

JDF

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PROGRAMME



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AIR PROGRAMME

JAPAN DEFENSE FOCUS

Oct. 2026 No. 200



Quadrilateral Joint Statement on Canada becoming an Observer to GCAP

DM Koizumi's Visit to Türkiye

DM Koizumi participated in the defense-related events of the NATO Ankara Summit on July 7 and 8.

1 Wreath-Laying Ceremony at Anıtkabir

On July 7, DM Koizumi laid a wreath at Anıtkabir, the mausoleum of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye.



2 Defence Industry Forum

DM Koizumi participated in the NATO Summit Defence Industry Forum, becoming the first Japanese Minister of Defense to participate in the event.



3 Meeting with NATO Secretary General and the Representatives of the IP4

DM Koizumi, together with Minister for Foreign Affairs Motegi, participated in a meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte and representatives of the IP4 (Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea). DM Koizumi stated that the need for cooperation between NATO and the IP4 has never been greater.



4 Defense Ministerial Level Working Dinner

DM Koizumi attended a working dinner with the Defense Ministers of NATO member countries and the IP4 (Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea).

DM Koizumi emphasized to his counterparts that the

security of the Euro-Atlantic and that of the Indo-Pacific regions is inseparable, and reiterated that it is critically important for like-minded countries to strengthen cooperation across regions.

5 Meetings with Counterparts

DM Koizumi held bilateral meetings with the Defence Ministers of Türkiye, the host nation of the NATO Summit in Ankara, as well as Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands. He also met with NATO Deputy Secretary General Shekerinska.



6 DM Koizumi Met with Australian Minister for Defence Industry and Minister for Pacific Islands Affairs

On July 8, DM Koizumi held a meeting with Hon Pat Conroy MP, Australian Minister for Defence Industry and Minister for the Pacific Islands Affairs.

They confirmed their intention to further strengthen defense equipment and technology cooperation between Japan and Australia, based on the Leaders' Statement on Enhanced Defence and Security Cooperation, issued on the occasion of the Japan–Australia Summit Meeting in May this year.

They welcomed the Royal Australian Navy's General Purpose Frigate Program's steady progress. Minister Koizumi conveyed his intention to continue driving the program forward vigorously, in cooperation with Minister Conroy, who is leading efforts to strengthen Australia's defence industry, considering the Mogami Memorandum signed by the Ministers of Defense of Japan and Australia in April this year. The Ministers shared this commitment.



7 Meeting between DM Koizumi, Australian Minister for Defence Industry and Minister for Pacific Islands Affairs, and New Zealand Minister of Defence

DM Koizumi held a meeting with Hon Pat Conroy MP, Australian Minister for Defence Industry and Minister for the Pacific Islands Affairs, and Hon Chris Penk, New Zealand Minister of Defence (then).

The three Ministers welcomed the second ministerial meeting among the three countries' defense authorities, since May this year. They exchanged views on the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region and confirmed that the three countries would continue to work together toward realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and resilient.

They welcomed the fact that JS Kumano, a Mogami-class frigate that returned to Japan last month, enhanced interoperability and people-to-people exchanges through its visits to Australia and New Zealand. They also confirmed that the three countries would continue to strengthen their cooperation by making use of various opportunities in the future. In addition, they exchanged views on New Zealand's potential replacement of its frigates, noting that no decision has been made by New Zealand and that advice on next steps is expected to be provided to the New Zealand Cabinet by the end of 2027.



8 Visit to the Naval Museum

DM Koizumi visited the Naval Museum in Istanbul, where he viewed exhibits related to the frigate Ertuğrul, which is regarded as a symbol of the origins of the friendship between Japan and Türkiye.



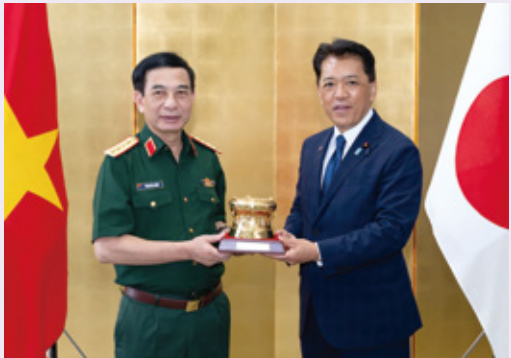
Japan-Vietnam Defense Ministerial Meeting

On July 12, DM Koizumi welcomed Gen. Phan Van Giang, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Vietnam, at Haneda Airport during his first visit to Japan in five years.

On July 13, DM Koizumi held a meeting Minister Giang, and on July 15, they held an official luncheon.

They exchanged views extensively on regional affairs, including the situations in the East China Sea and the South China Sea and reaffirmed the importance of respecting freedom of navigation and overflight and of complying with international law, including UNCLOS. They also welcomed the active progress in people-to-people exchanges, including high-level exchanges and the acceptance of Vietnamese cadets at the National Defense Academy and other educational institutions, as well as reciprocal unit visits, port calls and goodwill drill, and capacity building conducted among the ground, maritime, and air services. They confirmed that Japan and Viet Nam would continue to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including in the fields of UN Peacekeeping Operations and cybersecurity, and contribute to regional peace and stability.

Before the ministerial meeting, SM Miyazaki welcomed Gen. Giang at the Joint Staff College. Japan-Vietnam educational exchanges continue to make steady progress and serve as an important foundation for the bilateral relationship.



Defense Secretary of India Visited the MOD

On July 13, VM Kano held the 8th Japan-India Defense Policy Dialogue with Defence Secretary Mr. Rajesh Kumar Singh. The summary is as follows.

VM Kano referred to Prime Minister Modi's welcome at the recent Japan-India Summit Meeting, of Japan's revision of its defense equipment transfer framework in April 2026. He expressed his expectation that the transfer of the UNICORN system would be steadily advanced and successfully implemented, and that discussions would continue toward identifying further areas of cooperation in the field of Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation.



On the same day, DM Koizumi received a courtesy call from Defence Secretary Singh. Japan-India defense cooperation is indispensable for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, and they confirmed further strengthening their cooperation.



DM Koizumi's Visit to Europe

1 Farnborough International Airshow

On July 20, DM Koizumi visited the Farnborough International Airshow, one of the world's largest aerospace and defense exhibitions. He toured the GCAP pavilion and Japanese booths, highlighting the strengths of Japan's defense industry and advanced technology to a global audience.



2 Visit to HMNB Portsmouth

DM Koizumi visited HMNB Portsmouth, which is the home port for HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales. The Royal Navy's project, "Beehive" is equipped with a Japanese-made engine and controller.



3 Quadrilateral Joint Statement on Canada becoming an Observer to GCAP

On July 21, H.E. Mr. Guido Crosetto, Minister of Defense of the Italian Republic, DM Koizumi, the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Rt Hon David J. McGuinty, Canadian Minister of National Defence met in London to discuss Canada's participation in the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP). The Ministers of Italy, Japan and the UK welcomed Canada's participation as an Observer, and all four Ministers welcomed the opportunities arising from this important development. This announcement marks an important step in strengthening cooperation among trusted, like-minded partners through the Programme.



4 Japan-UK-Italy Trilateral Defense Ministerial Meeting

DM Koizumi attended the Trilateral Defense Ministerial Meeting with the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and H.E. Mr. Guido Crosetto, Minister of Defense of the Italian Republic. At this meeting, they discussed the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), the trilateral collaboration to jointly develop the next-generation fighter aircraft.



The three Ministers welcomed the achievement of significant milestones through the conclusion of international contracts between the GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO) and the Joint Venture Edgewing in April and July 2026 respectively. The conclusion of these contracts is expected to further streamline and accelerate the development effort under GIGO and Edgewing.

The three Ministers also discussed wider cooperation with other countries, including Canada's participation as an observer. Recognizing that GCAP has entered a new phase, they confirmed their commitment to working closely together to make the programme even better.

5 Meetings with Counterparts

On July 21 and 22, DM Koizumi held bilateral meetings with Italian Minister Crosetto and French Minister Vautrin. He also met with NATO Secretary General Rutte.



Chief of Staff, JASDF's Visit to the UK

From July 14 to 22, Gen Morita, Chief of Staff, JASDF visited the UK to participate in Global Air and Space Chief's Conference and Royal International Air Tattoo.

At a meeting with ACM Harv Smyth, Chief of the Air Staff, Royal Air Force and Lt Gen Antonio Conserva, Chief of Staff, Italian Air Force, he confirmed steady progress on GCAP.

He also engaged with many international air chiefs to deepen defense cooperation and exchanges.



Japan-U.S.-ROK Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Meeting

On July 15, CSJJS Gen Uchikura visited Department of War and attended Japan-U.S.-ROK Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) meeting with Gen Daniel J. Caine, U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Gen JIN, Yong-Seung, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Republic of Korea. GEN Xavier T. Brunson, Commander, USFK, Lt Gen Stephen F. Jost, Commander, USFJ, and Lt Gen George B. Rowell IV, Deputy Commander, PACOM also participated in the meeting. During his visit to the U.S., Gen Uchikura also held separate bilateral meetings with Gen Caine and Gen JIN.

(1) Japan-U.S.-ROK Chiefs of Defense Meeting

Gen Uchikura, Gen Caine, and Gen JIN shared their assessments of the security situation and discussed the further deepening of trilateral defense cooperation to promote peace and stability in the region surrounding the three countries. For example, they agreed to further strengthening trilateral cooperation by advancing defense cooperation, including joint exercises such as Freedom Edge, the Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral exercise which had been conducted for the third time last year.



(2) Japan-U.S. Bilateral Meeting

During the meeting, Gen Uchikura and Gen Caine shared their assessments of the global security environment and the situation in the Indo-Pacific region, and extensively exchanged views on the roles of Japan and the United States in maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. They also concurred on working closely together toward the realization of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and on further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Lt Gen Jost, also attended the meeting.



(3) Japan-ROK Bilateral Meeting

During the meeting, Gen Uchikura and Gen JIN shared their assessments of the security environment surrounding their respective countries and agreed to steadily advance Japan-ROK defense cooperation. This meeting marked the first face-to-face meeting between them since Gen JIN assumed office. Gen Uchikura also referred to Minister of Defense Koizumi's visit to the Republic of Korea and the Japan-ROK Defense Ministers' Meeting held in June. They concurred on conducting frank exchanges at all levels and further strengthen defense cooperation between Japan-ROK.



Kamandag 10-26

From June 15 to July 1, JGSDF participated in a field training exercise Kamandag10-26 with the U.S. and Philippine Marine Corps and other partner forces in the Philippines.

During the exercise, the JGSDF conducted various activities related to airborne operations and CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) response training with U.S. and Philippine Forces. Through these activities, the participating units enhanced their operational capabilities and strengthened cooperation with U.S. and Philippine Marine Corps and other partner forces.



Courtesy call by UN Under-Secretary General for Operational Support on Chief of Staff, JGSDF

On July 13, GEN Arai, Chief of Staff, JGSDF, received a courtesy call from Mr. Athul Khare, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support.

During the meeting, GEN. Arai briefed Mr. Khare on the JGSDF's initiatives aimed at improving the international security environment, and they exchanged views on issues surrounding UN peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Khare expressed his appreciation for the JGSDF's long-standing contribution to the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (UNTPP), which supports capacity building for peacekeepers.



JS Yuudachi Conducted a Bilateral Exercise with USS George Washington

On July 24, JS Yuudachi conducted a bilateral exercise with USS George Washington, USS Robert Smalls, USS Shoup, and USS Benfold. Through this exercise, the JMSDF improved its tactical capabilities and interoperability between the JMSDF and the U.S. Navy.



Southern Cross 26

From July 6 to 16, JASDF conducted Japan-U.S.-Australia trilateral exercise “Southern Cross 26” in Darwin, Australia.

On July 9, Gen Morita, Chief of Staff, JASDF, observed Southern Cross 26, joined by AIRMSHL Stephen Chappell, Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force and Gen Kevin B. Schneider, Commander, Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Air Force. At the media engagement, he emphasized the importance of Southern Cross 26, trilateral cooperation, preparedness, and opportunities that the exercise offers. They also affirmed the expansion of operational cooperation on F-35A and further enhancement of interoperability.

Southern Cross 26 is among the three F-35 exercises highlighted in trilateral joint statement issued at Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Ministers’ Meetings in 2024 and 2025. It marked the third iteration of trilateral F-35 exercise, following Cope North 25 in the U.S. and Bushido Guardian 25 in Japan, and the first to be conducted in Australia.



E-2D Made First Visit to the Philippines and Indonesia

En route to Australia for Southern Cross 26, E-2D AER&C (airborne early warning and control) from 603rd Squadron, Airborne Warning and Control Wing made its first visits to the Philippines and the Indonesia. During the visits, 603rd Squadron conducted a subject matter expert exchange with respective air forces to deepen bilateral defense exchanges.



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