

(Press Release)

February 23, 2026
Japan Ministry of Defense

Japan- Tonga Defense Minister's Meeting

On February 23, 2026, Defense Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro held a meeting with His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'ULUKALALA (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for His Majesty's Armed Forces) of Kingdom of Tonga, 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 Tonga 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 also paid his respect to Tonga's important role in securing peace and stability in the region.
2. Both Ministers welcomed the advancement of cooperation in the defense field between Japan and Tonga, and confirmed the progress made in cooperation regarding maritime security and HA/DR including capacity building assistance. Minister Koizumi stated that he would like to proactively continue engaging in these areas.
3. Furthermore, Minister Koizumi welcomed the first-ever cadets from Tonga to the National Defense Academy and also 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, the Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'ULUKALALA responded that this is a wonderful proposal and that Tonga 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.