

# JDF

JAPAN DEFENSE FOCUS



Dec. / 2020

# No. 130



## ACTIVITIES

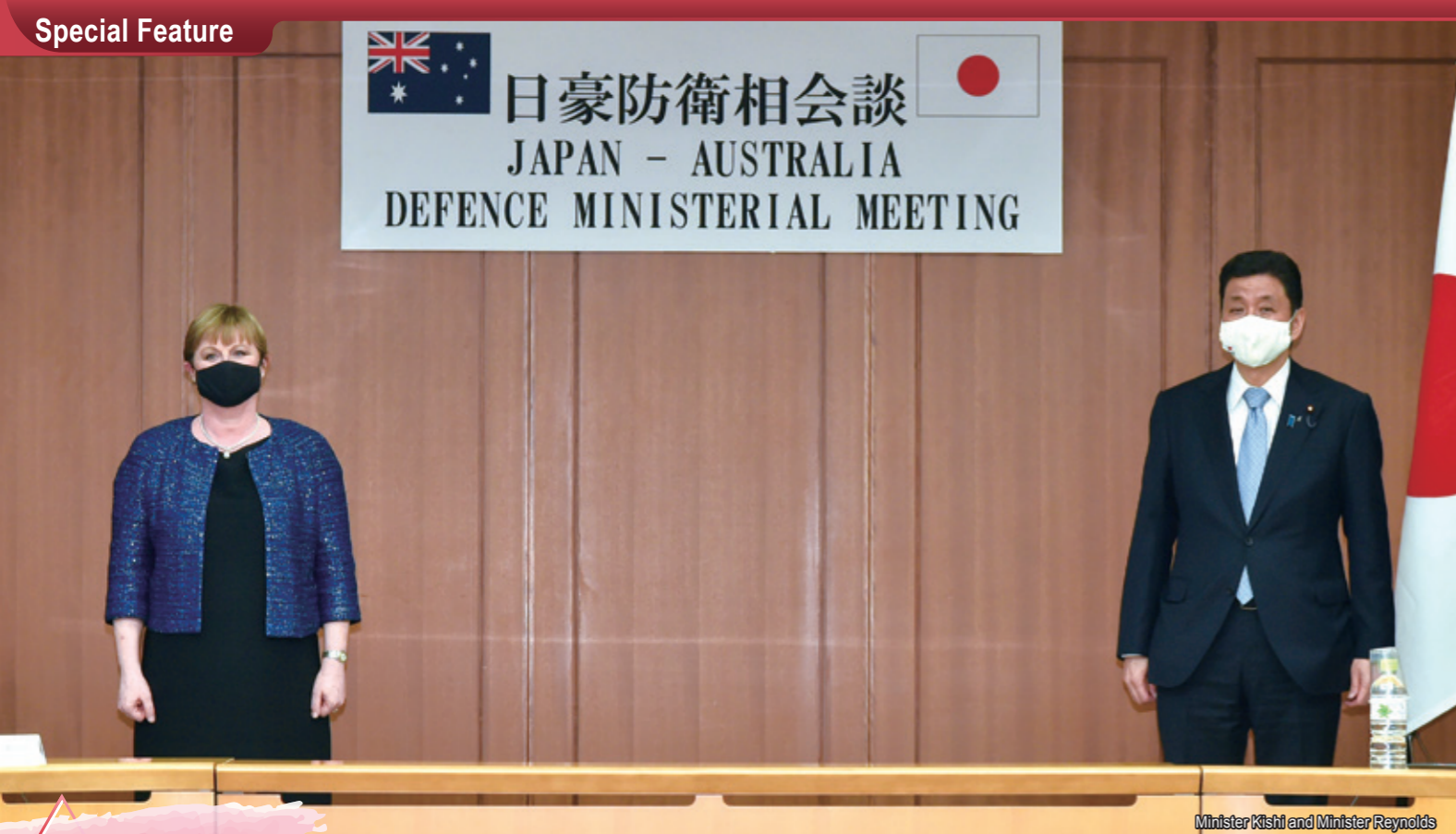
# FY2020

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Minister Kishi and Minister Reynolds

## Japan-Australia Defence Ministerial Meeting

On October 19th, 2020, Minister of Defense Kishi held a meeting with Australian Minister for Defence, Senator Linda Reynolds at the Ministry of Defense (MOD) as part of maintaining close bilateral defence and security ties in support of an Indo-Pacific region that is free, open, secure, inclusive, and prosperous.

This meeting was the first time the Ministers met face-to-face in Ichigaya since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Undertaking such a meeting at this challenging time is testament to the value and strength of the Japan-Australia Special Strategic Partnership.

The Ministers held a productive discussion on further promoting and materializing defense cooperation between the two countries and issued the Japan-Australia Defense Ministers' Joint Statement on Advancing Defence Cooperation.

**Please go to the link below for the joint statement:**  
[https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d\\_act/exc/area/docs/2020/20201019\\_j-aus-en.html](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/exc/area/docs/2020/20201019_j-aus-en.html)

During the meeting, the Ministers exchanged views on regional affairs, including the East China Sea, the South China Sea, and North Korea.

Concerning regional situations in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, the Ministers issued a clear message that they strongly oppose any attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by coercion and expressed their intent to continue coordinating closely.

The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to efforts to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of all of North Korea's nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges and to cooperate closely on warning and surveillance activities against illicit ship-to-ship transfers involving North Korean vessels.

The Ministers also concurred to continue to exchange views including by:

- sharing lessons learned from HA/DR operations during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- exploring new opportunities for capacity building with like-minded partners to build regional resilience;
- sharing information and exchanging views on reinforcing the rules-based international order, including working together to counter disinformation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Ministers also confirmed the importance of further close collaboration between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in the Indo-Pacific region and instructed their officials to commence necessary coordination to create a framework to protect ADF assets by the SDF personnel under Article 95-2 of the SDF Law.

Australia is one of Japan's special strategic partners in the region. The MOD/JSDF intends to further deepen defense cooperation and exchange between the two countries in order to maintain and reinforce a free and open Indo-Pacific.



Guard of Honor



AN SAN 1 lying alongside a small vessel "B" (May 13th, 2019)

## Warning and Surveillance Activities for Illegal Ship-to-Ship Transfers

North Korea is presumed to be evading sanctions by conducting illegal ship-to-ship transfers on the high seas. Ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels are forbidden under the terms of United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs).

The MOD/JSDF gathers information on vessels suspected of violating UNSCRs as part of regular warning and surveillance activities. Between 2018 and the end of March 2020, JSDF patrol aircrafts and vessels observed 24 cases in which North Korean-flagged tankers and foreign-flagged vessels were lying alongside each other on the high seas of the East China Sea. As a result of a comprehensive judgement across the Government, it is strongly suspected that the vessels concerned were engaging in illegal ship-to-ship transfers. This information was reported to the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea and shared with relevant countries.

In response to illicit maritime activities prohibited by UNSCRs including illegal ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean vessels, the U.S. and other concerned countries conduct aerial surveillance activities. In 2020, Australia conducted aerial surveillance activities from late September to late October, which was Australia's seventh surveillance by

air since 2018. Starting in early October, the Royal Canadian Navy Frigate HMCS Winnipeg conducted maritime surveillance activities for the fourth time since 2018. In addition, Canada has carried out its fifth aerial surveillance activity since 2018 from early November through early December. New Zealand has also conducted aerial surveillance from late October through late November, which is their third aerial surveillance since 2018. (as of October 26th, 2020)

Japan welcomes these activities from the viewpoint of ensuring effective implementation of the relevant UNSCRs while maintaining the solidarity of the international community for the realization of North Korea's dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner.

The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) has also been conducting information gathering activities for vessels suspected to be in violation of the UNSCRs, and Japan will work closely with related countries.



AN SAN 1 lying alongside a small vessel "A" (May 13th, 2019)



MU BONG 1 lying alongside a vessel of unidentified nationality (Nov. 13th, 2019)



NAM SAN 1 lying alongside a small ship of unidentified nationality (Dec. 16th, 2019)



A JGSDF member watching over the surrounding area



JGSDF members exiting a UH-60JA



Type 16 maneuver combat vehicle being deployed



Type 10 tank advancing forward



Preparing the defensive position with engineering equipment



Transporting a casualty



Force Demonstration

## Japan-EU Joint Naval Exercise and Port Call on Djibouti

On October 5th-6th, Deployment Surface Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DSPE) and EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) conducted an anti-piracy exercise in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. The JMSDF JS *OHNAMI*, Spanish Navy Frigate *SANTA MARIA* and Spanish Air Force's P-3M carried out the exercise.

Through the exercise, Japan and the EU confirmed their commitment and the coordination between their respective forces in the fight against piracy.

Further, DSPE and EU NAVFOR Somalia - Operation Atalanta conducted the naval parade off Djibouti and paid a joint port call on Djibouti on October 15th. The port call was conducted by JS *OHNAMI*, Italian Navy Frigate *ALPINO*, Spanish Navy Frigates *SANTA MARIA* and *REINA SOPHIA*, Spanish Air Force's P-3M and German Navy's P-3C.

On this occasion, MOD/JSDF and the EU jointly hosted the ceremony to supply goods to local schools that suffered from damage by heavy rain and floods in November 2019. Japan delivered stationary and sports goods such as volleyballs donated by Minamisoma City, Fukushima Prefecture, which has been exchanging with Djibouti. The EU delivered personal protection equipment, such as facial masks and hand gels, as well as stationary.

On the same day, MOD/JSDF conducted a video conference with the European Union External Action Service (EEAS) and EU NAVFOR Somalia - Operation Atalanta. During the video conference, they shared the lessons learned from the joint exercise on October 5th-6th and confirmed the importance of coordination between Japan and the EU in the anti-piracy activities.

Japan and the EU are committed to upholding the rules-based international order through practical maritime cooperation, including cooperation on freedom of navigation and overflight, to secure sea-lanes of communication and to protect the global maritime domain against all types of threat, traditional and non-traditional. Japan and the EU are determined to pursue and enhance their cooperation on freedom of navigation and maritime security through future training initiatives and operational activities at sea. Furthermore, they stand ready to extend their lasting cooperation in this area so as to include also other partners in the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific region.



Japan-EU Joint Naval Exercise

Joint Port Call



Ceremony to Supply Goods to Djibouti



Japan-EU VTC

## FY2020 Regional Army's Field Training Exercise (JGSDF Western Army)

The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Western Army is conducting the FY2020 Regional Army's Field Training Exercise from October 16th through November 5th.

This exercise is the largest field training exercise for the JGSDF Western Army, which is taking place in the camps and training areas in the western region, as well as outside of JSDF facilities such as the facilities of the U.S. Forces and the private properties.

The Northern Army, the North Eastern Army and the Central Army as well as the JMSDF and Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) are participating in this field training exercise.

As part of this exercise, various drills are carried out across the western region. For example, a unit from the JGSDF's 8th Division (Kita Kumamoto) is conducting various exercises at Hijudai Training Area (Oita Prefecture), which intends to cover all stages to counter an invasion of remote islands from deploying the SDF units to anti-landing

combat; a unit from the JGSDF 15th Brigade (Naha) is conducting anti-air warfare drills at the JASDF Naha Base and other locations; and the JGSDF Western Army Intelligence Unit (Kengun) is conducting a flight training to simulate flying drones on remote islands at the former site of Tanegashima Airport in Kagoshima Prefecture.

The JGSDF Western Army is conducting the exercise at four U.S. Forces facilities in Okinawa: Camp Hansen, Torii Station, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma, and Makiminato Service Area. Communications training is conducted at Camp Hansen, intelligence and logistics training is conducted at Torii Station, anti-aircraft training is conducted at MCAS Futenma, and intelligence training is conducted at Makiminato Service Area.

The JGSDF aims on improving the capabilities to respond to various situations by conducting this exercise which relates to countering an invasion of remote islands of Japan.

(as of the end of October 2020)

# Recent Defense Minister's Meetings with the U.S. side

## 1 Japan-U.S. Defense Ministers' Teleconference

On October 7th, Minister Kishi held a teleconference with U.S. Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark Esper.

After his inaugural greeting, Minister Kishi expressed his resolve to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Secretary Esper offered his congratulations on Minister Kishi's appointment to the office.



Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Teleconference

The Ministers exchanged their views on the latest situation of the Indo-Pacific region, and reconfirmed that Japan and the U.S. will fulfill an even bigger role for regional peace and prosperity with a strong Japan-U.S. Alliance as a foundation.

Concerning an offshore option as an alternative for Aegis Ashore, Minister Kishi requested that the U.S. continues to support the Ministry's review. The Ministers confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will continue to closely work together to proceed with the study including the technical aspects.

The Ministers agreed that Japan and the U.S. will continue to closely work together to steadily progress the U.S. realignment plan including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko-saki.

The two Ministers confirmed the importance of maintaining the readiness of U.S. Forces in Japan, and agreed that both countries will continue to cooperate with each other, with the recognition that local understanding and cooperation is essential for maintaining readiness. The Ministers confirmed the importance of securing safe operations of the U.S. Forces.

## 2 Meeting with the USFJ Commander

On October 8th, Minister Kishi visited Yokota Air Base and had a discussion with Lt. Gen. Kevin B. Schneider, Commander of the U.S. Forces Japan and the 5th Air Force.

Along with giving an inaugural greeting, the minister also expressed his gratitude for the day-to-day efforts of Lt. Gen. Schneider, representing the U.S. Forces in Japan and the U.S. 5th Air Force, to ensure the regional peace and stability, develop the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and build relationships with the local community. The minister also expressed his intention to continue to develop the cooperation between the JSDF and the U.S. Forces.

They also exchanged views on the regional security environment surrounding Japan, realignment of the U.S. Forces and various challenges concerning the USFJ.



Minister Kishi and Lt. Gen. Schneider

Minister Kishi and Lt. Gen. Schneider

## 3 Courtesy Calls from Secretary of the U.S. Navy, Secretary of the U.S. Army, and the Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command

Minister Kishi received courtesy calls from the U.S. Secretary of the Navy Kenneth Braithwaite on October 15th, from the U.S. Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy on October 20th, and from Admiral Philip Davidson, Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command on October 23rd.

During these courtesy calls, the leaders exchanged views on regional affairs and reinforcement of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.



Secretary Braithwaite

Secretary McCarthy

Admiral Philip S. Davidson



Joint press conference on JS Kaga by Gen. Yamazaki and Lt. Gen. Schneider

## Keen Sword 21/02FTX

The JSDF and the U.S. Forces are conducting the Japan-U.S. Joint Field Training Exercise (Keen Sword 21/02FTX) from October 26 through November 5. The Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercise was commenced in 1985, and this year marked the 15th iteration of FTX (Keen Sword).

Approx. 37,000 personnel, 20 ships, and 170 aircraft from the JSDF and approx. 9,000 personnel from the U.S. Forces have been participating in the exercise. A ship from the Royal Canadian Navy also joined the exercise.

In addition to the traditional fields of training such as amphibious operation, ground operation, maritime operation and airspace operation, this year's Keen Sword includes the training related to operations in the new domains, such as space situational awareness, counter cyber terrorism and electromagnetic warfare.

Those exercises are carried out in the sea and airspace of Japan, in the installations of the JSDF and those of the U.S. Forces. Non-JSDF facilities such as Gajajima and Tanegashima of Kagoshima Prefecture are also used for amphibious training.

Furthermore, the training relocation of MV-22 and the rotary wing aircraft, which are currently stationed at MCAS Futenma, to the outside of Okinawa is also conducted at the same time.

Through this exercise, the JSDF and the U.S. Forces, based on the strong relationship of two countries, reaffirm the readiness of respective forces and enhance their interoperability. The JSDF and the U.S. Forces will maintain and strengthen the posture and capability to actively contribute to the peace and stability of the region.

(as of the end of October 2020)



JASDF F-15 taking off for air operations

USAF F-15 taking off for air operations



Japan and U.S. working hand in hand with each other



USAF Ospreys touching down on JS Kaga

AAV towing another AAV

Japan and U.S. aircraft flying in formation above JS Kaga and USS Ronald Reagan



## Naming and Launching Ceremony for SS *Taigei*

On October 14th, a ceremony was held at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. Kobe Shipyard & Machinery Works to name and launch the first of a new submarine class. It was named *Taigei* by Minister Kishi.

*Taigei* means “big whale.” JMSDF submarines are named after marine phenomenon, aquatic animals, and auspicious animals in general.

In order to respond to advances in science and technology and an increasingly severe security environment, the *Taigei*-class submarine is equipped with a new type of sonar system with improved detection capabilities, a submarine combat management system (CMS) that makes

it possible to fully utilize information acquired from onboard equipment, and a hull structure reducing signature

SS *Taigei* will be commissioned in FY2021 and is expected to play a key role in Japan’s maritime defense.

### SS *Taigei* Specifications

- ▷ **Standard Displacement:** Approx. 3,000t
- ▷ **Length:** 84m
- ▷ **Beam:** 9.1m
- ▷ **Depth:** 10.4m
- ▷ **Main Engines:** Diesel/Electric propulsion (single shaft)
- ▷ **Main Armaments:** Underwater torpedo tube (1)



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