacific Islands who will bear the responsibility of policy making in the future to Japan. To this proposal, Minister Joseph responded that this is a wonderful proposal and that Papua New Guinea would like to happily accept the

offer.

4. In addition, the two Minister concurred to make a Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges to further strengthen collaboration in the security field between the two countries.

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