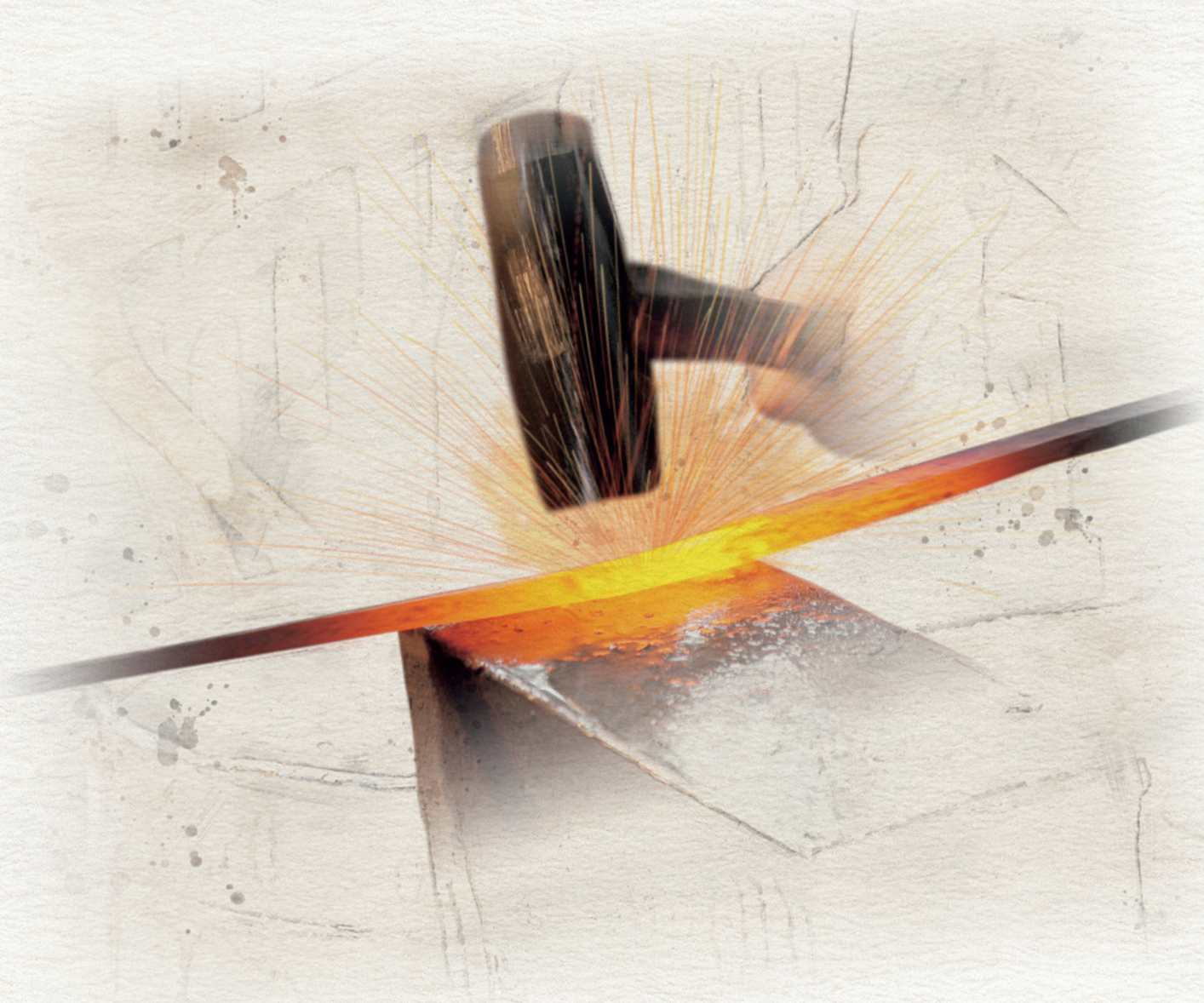


2024

DEFENSE OF JAPAN

Pamphlet



MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

On the Publication of "Defense of Japan 2024"

KIHARA Minoru

Minister of Defense

木原 稔



The international community has entered a new era of crisis. It is now facing its greatest trial since the end of World War II. The existing order is being seriously challenged. Japan finds itself in the most severe and complex security environment of the post-war era.

China has been rapidly building up military capabilities while intensifying its activities in the East China Sea, where the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands are, as well as in the Pacific. North Korea has been advancing its nuclear and missile development and pushing ahead with the launch of ballistic missiles and others. Russia has been conducting intensive military activities in the Far East encompassing the Northern Territories, while continuing its aggression against Ukraine. Russia has also been observed engaging in joint activities with China involving aircraft and vessels.

Amidst the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are committed to protecting the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese people and defending Japan's territorial land, waters and airspace to the end. In fulfillment of these missions, the MOD/SDF will drive the implementation of policies expressed in the National Security Strategy of Japan, the National Defense Strategy, and the Defense Buildup Program.

These policies consist of three major objectives. The first one is to steadily actualize a fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities of Japan. Building future core defense capabilities such as stand-off and IAMD (Integrated Air and Missile Defense) must be prioritized. Therefore, Japan is going to acquire various types of stand-off missiles earlier than originally planned, including Tomahawk missiles and the ground-launched version of upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship missiles. Japan will expedite the start of the construction of Aegis System Equipped Vessels to defend herself from increasingly sophisticated ballistic missiles and other threats. Enhancing sustainability and resiliency is another important task. Japan will thus proceed to improve the operational availability of equipment, secure sufficient ammunition and guided missiles, and promote focused investments to improve the resiliency of defense facilities.

The second major objective is to cooperate with our ally, like-minded countries, and other partners. No country can now protect her own security alone. As challenges to the existing international order continue, it is critical for Japan to deepen cooperation and collaboration with our ally, like-minded countries, and other partners with whom Japan shares universal values and strategic interests.

The Alliance with the United States is the cornerstone of our national security policy. Japan will steadily implement concrete measures to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

At the same time, it is important for Japan to enhance cooperation with like-minded countries and other partners to ensure peace and stability of the region. Japan will implement measures which contribute to realizing the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific". To this end, Japan will proactively promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges, such as bilateral/multilateral exercises and defense equipment and technology cooperation, taking into account characteristics and other factors of the region and each country. Such cooperation is represented by the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft. This joint development aims to enhance the performance of fighters, which constitutes the core defense capability of Japan. It will serve to the world a basis of security, stability, and prosperity over the coming decades.

There has also been progress in multilateral cooperation centering on Japan and the United States. Last December, Japan, the United States and the Republic of Korea began the operation of the real-time sharing of missile warning data on North Korea. Around that time, the Australian Defence Force participated for the first time in two Japan-U.S. bilateral command post exercises: "Keen Edge" and "Yama Sakura." Japan will promote such cooperation.

The third major objective is to reinforce our human resource base, which is an urgent one. As Japan is in a midst of serious labor shortages, there is an increasingly fierce competition to secure human resources. SDF personnel constitutes the core element of defense capabilities of Japan. To procure excellent human resources in the competitive recruiting environment, we will take all necessary measures to reinforce our human resource base without ruling out any options. These consist of the enhancement of SDF recruitment capabilities, the effective use of human resources, the improvement of living and working environments, and the reformation of remuneration systems.

Harassment has no place in the MOD/SDF, as an organization where people matter. Recognizing that harassment damages the mutual trust among SDF personnel and shakes the very foundation of the entire organization, we will continue to create a working environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind by implementing effective harassment prevention measures.

"Defense of Japan 2024" describes the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts of the MOD/SDF as have been outlined above. In particular, we took care to comprehensively explain our progress towards the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities of Japan; or in other words, how Japan's defense and deterrence capabilities have been taking stable steps towards reinforcement. The year 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the SDF, and "Defense of Japan 2024" is the 50th commemorative issue of Japan Defense White Paper. The opening pages touch upon the 70-year history of the SDF as a special feature article.

Efforts of the MOD/SDF, including the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, would not be made possible without the understanding and support by the Japanese people and countries around the world. I hope this white paper will help as many readers as possible to facilitate a better comprehension of the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts made by the MOD/SDF.

70 Years of the SDF as described in the Defense White Papers

The Ministry of Defense (MOD), formerly the Defense Agency (DA), and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) was established on July 1, 1954, and marks its 70th anniversary in 2024.

"Defense of Japan 2024" is the 50th issue of Japan's Defense White Paper since the first edition was published in 1970.

This feature shows a 70-year history of the MOD/SDF—which has worked in step with the public—as described in the past 50 defense white papers.

Note: The coverage of events that happened before the first defense white paper was published is based on descriptions in successive white papers up to the 2024 Defense White Paper, with a special focus on features and other articles in the 1994 Defense White Paper (the 40th anniversary of the SDF) and the 2004 Defense White Paper (the 50th anniversary of the SDF).

The Period from the SDF's Establishment to the Subsequent Gradual Buildup of Defense Capabilities

1949

NATO established

Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and German Democratic Republic (East Germany) established
People's Republic of China established

1950

Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance signed
Korean War broke out



The Battle of Incheon in the Korean War.
[AFP/Jiji Press Photo]



12 countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty (April 1949) [NATO website]



Through the GHQ, the U.S. asked the Government of Japan (GOJ) to dispatch a minesweeper unit of the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) to Korea in order to fill the gap in the minesweeping capabilities in its landing operations. The photo shows "Yuchidori", the flagship of the JCG unit.

1953

USSR carried out its first hydrogen bomb test

Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea

Political and military rivalries between the East and West blocs over political, economic, and ideological differences during the Cold War

1954

Paris Agreement signed

West Germany recovered sovereignty, being allowed to rearm and join NATO



[NATO website]

July 1, 1954

Defense Agency established
Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces established
Joint Staff Council established

1952

National Safety Agency established

The purpose was to complement the general police force. It did not reach an established defense force at this point.

1954

Japan-U.S. Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement (MDA) signed based on U.S. Mutual Security Act (MSA)

MSA, which involved the integration of economic assistance and a strengthened military alliance, called on Japan to make defense efforts on its own.



Ceremony marking the establishment of the DA (SDF personnel saluting Director General KIMURA Tokutaro)



SDF flag (left) and SDF naval ensign (right) instituted upon the DA's establishment
Director General KIMURA Tokutaro (center)

1945

The End of World War II



After the war, the allied forces occupied and disarmed Japan. [Jiji Press Photo]

1950
National Police Reserve established

Background: There was growing concern about public order in Japan after the bulk of U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) was deployed to the Korean peninsula after the Korean War started.

1952

Maritime Guard established

As an organization within the JCG

1951

Treaty of Peace with Japan and Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed

- Japan provides facilities and areas for the U.S. Forces.
- Treaty of Peace with Japan meant the recovery of Japan's sovereignty (1952), but it left Japan dependent on U.S. Forces for its security.



In Charleston, the U.S., JS Asakaze and JS Hatakaze were transferred to the MSDF at the first transfer ceremony under the Agreement for the loan of U.S. naval vessels to Japan (October 1954)



The duty to defend Hokkaido was transferred from U.S. Forces' XVI Corps to the GSDF Northern Army (September 1954)

Legend

- : International affairs
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- : Other

1955

Warsaw Pact Organization established 1962

Cuban Missile Crisis

- USSR launched construction of a nuclear missile base in Cuba, escalating tensions between U.S. and USSR.
- Post-crisis efforts to avert a critical confrontation or a catastrophe between the two countries led to the signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 and the conclusion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks 1 (SALT I) in 1972.



President Kennedy ordered a naval blockade in response to the Soviet Union building a nuclear missile base in Cuba. [Avalon/Jiji Press Photo]

1964

Gulf of Tonkin incident

In response, U.S. Forces bombed torpedo boat bases in North Vietnam.

China conducted its first nuclear test

1957

Basic Policy on National Defense

- Supporting UN activities and promoting international collaboration to realize world peace
- Stabilizing the livelihood of the people, fostering patriotism, and thereby, establishing the necessary basis of national security
- Building up rational defense capabilities by steps within the limit necessary for self-defense in accordance with national strength and situation
- Dealing with external aggression, based on the security arrangement with the U.S., until the United Nations will be able to fulfill its functions in stopping such aggression effectively in the future

1954

SDF Reserve Personnel System introduced

Gradual buildup of defense capabilities

Buildup of defense capabilities

First Defense Buildup Program (1st DBP) (1957)

- 1st DBP called for the buildup of minimum necessary self-defense capabilities commensurate with the national strength

2nd DBP (1961), 3rd DBP (1966), 4th DBP (1972)

- Under these DBPs, The aim of building up defense capabilities was to effectively respond to aggression in local or lower-level wars involving conventional weapons.

Joint operations

The Joint Staff Council's authority put under review (1961)

- Grant authority to execute DA chief's orders to joint force

Joint Staff College established (1961)

Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

Japan-U.S. Security Treaty re-signed (1960)

- Clarifying the U.S. obligation to defend Japan
- Deleting the provision so called "internal riots clause" that allowed U.S. Forces to put down internal riots in Japan
- Setting a framework of prior consultation between Tokyo and Washington regarding actions to be taken by U.S. Forces



The first joint maritime transport exercise by the Ground, Maritime and Air SDF in Shizuoka Prefecture (1962)

1956

Relocation of the Defense Agency



Completed new DA building in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo (From Etchujima to Kasumigaseki)

From cir. 1970

Détente

East-West relations remained stable.

- The United States restrained its defense efforts.
- The USSR consistently built up its military capabilities and expanded into Southeast Asia, Africa, etc. to increase its political influence there.

Ease of tensions between the United States and the USSR (Détente)



1970

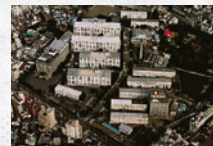
1st Defense White Paper published



1976
2nd Defense White Paper published
(Published annually from then on)

1960

Relocation of the Defense Agency



New DA HQ in Roppongi (Hinoki-cho), Tokyo (From Kasumigaseki to Hinoki-cho)

1962

Defense Facilities Administration Agency (DFAA) established



DFAA plate mounted (November 1962)

Return of Okinawa

Aichi-Rogers talks (1971)

- The Agreement on the Return of Okinawa was signed

Return of Okinawa (1972)

- Following Okinawa's reversion to Japan, the GOJ provided USFJ facilities and areas under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.



An MSDF vessel unloading 54 billion yen in cash at Naha Port, Okinawa Prefecture, for conversion from USD to JPY following Okinawa's reversion

Arms Exports

Three Principles on Arms Exports were declared at the Diet (1967)
Arms exports to the following countries or regions shall not be permitted:

- (1) communist bloc countries,
- (2) countries subject to "arms" exports embargo under the United Nations Security Council's resolutions, and
- (3) countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts.

The Government's Unified View on Arms Export announced (1976)

Arms exports to areas not subject to the Three Principles shall also be restrained.

1971

All Nippon Airways plane collided with SDF aircraft



Crashed ANA plane, and SDF personnel in search and rescue operations near Shizukuishi, Iwate Prefecture

1964

SDF supported Tokyo Olympics



The ASDF Blue Impulse drawing the five rings over Tokyo at the 18th Olympic Games in Tokyo



Maiden flight of Hinomaru-marked jets (T-33) over Kyushu (January 1955)



The National Defense Academy holding its first graduation ceremony (March 1957)

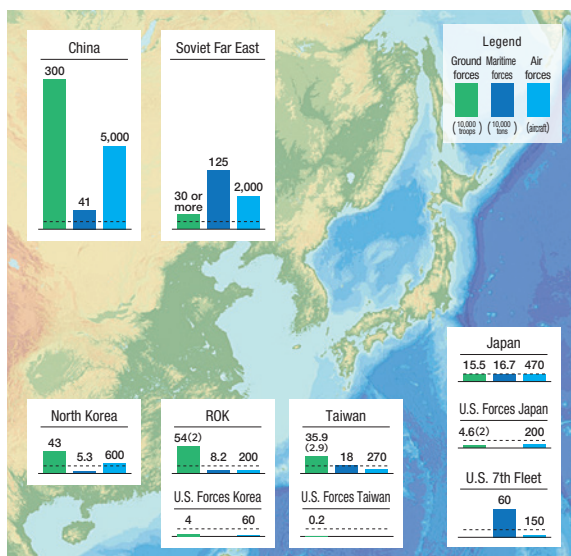


Demonstrators opposing the new security treaty in front of the Diet (January 1960)



Between the late-1950s and the late 1960s, the SDF helped farmers with rice planting and others, mainly in rural Hokkaido and Tohoku in the busy farming season as requested by local governments.

Main Military Forces in Japan's Surroundings (Approximate Strength) (FY1976)



(Note) 1 Compiled from the 1977 Defense White Paper.

2 The number of U.S. troops stationed in these countries indicates the combined total for ground, naval, and air forces.

3 Figures in parentheses indicate the military force of Marine Corps.

4 Figures for Japan indicate the actual strength.

5 - - - - indicates the actual strength of Japan as of 1976.

The Period of the Basic Defense Force Concept and the Period of International Contribution

1989

End of the Cold War declared

1990

East and West Germany unified



The Berlin Wall, a symbol of the Cold War, was torn down in 1989. [EPA/Jiji Press Photo]

1991

Warsaw Pact dissolved

Religious and ethnic tensions became apparent

1990

Iraq invaded Kuwait



The Gulf War started when the multilateral forces resorted to the use of force in order to eliminate the Iraqi aggression and secure peace and security in the Gulf region. [AFP/Jiji Press Photo]

1991

Civil war broke out in Yugoslavia

The end of the Cold War

1983

Soviet military aircraft shot down KAL airliner

1987

U.S. and USSR signed Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

1976

MiG-25 landed at Hakodate Airport without permission



The Soviet military aircraft made an unauthorized landing at Hakodate Airport. This incident highlighted such issues as how radar sites should cope with aircraft intruding at low altitude and a gap in the early warning and surveillance functions. This in turn led to the introduction of airborne early warning aircraft and improvements to communication structures.

1979

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

Setting out the GOJ's views as specifically as possible on what Japan's defenses should look like to form national consensus on this issue

1976

Formulation of the National Defense Program Guidelines (1976 NDPG)

• "Basic Defense Force Concept"

• Japan is to maintain the minimum necessary basic defense capabilities as an independent nation to prevent itself from creating a power vacuum that would destabilize the area surrounding Japan, instead of directly countering military threats to Japan.

Japan-U.S. Alliance

Subcommittee for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation established (1976)

Cabinet approved Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (1978)

• Calling for studies on joint defense planning for the defense of Japan as well as bilateral training and exercises
• Defining the roles of Japan and the United States in case of contingencies in Japan



Destroyer JS "Hiei" navigating alongside a U.S. aircraft carrier during the SDF's first participation in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) hosted by the U.S. Navy (1980)

1976

"GNP 1% ceiling" adopted for defense spending

The Immediate-Term Defense Buildup Program" (Cabinet decision on November 5, 1976) called for limiting total annual defense-related expenditures to less than 1% of gross national product for the time being.

1983

Transfer of military technologies to U.S. approved

The Chief Cabinet Secretary stated that such provision was not subject to the Three Principles on Arms Exports.

1987

The GNP 1% ceiling rescinded

The GOJ said that although it would not apply the GNP 1% ceiling¹, it would continue to respect the spirit of seeking a moderate defense buildup².

(Notes)

¹ "Plans for Dealing with the Immediate-term Defense Buildup Program," which was approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on November 5, 1976, in the FY1987 Budget (Approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 30, 1986)

² The Program for the Future Buildup of Defense Capability (Approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on January 24, 1987)

Legend

- : International affairs
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Spread of nuclear and missile threats

1993

North Korea declared the withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
North Korea conducted a ballistic missile test launch toward the central Sea of Japan



An array of North Korean missiles in the military parade celebrating the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the Korean People's Army.
[Korea News Service/Jiji Press Photo]

While the likelihood of a global armed conflict has become distant, security concerns diversified.

1995

Formulation of the National Defense Program Guideline (1995 NDPG)

- Basically following the Basic Defense Force Concept
- "Dealing with various contingencies such as major disasters" and "contributing to building a more stable security environment" added to the roles of defense capability, joining the existing role of "defense of the nation"

Contributing to building a more stable security environment

Enforcement of the International Peace Cooperation Act and amendment of the Japan Disaster Relief Team Law (1992)

- Developed a domestic structure focusing on human resources for more active contribution to the international community



After the transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas became a new duty of the SDF, the ASDF conducted trainings to change the specifications of the in-flight equipment of the government aircraft from those for dignitaries to those for Japanese nationals and others.

Dispatch of SDF to international peace cooperation assignments including :

- Cambodia (1992–1993)
- Mozambique (1993–1995)
- Rwanda (1994)
- The Golan Heights (1996–2013)
- etc.

Amendment of the Self-Defense Forces Law (the SDF Law) (1994)

- The transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas was added as a duty of the SDF

Amendment of the SDF Law (1999)

- The use of SDF vessels and shipboard helicopters, in addition to SDF aircraft, is now allowed to transport Japanese nationals and others overseas



Training for transporting Japanese nationals and others overseas (leading people to the onboard boat)

1996

North Korean mini-submarine ran aground on the east coast of ROK, and its crew intruded into ROK territory



A North Korean submarine designed to carry special operations forces ran aground in the ROK's territorial waters. Its crew and armed agents on board intruded into the ROK's territory. [Jiji Press Photo]

1999

Kosovo conflict breaks out



Ichigaya area at the time of relocation (Hinokicho => Ichigaya)

Strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense

Joint operations

The Defense Intelligence Headquarters established (1997)
The authority of the Joint Staff Council (JSC) strengthened (1999)

- The JSC now assists the DA chief in disaster relief operations and international disaster relief activities in addition to defense and public security operations.

The Central Command Post started operations following the relocation of the DA (2000)



Joint arrangements in action for disaster relief operations following the eruption of Mt. Miyake. The photo shows a RF-4 reconnaissance aircraft flying near Miyakejima Island.

Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)

The G-2 and the U.S. signed the Exchange of Notes and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Japan and the U.S. on Japan-U.S. Cooperative Research on BMD (1999)

The government decided to introduce the BMD system (2003)

Amendment of the SDF Law (2005)

- Paving the way for responding with the BMD system when no defense operation orders are given

The SDF Ready Reserve Personnel System introduced (1998)



SDF Ready Reserve Personnel in training

Dealing with various contingencies such as large-scale disasters

The Great Hanshin and Awaji Earthquake and the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack (1995)



The Basic Act on Disaster Management and the SDF Law amended, the Defense Agency Disaster Prevention Plan amended (1995)

- Additional authority to uniformed SDF personnel in a disaster relief operation (e.g., the authority to ensure the passage of emergency vehicles when no police officers are around)
- Clarified criteria for discretionary dispatches and closer cooperation with local governments

Japan-U.S. Alliance

The unfortunate incident in 1995 led to the establishment of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) (1996 The SACO Final Report).



The SACO Final Report agreed to return some 21% in area of the facilities and areas of the USFJ located in Okinawa Prefecture at the time. The photo shows Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma, the total return of which was stipulated in the report. [Ginowan City Website]

Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security (1996)
Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation revised (1997)

- Studying and making revisions in three areas: (i) cooperation under normal circumstances, (ii) actions in response to an armed attack against Japan, and (iii) cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan

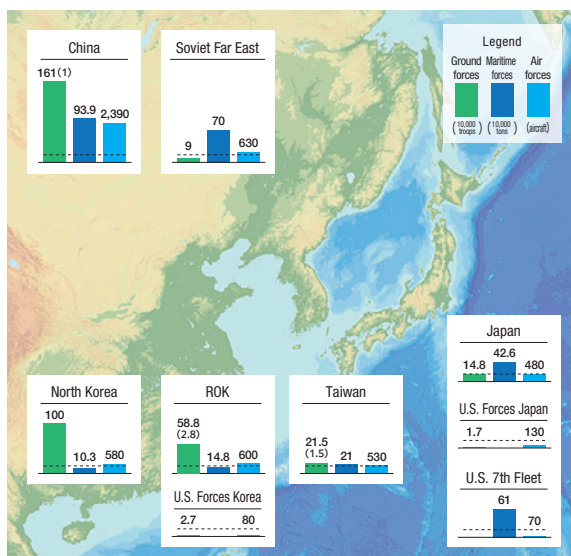
The Act Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan came into force (1999)

- Providing for measures that Japan will take in response to situations in areas surrounding Japan (rear area support, rear area search and rescue operations, etc.) as well as for implementation procedures among other requirements.



The Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security reaffirmed the importance of Japan-U.S. security arrangements as a cornerstone of Japan-U.S. relations, and made clear what the Japan-U.S. Alliance should look like in the 21st century. [Jiji Press Photo]

Main Military Forces in Japan's Surroundings (Approximate Strength) (FY2004)



(Note) 1 Compiled from the 2005 Defense White Paper.
 2 Figures for the ground forces of U.S. Forces Japan/Korea indicate the combined total for Army troops and U.S. Marines.
 3 Figures in parentheses indicate the military force of Marine Corps.
 4 Figures for Japan indicate the actual strength.
 5 - - - - indicates the actual strength of Japan as of 1976.

The Period of New Threats, Diverse Contingencies, and a Growing Role of Defense Capabilities

China expands and increases activities in surrounding waters

2001 The 9/11 terrorist attacks



[dpa/Jiji Press Photo]

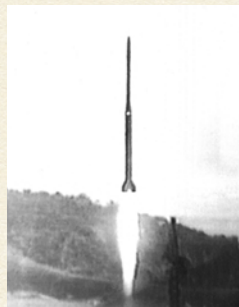
2003 Iraq War broke out



[AFP=Jiji]

Developments in North Korea

A missile launched by North Korea (presumed to be Taepodong I) passed over Japan (1998)



[AFP=Jiji]

Discovery of a suspicious ship off the Noto Peninsula (1999)



Nuclear test (2006)

• From the onward, one such test each in 2009, 2013, and 2017, as well as two in 2016.

- New threats, such as international terrorism and ballistic missile attacks
- The direct connection between world peace and Japan's peace
- Necessity to convert the policy from putting weight on deterrence to responding to the situation

2004

Formulation of the National Defense Program Guidelines (2004 NDPG)



2006

2005

2007
Defense Agency superseded by Ministry of Defense (MOD)



- Calling for multi-functional, flexible, and effective defense capabilities to work independently and proactively on implementing international peace cooperation activities while dealing effectively with new threats and diverse contingencies
- Succeeding the effective parts of the Basic Defense Force Concept

Effective response to new threats and diverse contingencies

Legislative measures

Act on Special Measures against Terrorism (2001)

Amendment of the SDF Law (2001)

- Amendments for the response to suspicious vessels (regarding the use of weapons during Maritime Security Operations)
- Amendment that allows for Guarding Operations and define the authority to conduct them
- Amendment for the response to armed agents (allowing both for information gathering before an order for a Public Security Operation is issued and for the use of weapons during such an operation)

Three Emergency-Related Laws (Armed Attack Situation Response Law, etc.) enacted. (2003)

- The Armed Attack Response Law specifies (i) basic principles, (ii) the responsibilities of national and local governments, and (iii) cooperation of the people in armed attack situation, etc. (Armed Attack Situations and Expected Armed Attack Situations).

Seven bills related to Armed Attack Situation Response Law passed and three treaties ratified (2004)

- The Civil Protection Law, etc.



A MSDF vessel in escort operation



SDF personnel participating in civil protection training in Fukui Prefecture, the first such training under the Civil Protection Law

Response to suspicious vessels

First order for maritime security operations (1999)

- MSDF destroyers gave orders to halt and fired warning shots.
- P-3C aircraft dropped bombs as a warning.

Joint exercise with JCG to deal with suspicious vessels (from 1999)

- "The manual for jointly dealing with suspicious vessels" was formulated.



A MSDF destroyer conducting a joint exercise with a JCG patrol vessel in light of the lessons learned from the cases of suspicious vessels

2024 Defense White Paper

Legend

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Chinese Activities in Waters near Japan

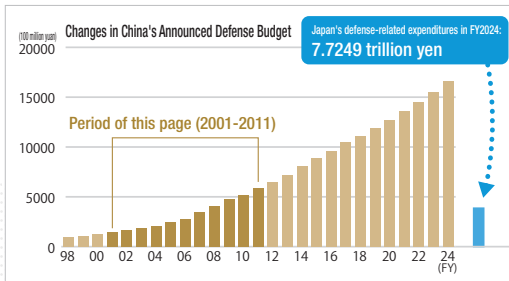
- Submerged Chinese nuclear-powered submarine navigated in Japan's territorial waters, breaching international law (2004)
- China Maritime Surveillance vessels intruded into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, and hovered and drifted there (2008)
- Chinese fishing trawler collided with a JCG patrol vessel in Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands (2010)
- Chinese government ship ordered a Philippine research vessel to withdraw in the South China Sea (2011)
- China moved to build new constructions such as station poles in the South China Sea (2011)
- Chinese government ship cut an investigation cable towed by a Vietnamese resource exploration vessel (2012)

- Change in global power balance
- Complex military situation surrounding Japan
- Diversification of the military role in global society

2010

Formulation of the National Defense Program Guidelines (2010 NDPG)

- Developing a Dynamic Defense Force (Not bound by the Basic Defense Force Concept)
- Facilitating effective deterrence and responses to various contingencies and making it possible to proactively conduct activities in order to further stabilize the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and improve the global security environment in a dynamic manner



2011

2011

Great East Japan Earthquake



A joint task force conducting various activities for supporting affected people, including searching for missing persons

2011

Comprehensive exemptions to Guidelines for Overseas Transfer of Defense Equipment, etc. (Statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary).

- Cases related to peace contribution and international cooperation
- Cases regarding international joint development and production of defense equipment that contribute to Japan's security



2007



2008



2009



2010

2009

Order for ballistic missile destruction measures issued for first time

ASDF PAC-3 deployed in the Tohoku region after an order for ballistic missile destruction measures was issued for the first time (2009)



From 2009

Counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden



Piracy incidents were frequent and surging in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. To protect Japan-related vessels from piracy, an order for Maritime Security Operations was issued first. This was followed by an order for counter-piracy operations after the Counter-Piracy Measures Act was enacted.

The MOD/SDF began to operate a new operation facility in the Republic of Djibouti for the Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DAPE) in 2011.



Effective deterrence and responses

Strengthening the defense architecture in the southwestern region

Ensuring security of sea and airspace surrounding Japan

- Increasing the number of submarines, introducing P-1 patrol aircraft, and upgrading fixed 3D radars

Improving capabilities for rapid deployment and response

- Establishing the 15th Brigade and introducing next-generation cargo aircraft

Improving intelligence-gathering and patrol/surveillance postures

- Increasing the number of transportable radars in Naha, and deploying a coast observation unit in the southwestern region



Ceremony to mark the delivery of submarine "Unryu" and granting of the MSDF flag



Ceremony to mark the granting of the unit's flag in an event celebrating the newly established 15th Brigade



The maiden flight of a prototype of next-generation cargo aircraft (XC-2) from ASDF Gifu Air Base

Further stabilizing the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and improving the global security environment

Continue proactive contribution to international peace cooperation activities

Starting initiatives to provide capacity building (from 2012)

- Creating a desirable security environment for Japan by helping the partner countries' forces, etc., to adequately fulfill their roles in maintaining international peace and regional stability



GSDF personnel explaining vehicle maintenance procedures in Timor-Leste

Joint operations

Joint Staff established (2006)

- Changed the posture from each SDF based operations to joint based operations

Clarified The status and roles of the Defense Intelligence Headquarters as "the central intelligence service for the Defense Agency" (2006)

Response to ballistic missile attacks



Surface-to-air missile PAC-3 introduced (first deployed in March 2007)



Destroyer JS "Kongo" was equipped with ballistic missile response capabilities (December 2007)



With a shift to the joint operations system, the first Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, assumed his post (March 2006)

Established a structure that allows the SDF to independently and proactively engage in international peace cooperation activities

Activities for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq (2003-2009)



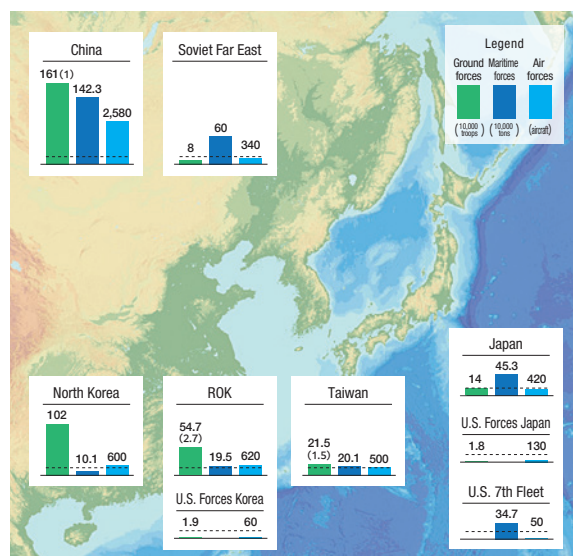
Japan dispatched the SDF units to Iraq following the collapse of the Hussein administration to provide humanitarian assistance and reconstruction support, such as providing medical services and supplying water.

International peace cooperation activities became a primary SDF mission (2007)



Female SDF personnel participated in PKO for the first time, in Timor-Leste (2002)

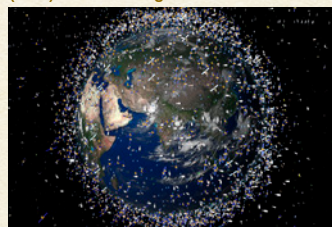
Main Military Forces in Japan's Surroundings (Approximate Strength) (FY2013)



(Note) 1 Compiled from the 2014 Defense White Paper.
 2 Figures for the ground forces of U.S. Forces Japan/Korea indicate the combined total for Army
 3 Figures in parentheses indicate the military force of Marine Corps.
 4 Figures for Japan indicate the actual strength.
 5 - - - - indicates the actual strength of Japan as of 1976.

Growing interest in global commons such as outer space and cyberspace

2010 The U.S.'s National Security Strategy (NSS) referred to global commons.



A CG image depicting the distribution of space debris in orbit around Earth [Courtesy of the European Space Agency]



2012

2013
National Security Council established; National Security Strategy of Japan formulated

Growing tensions in the Korean Peninsula

2010 ROK naval patrol ship "Cheonan" sunk in the Yellow Sea North Korea shelled the ROK's Yeonpyeong island 2012 North Korea launched what it calls a satellite

North Korea launched what it calls a satellite



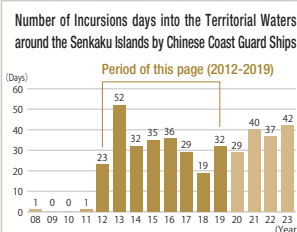
2013

U.S. policy of rebalance (redistribution of resources)

2012 The U.S. announces a policy of strategic rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region in its Defense Strategic Guidance

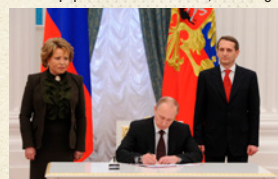
- After the GJ transferred the ownership of three of Senkaku Islands in 2012, activities by Chinese vessels were markedly intensified in waters surrounding the islands.
- China increased the numbers of surface vessels (most notably the commissioning of the aircraft carrier "Liaoning"), submarines, and 4th generation fighters (2012)
- A Chinese warship directed a fire-control radar at an MSDF destroyer in the East China Sea (2013)

China rapidly expands and intensifies activities in the maritime and aerial domains



Developments in Russia

- "Annexation of Crimea" (2014)
- Conducted what is known as "hybrid warfare," which is constituted so as not to be recognized as the use of force by the state
- Strengthened missile capabilities with the deployment of new equipment in the Far East, including Japan's Northern Territories



Russian President Vladimir Putin signing the legislation incorporating Crimea (March 2014) [SPUTNIK/Jiji Press Photo]



"Bastion" surface-to-ship missiles deployed to Etorofu Island (2016) [Russian Ministry of Defence website]



Su-35S deployed to Etorofu Island (from 2018) [Russian Ministry of Defence website]



2015

2013

Formulation of the National Defense Program Guidelines (2013 NDPG)

- Building a Dynamic Joint Defense Force
- Defense force to be more thorough with the concept of joint operations, which enables the SDF to respond swiftly to the increasingly severe security environment and carry out various activities—such as achieving maritime and air superiority—seamlessly and flexibly



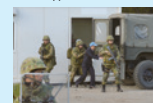
2014

2014
Cabinet decision on "Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology"

2015

Legislation for Peace and Security enacted

- Amendment of the SDF Law (including the Rescue of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas and Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and Other Forces)
- Enacted the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure Peace and Security of Japan in Situations that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security (to replace the Act concerning "Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan")
- Enacted the International Peace Cooperation Act (to cover, inter alia, Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security and so-called "kaketsuke-keigo" (coming to the aid of geographically distant units or personnel under attack) operations)
- Amendment of the Armed Attack Situation Response Law (to cover Survival-Threatening Situations)
- Enacted the International Peace Support Act (to allow for cooperation and support activities in Joint International Peace Response Situation)



Training for "kaketsuke-keigo" operations

Securing a posture for effective deterrence and response to various situations

Ensuring security of the sea and airspace surrounding Japan



The MOD/SDF continues to engage in strict measures against intrusions into territorial airspace to ensure the security of the air and sea areas around Japan, even after China set the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone.

Response to an attack on remote islands (Strengthening of the defense architecture in the southwestern region)



- Deploying units to the southwestern region (Yonagunijima Island in 2016, Amami Oshima Island and Miyakojima Island in 2019, and Ishigakijima Island in 2023), including a Type-12 SSM unit
- Defense capabilities were bolstered to ensure air superiority as evidenced by the establishment of the Southwestern Air Defense Force (2017)



Developing amphibious operations capabilities by, for example, establishing the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade and enhancing the functions of the MSDF Minesweeper Squadron

Response to ballistic missile attacks



Equipping Atago-class destroyers with BMD capabilities, adding two Aegis destroyers, among other measures

Responses in space and cyberspace

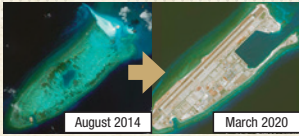


The Cyber Defense Unit established under the SDF Command Control Communication Computers Systems Command (2014)

Legend

- : International affairs
- : Reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities
- : Japan-U.S. relations
- : International contribution / international exchange / cooperation with other countries, etc
- : Other

- China established the "East China Sea ADIZ," which covers the Senkaku Islands. (2013) It incorrectly indicates them as Chinese territories.
- China pushed rapid and large-scale land reclamation in the Spratly Islands (from 2014 onward)



[Sources: CSIS/AMTI/Maxar]

- The Philippines-China South China Sea Arbitral Tribunal determined the illegality of China's activities, such as land reclamation (2016)
- China placed its maritime security units under the command of the People's Armed Police (PAP) and ultimately the Central Military Commission (2018)



2016

2016

Disaster relief teams dispatched after the 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake



2017

Rapid expansion in the use of new domains, which are space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum



The threatening text of the malware "WannaCry," which wreaked havoc globally
[EPA/Jiji Press Photo]



Ground-deployed electronic warfare (EW) system "Leer-3" [Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]



2018

2018 Formulation of the National Defense Program Guidelines (2018 NDPG)

- The security environment surrounding Japan became increasingly severe and uncertain at a remarkably fast pace
- Rapid expansion in SDF's use of new domains, which are space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum
- Notable trends toward further increases in military capabilities and activities



2019

- Building a Multi-Domain Defense Force
- Truly effective defense capability that enables cross-domain operations organically fusing capabilities in all domains by strengthening not only those in traditional domains-land, sea and air-but also those in new domains, which are space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum

Strengthening capabilities necessary for cross-domain operations

Acquiring and strengthening capabilities in space, cyber, and electromagnetic domains



- ASDF Space Operations Squadron established (2020)
- ASDF Space Operations Group established with expanded units (2022)



JSDF Cyber Defense Command established by expanding the functions of the Cyber Defense Unit and by abolishing the SDF Command Control Communication Computers Systems Command (2022)



- GSDF Electronic Warfare Operations Unit established (2022)
- GSDF Network Electronic Warfare System acquired (from 2017)
- ASDF stand-off electronic warfare aircraft developed (from 2020)

Enhancing capabilities in traditional domains

Maritime and air domains



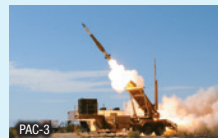
F-35A fighter



Soryu-class submarine

- Acquiring F-35A/B fighters, P-1 patrol aircraft, KC-46A aerial refueling/transport aircraft
- Acquiring a new type of frigates (FFM)
- Increasing the number of submarines
- Refurbishing Izumo-class destroyers and testing the takeoff and landing of F-35B fighters (2021).

Comprehensive air and missile defense capabilities



- Deploying PAC-3ME surface-to-air guided missiles
- Increasing the number of Aegis destroyers (to 8 by 2020)



Maya-class Aegis destroyer

Stand-off defense capabilities



Upgraded Type-12 SSM (image)



JSM-equipped F-35A (image)

- Conducting R&D of upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship missiles, hypersonic gliding projectiles for the defense of remote islands, hypersonic missiles, etc. (from 2018)
- Procuring stand-off missiles (JSM) (from 2018).

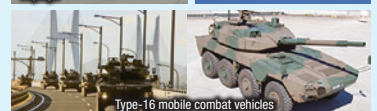
Mobile deployment capabilities



Ospreys



C-2



Type-16 mobile combat vehicles

- Acquiring V-22 Ospreys, Type-16 mobile combat vehicles, and C-2 transport aircraft
- Establishing rapid deployment regiments

2016

Japan advocates a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" vision at TICAD

(Three pillars)

- Promotion and establishment of the rule of law, freedom of navigation and free trade
- Pursuit of economic prosperity (e.g. improving connectivity)
- Commitment to peace and stability

2015

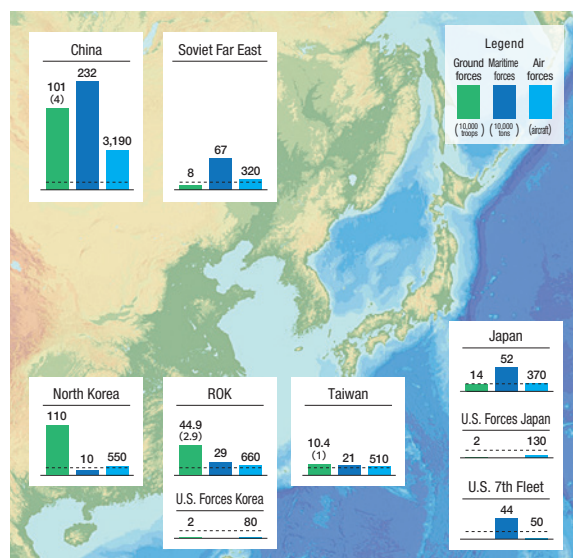
Revision of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation

- Establishment of the Alliance Coordination Mechanism available from peacetime
- Strengthening of operational coordination
- Formulation and update of joint plans



Announcement of the new Guidelines at the Japan-U.S. "2+2"

Main Military Forces in Japan's Surroundings (Approximate Strength) (FY2022)



(Note) 1 Compiled from the 2023 Defense White Paper.

2 Figures for the ground forces of U.S. Forces Japan/Korea indicate the combined total for Army troops and U.S. Marines.

3 Figures in parentheses indicate the military force of Marine Corps.

4 Figures for Japan indicate the actual strength.

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Emerging new ways of warfare

Attacks in space, cyber, and electromagnetic domains, as well as attacks by UAVs, etc.



November 2021

Taiwan released the National Defense Report, which concerns about "cognitive warfare"

The report describes "cognitive warfare" as being designed to create disorder in society by manipulating and disturbing the public's mentality through the "Three Warfares" and disinformation via social media.



2021

From 2020 Response to COVID-19



Preparation for administering vaccines at a large-scale vaccination center. The MOD/SDF administered some 2.49 million doses from May 2021 to March 2023.

From February 2022

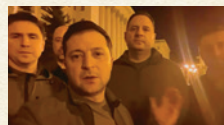
Russia's aggression against Ukraine
Massive missile attacks



Ukrainian housing complex destroyed by Russian missile attack (January 2023) [Facebook account of the Government of Ukraine]

Hybrid warfare including information warfare

The caption of a video taken and posted by President Zelenskyy in front of the Presidential Office to counter disinformation that he had left Ukraine (February 2022) [Facebook account of President Zelenskyy]



2022

August 2021

Transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Afghanistan



The SDF organized a joint task force to transport 15 Japanese nationals and others from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan by C-130 transport aircraft following the Taliban's takeover of the capital city, Kabul. The photo shows the activities of the SDF transport assistance unit at Kabul Airport.

The Period of the Most Severe and Complex Security Environment since the End of WWII and Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities

China-Russia joint actions

- Joint flights by Chinese and Russian bombers (from 2019)
- A total of 7 flights since 2019 (as of the end of March 2024)
- Joint navigation by Chinese and Russian navy vessels (from 2021)
- Bilateral exercises



Russian Navy shipboard helicopter and Chinese Navy vessel participating in joint China-Russia navigation as part of the Russia Eastern Military District strategic command and staff exercise "Vostok 2022" (September 2022) [Official Rutube channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

China-Russia strategic coordination

Intensified activities by China around Taiwan

China's activities around Taiwan

- China conducted large-scale military activities around Taiwan.
- Five ballistic missiles landed in the waters around Japan, including Japan's EEZ (2022)
- Significant increase in the number of Chinese aircraft entering Taiwan's airspace

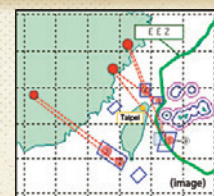
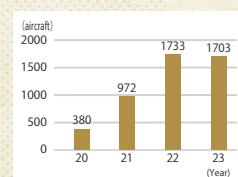


Image of China's ballistic missile launch in August 2022

Chinese military aircraft confirmed around Taiwan [Website of Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense]

December 2022

National Security Strategy (NSS)
National Defense Strategy (NDS)
Defense Buildup Program (DBP)

- Fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities as well as reinforcing the defense architecture of the whole country by integrating the strength of the nation
- Focusing on the capabilities of opponents and new ways of warfare
- Presenting Japan's defense objectives, approaches, and means by which Japan accomplishes those objectives, in lieu of the NDPG
- Fundamentally reinforcing the current Multi-Domain Defense Force through further accelerated efforts



2023

April 2023

Transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Sudan



Inside the C-2 transport aircraft carrying 45 Japanese nationals and others from the Republic of the Sudan following the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces

Japan-U.S. Alliance

Cooperation in space

Japan-U.S. "2+2" confirmed that an attack in space could lead to invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. (January 2023)

Policy coordination at different levels



Japan-U.S. joint press conference (April 2024) [Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan]

Cooperation in R&D, etc.

- Joint research in glide phase interceptor (GPI) to counter hypersonic guided weapons and in AI technology for autonomous UAV



GPI (image)

Legend

- : International affairs
 : Reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities
 : Japan-U.S. relations
 : International contribution / international exchange / cooperation with other countries, etc
 : Other

April 2023

North Korea launched a solid-fuel-propelled, ICBM-class ballistic missile "Hwasong-18" for the first time



Image publicly released by North Korea when it launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile "Hwasong-18" [Korean News Service/ Jiji]

From October 2023

Clashes between Israel and the Palestinian militants.



An Israeli tank rolling in the north of the Gaza Strip (December 2023) [AFP/Jiji]

November 2023

North Korea launched a military reconnaissance satellite

Image of launching the "military reconnaissance satellite" released by North Korea [Korea News Service]



December 2023, March 2024

Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology partially amended

Cabinet decision made in March 2024 on direct transfer of finished products regarding Global Combat Air Programme from Japan to countries other than partner countries

October and November of 2023
Transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Israel



SDF aircraft carrying Japanese nationals and others from Israel landed at Haneda Airport

January 2024

Disaster relief teams dispatched after the Noto Peninsula Earthquake



Reinforcing the defense architecture of the whole country

- R&D (recognizing it as a matching business)
- Public infrastructure Development (Specific-Use Airport and Seaport)
- Cybersecurity
- International cooperation for enhancing deterrence capabilities of Japan and like-minded countries (Official Security Assistance [OSA])



The ceremony of E/N signing for the provision of coastal surveillance radars to the Philippines [Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan]

Strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense

Capabilities to disrupt and defeat invading forces over long distances, thereby deterring invasion of Japan itself

Stand-off defense capabilities

- Moving forward the deployment of upgraded Type-12 SSM (ground-launched) (from FY2026 to FY2025)
- Moving forward the acquisition of Tomahawks (from FY2026 to FY2025).
- Development of hyper velocity gliding projectiles for the defense of remote islands



Upgraded Type-12 SSM that have stood various trials on the ground [Courtesy of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd.]

Integrated air and missile defense capabilities

- Japan-U.S. cooperative development of Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) to counter hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs), etc.
- Signing of a design contract for Aegis System Equipped Vessels
- Procurement of various interceptors (SM-3 block IIA, SM-6, PAC-3MSE, etc.)
- Strengthening of the sensor network by improving the capabilities of FPS-5, JADGE, etc.

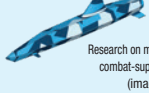


Additional capabilities to ensure asymmetric advantage across domains should deterrence fail and invasion of Japan occur

Unmanned defense capabilities



Middle-range reconnaissance UAV (image)



Research on multi-purpose combat-support USVs (image)

- Acquisition of middle-range reconnaissance UAV equipped with a synthetic aperture radar
- Trial operations of USVs (unmanned surface vehicles)
- Research on multi-purpose combat-support USVs
- Joint development with the U.S.

Cross-domain operation capabilities

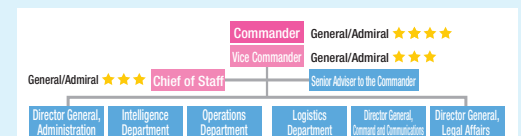
- Acquiring SDA satellites (FY2026)
- Implementing the cyber-related Risk Management Framework (RMF) and developing human resources at the GSDF System and Signal/Cyber School, etc.
- Acquiring counter air electronic warfare system and developing electronic warfare aircraft



Counter air electronic warfare system (image)

Command and control/intelligence-related functions

- Establishing JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) (FY2024)



- Upgrading the Central Command System, and responding to information warfare with the special regard to the cognitive dimension

Capabilities to operate in a swift as well as persistent manner to crush the opponent's will to invade

Mobile deployment capabilities and civil protection



maneuver support vessel (image)

- Establishing an SDF Maritime Transport Units (tentative name)
- Acquiring maneuver support vessels and transport helicopters
- Utilizing private maritime transport service

Sustainability and resiliency

- Securing various ammunition, and sustaining and maintaining equipment
- Developing as necessary master plans that involve structural reinforcement, relocation, and consolidation of facilities to improve the resiliency of those facilities and the living and working environments of SDF personnel
- Improving facility resiliency (e.g., developing facilities associated with the establishment of units, making major command headquarters underground, improving natural disaster resilience, and securing ammunition storage facilities)



An improved aircraft shelter for F-15 fighters at the Chitose Air Base

Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others



At the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting at Camp David, the three leaders affirmed progress towards the operationalization of sharing missile warning data on North Korea in real-time. (August 2023) [Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan]



The Japanese, UK, and Italian defence ministers signing the convention on the establishment of GIGD for the joint development of the next-generation fighter aircraft (December 2023)



The Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement, the first of its kind for Japan, came into force. (August 2023) The photo shows the signing ceremony (January 2022) [Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan]



The 2nd Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (JPIDD) (March 2024)

2

Voice
of SDF Personnel

My Way to

◆ Diverse missions



Working in a Company That Is Key to the Defense of the Southwestern Region

Commanding the company in a combat exercise (the author is in the right)

I am the commander of an infantry company of the Yaeyama Area Security Force at Camp Ishigaki, which was established in March 2023 in Okinawa Prefecture.

Ishigaki Island is the center of the Yaeyama Islands located some 400 kilometers from Naha. Along with Miyako Island and Yonaguni Island, Ishigaki Island is the hub of the defense of remote islands, making us feel the increasingly severe security environment on the front line. For this reason, a surface-to-air guided missile unit and a surface-to-ship guided missile unit are also stationed at Camp Ishigaki. The Yaeyama Area Security Force works with these units from the peacetime to be ready for any situation.

I will continue working hard every day with my colleagues, who gathered from all over the country. When the camp opened to



A guard of honor for the Minister of Defense at the camp's opening (the author is in the left)

Major **OSHIRO Takanori**

- 1 Infantry company, GSDF Yaeyama Area Security Force (Camp Ishigaki)
- 2 Infantry

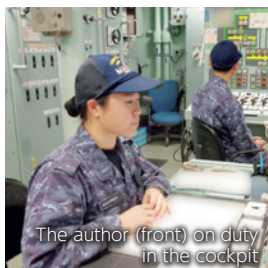
achieve our national defense mission with our catchword, "Work hard in Yaeyama for the peace of the nation!"

The MSDF conducts 24-hour monitoring and surveillance activities in the waters around Japan, including the Senkaku Islands, and my first duty after boarding the MSDF destroyer JS Makinami was to conduct monitoring and surveillance activities.

I remember having been very tense all the time for response to Chinese vessels.

As an engineer officer, I monitor and manage the status of a ship's engines and electrical power. As it was necessary to record information required for surveillance during the mission, I was assigned to command collecting records.

Through the mission, I directly learned about the increasingly severe security environment we face, which made me brace myself, and I strongly felt a sense of fulfillment and experiencing personal growth through my contributions to national defense. I will continue to pursue this challenging work and develop myself.



The author (front) on duty in the cockpit

Ensign **NISHIDA Saki**

- 1 JS Makinami (Ominato)
- 2 Engineer

My duties in monitoring and surveillance activities around Japan, including the Senkaku Islands



The author (right) recording information

Preparedness for countermeasures against airspace violations



The author is preparing for F-2A taking off

As an F-2 fighter pilot, I am engaged in countermeasures against aircraft intruding into Japan's territorial airspace.

These measures involve scrambling fighters and other aircraft to deal with foreign aircraft flying in airspace surrounding Japan that may intrude into Japan's territorial airspace without permission. In recent years, the number of scrambles has consistently remained high, nearly 1,000 times annually, as we also deal with unmanned aircraft.

Upon receiving a scramble order, we promptly launch our jets, strive to ascertain the status of aircraft that may be intruding into Japan's territorial airspace, and vigilantly monitor their activities.

Our airfields serve as the frontline, embodying Japan's intention and capability. With this understanding, I remain steadfastly committed to my duties, upholding a stringent attitude and a profound sense of responsibility and urgency.



The author and the F-2 fighter jet she is piloting

First Lieutenant
MIZUKOSHI Misaki

- 1 8th Air Wing Flight Group, 8th Fighter Squadron (Tsuiki Air Base)
- 2 Pilot

“Defend Japan”

GSDf

MSDF

ASDF

Administrative officer and others

Rank Name

- 1 Assignment
- 2 Branch of service/ appointed area

(Note) The rank and assignment are as of March 31, 2024.

Deployment to two disaster relief operations: the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake



My first disaster relief operation was the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake where I was engaged in saving lives as the leader (sergeant), and for the first time, I felt that I was helping people as a SDF personnel. During the Great East Japan Earthquake, I was engaged in rescue operations and searching for missing persons as an operational training officer for the 3rd Division of the Infantry Regiment. I was able to work in an organized manner, thanks to the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, and carry out a tough mission that only the SDF could perform. Having participated in two disaster relief operations, I realized that the times we are active are when people are in distress. Currently, the SDF is highly regarded, but without becoming

complacent, I will continue training to be ready for any mission at any time.



Major IKUBO Masanori

- 1 4th Sergeant Training Unit, Middle Army Combined Brigade (Camp Otsu)
- 2 Infantry

Regarding ballistic missile defenses, the MSDF performs its missions on its own and also with the GSDf and the ASDF as a joint task force. If there is a possibility of a ballistic missile falling into Japanese territory, Aegis will promptly launch missiles to intercept it.



Petty Officer 1st Class
ICHINOMIYA Toshiaki

- 1 JS Atago (Maizuru)
- 2 Fire Controlman

The job of the fire control man is to operate and maintain the SPY radar, which is the main sensor of Aegis. Since the condition of equipment is directly linked to the success of operations, I strive to work with all my strength all of the time.

I believe, our mission is the elimination of imminent threats at an early stage with absolute accuracy, though our operations are unnoticeable to the public as we work at sea.

My duties regarding ballistic missile defenses



The author (back row, left) during maintenance work



Transportation of Japanese Nationals and others from Israel

Seeing off after arriving in Japan (the author is standing in the middle)

had played an important role as an SDF personnel. I will pass on this experience to my juniors and continue to support the SDF missions by further growing myself.

My regular job is to make contracts for the acquisition and repair services of equipment that is necessary for national defense. In November 2023, I was engaged in a mission to transport Japanese nationals and others from Israel to Japan. From the moment I had read and watched press reports in October about the deteriorating situation, I had been wanting to rush to the site as soon as possible. I was therefore confident and motivated when the mission was announced. I headed to the country, hoping to give a sense of safety, especially to women and children as a female SDF personnel.

At the evacuation site, we provided boarding assistance from the airport terminal to the transport aircraft. When we arrived in Japan and saw off the people we had assisted, I felt relieved and proud that I



The author responding to the situation on board the flight.

Airman 1st Class
INOUE Mizuki

- 1 The 4th Air Depot Procurement Division (Iruma Air Base)
- 2 Procurement

My Way to "Defend Japan"

Aiming to become an SDF officer

Achieving my original aspiration



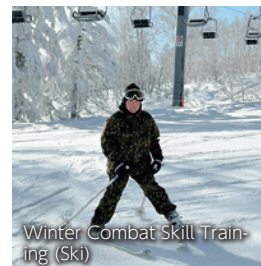
Command as a Tank Commander (the author is in the upper left)

The Great East Japan Earthquake was a major incident to learn about the existence of the SDF. At that time, I was in 5th grade at elementary school, and when I saw SDF personnel rescuing residents in disaster-stricken areas and helping them with outdoor cooking and bathing at evacuation sites, I thought they were cool, and I wanted to be someone who was needed like they were. That is why I joined the National Defense Academy.

Currently, I make training plans for maneuvers, shooting, winter combat skills, etc. to fulfill my duties in national defense as a tank platoon leader, and I work hard with other members to strengthen my unit. Being fascinated with tanks, I spend fulfilling days as I train hard with my fellow members, who all entrust their lives to each other.

My future aspiration is to become a commander who is needed by my troops.

It is important to carry on the aspirations you had at the beginning until the end.



Winter Combat Skill Training (Ski)

Second Lieutenant

NAKAGAWA Natsuki

- 1 11th Tank Unit (Camp Kita-eniwa)
- 2 Armor

I joined the MSDF because I wanted to serve people and the nation through my work, and my grandfather, whom I admire, had been a member of the MSDF. Currently, I belong to the 1st Maintenance and Supply Squadron at Kanoya Air Base. My main job includes loading and unloading electronic equipment on P-1 patrol aircraft, handling equipment malfunctions, and guiding aircraft using hand signals.

Electronic equipment is essential for the activities of patrol aircraft, and the success of missions greatly depends on the condition of the equipment. So I pay close attention to the wiring, etc. when performing maintenance, and I always check the maintenance records. Therefore, when I see aircraft return home without any problems, I feel that we maintenance personnel have also accomplished the mission, which gives me a sense of achievement and makes me feel proud of my work.

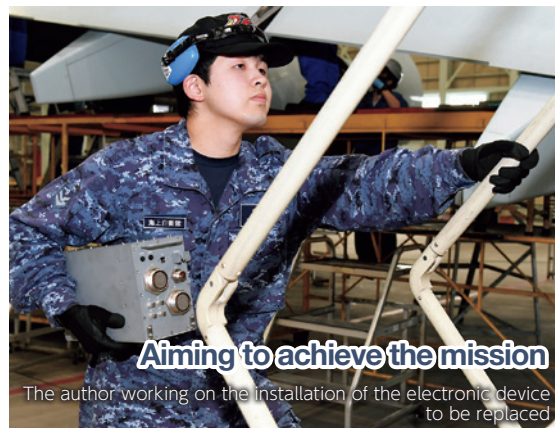


The author guiding the aircraft

Seaman

TAKEICHI Kodai

- 1 1st Maintenance and Supply Squadron, Fleet Air Wing 1 (Kanoya Air Base)
- 2 Avionics Maintenance (Air Crew)



Aiming to achieve the mission

The author working on the installation of the electronic device to be replaced

10 years since I joined the SDF: Where I am now

10 years of gratitude



The author in instrument maintenance service

I joined the SDF because I was impressed by the work of SDF personnel in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. I have served at many sites as a ground radio maintenance technician and have gained valuable experience. In this sense, I am extremely grateful to my superiors and colleagues. Currently, I am in charge of managing the unit's information system and maintaining the radio equipment of the anti-aircraft unit. Although I had not imagined this when I joined the SDF, I now have a family and work with the understanding and support of my wife, for which I am extremely grateful. Also, we are blessed with a child. Seeing my child make me motivated for child rearing as well as working harder. Our

life is thus fulfilling. I will carry on my work as an SDF personnel for society and my family in my own way.



The author working for information

Staff Sergeant

SHINZATO Toshiyuki

- 1 Patriot Operation Center, Southwestern Air Defense Missile Group (Naha Air Base)
- 2 Ground Radio Maintenance

Protecting Japan in various places

(Note) The rank and assignment are as of March 31, 2024.

Promoting the space policy



The author (right) participating in a tabletop exercise to strengthen the functional security of the entire space system

I have been primarily engaged in the research and development of aircraft and related fields as a developmental engineering officer. Recently, I had the opportunity to be seconded to the Cabinet Office and now work at the National Space Policy Secretariat. The secretariat, which is responsible for comprehensively and systematically promoting and coordinating space policy, approaches work from various perspectives, including diplomacy, intelligence, security, economics, and technology. Nowadays, space services, such as communications, observation, and positioning, have become entrenched in our daily lives, making space more familiar to us while still leaving issues to be solved, including space congestion, caused by the rapidly increasing number of artificial satellites, and space debris. Through my work at the secretariat, I will strive to do my daily job to help ensure the stable and sustainable use of outer space.

Colonel
HAYAKAWA Yukihiro

- ① Cabinet Office, National Space Policy Secretariat (Kasumigaseki)
- ② Developmental Engineering

Working on the PFI vessel Natchan World after retirement



Situation inside the ship (when I was dispatched to the Noto Peninsula earthquake site in 2024)

I am a former member of the MSDF and served as a school instructor and a destroyer captain.

I retired in January 2022 and currently work as a chief officer on the PFI vessel Natchan World. In October 2022, I was registered as a SDF Reserve Personnel, and I strive to do my regular tasks and training as a SDF Reserve Personnel.

The main job of the ship is to transport SDF units, and I work to assist the captain with all of the operations, including navigational watches, the coordination and supervision of all onboard operations, and the direction and supervision of the loading and unloading of tanks and other vehicles. The most memorable part of my work so far was the relief activities

in response to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake. After receiving instructions from the MOD, we made an emergency departure from Hakodate Port and rushed to Nanao Port in Ishikawa Prefecture. During my work there, I saw the enthusiasm of the people who had been dispatched to work in disaster-stricken areas, and the warm words of gratitude we received are deeply engraved on my heart.

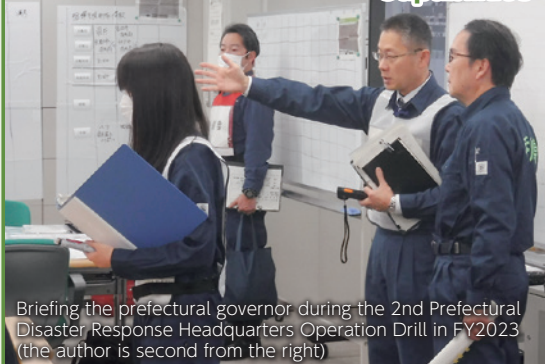


The author operating the ship in Nanao Port (when I was dispatched to the Noto Peninsula earthquake site in 2024)

Reserve Captain
TAKASUGA Masanobu

- ① Toyo Marine Service Co., Ltd.

To Enhance Local Disaster Prevention Capabilities



Briefing the prefectural governor during the 2nd Prefectural Disaster Response Headquarters Operation Drill in FY2023 (the author is second from the right)

After retiring from the GSDF, I became a prefectural disaster prevention supervisor, where I contribute to the improvement of local disaster prevention capabilities in my home prefecture of Kagawa by utilizing my experience of disaster relief operations at the GSDF's Engineer Unit and the headquarters. Currently, I am in charge of counter-disaster activities at the prefectural disaster management headquarters, as well as the education and training of prefectural staff, disaster management lectures, and liaison and coordination with the SDF.

Kagawa Prefecture in particular is required to prepare for and respond to disasters, such as a Nankai Trough megathrust earthquake as well as storm and flood disasters caused by typhoons. While the frequency of disasters in Kagawa Prefecture is low compared to other prefectures, it is extremely important to raise disaster awareness among residents to promote self-help and mutual support and for the prefecture and its

cities, towns, and disaster management organizations to cooperate in conducting practical training and drills and reflect the lessons learned. I want to contribute to saving the lives of people in the prefecture from disasters.



Giving a disaster prevention lecture at the 2nd Disaster Prevention Fair in Mannoike Forest Park (the author is top right)

Major General (before retirement)

AOI Tsuneharu

- ① Crisis Management Division, Headquarters for Crisis Management, Kagawa Prefecture
- ② Disaster Prevention Supervisor

For the Success of the GCAP

In the United Kingdom, where the headquarters of the international government organisation of the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) is to be located, I engage in a joint development of fighter aircraft between Japan, the United Kingdom and Italy as an engineer representing the Japanese government on the preparation team. In this international project with unprecedentedly high goals and scale, the process of integrating complex and advanced technologies requires a high level of expertise and experience, so I



A meeting with engineers (The author is on the far right.)



Counsellor
DOI Hirofumi

- ① Embassy of Japan in the United Kingdom (London)
- ② Civilian official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Technical and Engineering Official, Ministry of Defense

feel proud and fulfilled to be able to utilize the skills I have developed as a technical and engineering official in this project. I believe that the key to success of the project is to recognize each other's differences in technological edges, cultures and behaviors and help each another in positively integrating such differences, and I will lead the project with this belief in mind.



The Voice of a Defense Attaché to France

The population ratio between Japan and France is roughly 2:1, and the SDF and French armed forces are roughly the same size in terms of personnel. France has taken a different approach than Japan to maintain national defense in a declining population society. After the end of conscription in 2001, France adopted a volunteer system. In 2019, France imposed on those aged 15 and older the obligation to take a course



(A reception in March 2024 to celebrate the Japanese Emperor's birthday [The author is in the center.]

Lieutenant Commander
HAYASHI Aiko

- ① Embassy of Japan in France (Paris)
- ② Second Secretary and Defense attaché

that includes the field of defense under the principle of “Universal National Service.” I am constantly learning about the wide range of national defense policies in France. In our missions, we encourage a stronger presence for European countries and others in the Indo-Pacific region through interaction with French military personnel, military officer groups, and NATO-related European military personnel. I am a member of the Kyudo (Japanese traditional archery) club in the city, through which I strive to enhance Japan's presence in the region through training and related events.

Being a Defense Attaché in a War Zone

Every day, I hear reports of many civilian casualties caused by attacks from Russia. I work hoping for a swift resolution to this conflict in a manner that is desired by the Ukrainian people. I feel a sense of solidarity with the military officers of NATO countries, which are providing various types of weapons to Ukraine. Although Japan



A meeting with the Defense Minister of Moldova, a country to which Embassy of Japan in Ukraine is accredited.



The author in front of a monastery with a table where memorial flowers are placed

- Colonel
DEGUCHI Arata
- ① Embassy of Japan in Ukraine (Kyiv)
 - ② Intelligence

cannot provide such direct military support, we have heard numerous expressions of gratitude for accepting wounded soldiers at the SDF Central Hospital and providing SDF vehicles. By continuing to collect and report on various information appropriately in the region, I hope that Japan will be able to continue to provide support and contribute to achieving peace.

Further Strengthening Trust in Japan through PKO

I have been working in the Republic of South Sudan since January 2024 as an aviation operations staff at the UNMISS headquarters, where I am responsible for creating and issuing daily flight plans for the UNMISS aircraft, aircraft operations management based on flight plans, safety management, and emergency flights handling.

Most of the multinational staff working for the UNMISS are friendly toward Japan, and I strongly feel the trust that has been built by the past Japanese staff, including the missioned units and headquarters personnels. I will continue to contribute to the peace and stability of South Sudan and strive to further strengthen the trust in Japan.



Checking aircraft operations status (the author is in the right)



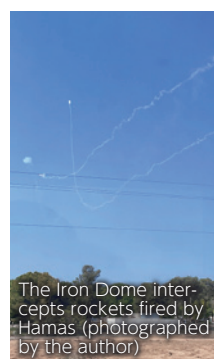
Interactions with other countries' military and local staffs (the author is in the left)

Captain
SUZUKI Wakana

- ① UNMISS (United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan) (Juba)
- ② Aviation

Gathering Information in the War Zone ~The Israel-Palestine situation~

The attack on Israel by Hamas and others that occurred on October 7, 2023, is said to be the greatest tragedy for the country since the founding of the State of Israel, with over 1,200 people killed on that day alone. The ensuing fighting resulted in numerous casualties for both Israel and Palestine, mainly in the Gaza Strip, and I have also experienced many sad moments. One of the missions of a defense attaché



The Iron Dome intercepts rockets fired by Hamas (photographed by the author)

is to follow the latest local developments and trends of the Israel Defense Forces known for utilizing the latest technologies, such as unmanned assets and AI, and accurately report it to Japanese government. In addition to direct support, such as ensuring the safety of Japanese nationals and others residing in the region and, if necessary, evacuating them, we aim to make a solid contribution to defending Japan in the Middle East by gathering such information.

- Colonel
OKAMOTO Jun
- ① Embassy of Japan in Israel (Tel Aviv)
 - ② Legal

(Note) The rank and assignment are as of March 31, 2024.

MOD/SDF in action around the world

6

Work in the SDF Training Squadron

I have been serving for about five months as a staff member (a communications specialist) at headquarters with a training squadron that is touring overseas for the purposes of educating and training junior officers and enhancing friendships with other countries. In parallel with my duties as a communications specialist, I am in charge of drone photography at home and abroad as well as the receptions on board ships at ports of call. I use drones to record videos for external release. At the receptions, I help domestic and international guests understand the activities of the SDF. At the Training Squadron Headquarters, a small number of personnel handle many tasks, making it a unit where we can gain valuable experiences that we could not gain in other units.



The author holding a drone he operates



Meeting Miss Colombia during a reception held on board a ship (the author is on the right)

Petty Officer 2nd Class
KINOSHITA Takao

- ① Training Squadron Headquarters (Kure)
- ② Communication

I would like to continue to strive in my duties so that many people can understand the activities of the SDF.

Participating in Capacity Building for Laos

I participated in capacity building for Laos as a member of the military medicine Education Team. This project aimed to enhance the capabilities of the Lao People's Army in the fields of search and rescue and military medicine, and it provided guidance and advice to Lao People's Army instructors and personnel participating in the training. As a SDF personnel, I am proud to have fulfilled my mission in an environment with a different language, culture, customs, and religion and to have contributed to building trust and strengthening relations between our two countries.



Working in the field (the author is second from the left)



The closing ceremony of the training (the author is on the right)

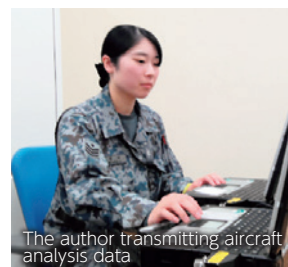
Amid the current unstable international situation, I strongly feel that fostering trust among people through projects like this will serve as a foothold for future collaboration in the international community.

Sergeant
YAMASHITA Mao
① The 2nd Infantry Regiment (Camp Takada)
② Medical

Participating in F-35 Deployment Training to the United States and Australia

I was missioned to Tindal Air Base, Australia, as a maintenance technician for the Autonomic Logistics Information System (ALIS) for F-35A fighter jets.

There, I transmitted aircraft analysis data relating to the ASDF F-35A to Misawa Air Base (Aomori Prefecture).



The author transmitting aircraft analysis data

This was the first time for the ASDF to transmit F-35 data from abroad, and I felt a sense of pride and fulfillment as an engineer to be able to contribute to overseas deployment training.

I am grateful for the valuable experiences I have had, such as deepening mutual friendships with members of the Royal Australian Air Force. I am committed to working hard to become a female SDF personnel who can play an active role both domestically and internationally.

Airman 1st Class
MAEDA Yui

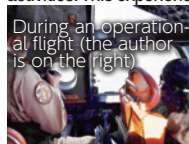
- ① Armament Maintenance Squadron, Maintenance Supply Group, 3rd Air Wing (Misawa Air Base)
- ② Computer Processing

As a member of the Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DAPE)

I am engaged in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and information-gathering activities in the Middle East as a P-3C patrol aircraft pilot of the 53rd DAPE in the Republic of Djibouti in eastern Africa. During flights, I check vessels one by one until I can confirm there are no abnormalities, which keeps me alerted and leaves me strong fatigue after landing. But at the same time, it gives me a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment that I cannot experience during the domestic duties. My work in cooperation with the militaries from other countries is rewarding and makes me realize that I am actually participating in international activities. This experience has given me good opportunities to expand my worldview.



Members of the team working together (the author is in the center)



During an operational flight (the author is on the right)

Lieutenant Junior Grade
SUGITA Yukika
① The 53rd Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DAPE) (Republic of Djibouti)
② Fixed-wing aircraft pilot

Studying in New Zealand

I am currently taking the Command and Staff Course at the New Zealand Defense College. The course is unique in that it is an integrated course, and nearly half of the class are international students. This, coupled with New Zealand's national character of accepting diversity, fosters on a daily basis lively discussions across military branches and national boundaries. In fact, this is the first time that an SDF member has joined the course, and I have received many words of welcome and encouragement. While I am studying until graduation, I would like to interact as much as possible with students from other countries and use this experience as inspiration for my future work. I find the SDF very attractive as it offers many avenues of learning through service.



In front of the traditional Maori meeting house at HMNB Devonport (the author is fifth from the left in the front row)

Major
NAKANE Kohei

- ① New Zealand Defense College, Command and Staff course
- ② Air Defense Missile Maintenance

other countries and use this experience as inspiration for my future work. I find the SDF very attractive as it offers many avenues of learning through service.

Part I

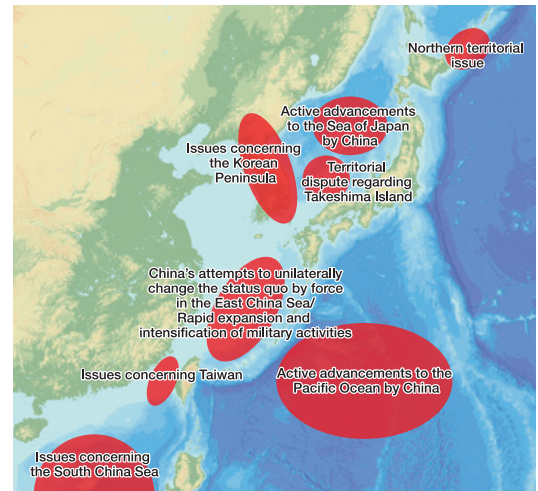
Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Overview

Chapter 1

International Community Facing Its Greatest Trial Since WWII

- States that do not share universal values or political and economic systems based on such values are expanding their influence. Unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts represent a serious challenge to the existing international order. The international community is facing its greatest trial since World War II and entering a new era of crisis. The global balance of power is shifting dramatically and competition among states continues, especially between the United States and China, and is set to intensify even further in future.
- Rapid developments in science and technology are fundamentally changing the paradigm of security. Countries are striving to develop innovative technologies that can become so-called game changers. The traditional military structure is undergoing fundamental changes, as are warfare tactics and strategies.
- Risks in cyberspace and other domains are becoming more serious and other security-related global issues such as information warfare and climate change are emerging.
- Gray zone situations involving territorial disputes are constantly occurring. The use of hybrid military and non-military warfare will become even more sophisticated.



Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Increasingly Severe Security Situation in the Indo-Pacific Region

- These global security environment and challenges are particularly prominent in the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is located, and are likely to intensify still further in future.
- Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II. It cannot be ruled out that a serious situation similar to Russia's aggression against Ukraine may occur in the Indo-Pacific region in future, particularly in East Asia.

Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine

Chapter 2

- Russia's aggression against Ukraine undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It is a serious violation of international law prohibiting the use of force and of the United Nations (UN) Charter. Such unilateral changes to the status quo by force have shaken the very foundation of the international order, including in Asia.
- This situation, in which a permanent member of the Security Council, which is supposed to take primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, openly engages in military actions challenging international law and the international order, claims innocent lives and repeatedly uses language and actions that can be interpreted as threats involving nuclear weapons, is unprecedented. If such aggression is tolerated, it could send out the wrong message and implication that unilateral changes to the status quo by force are also acceptable elsewhere. Accordingly, the international community, including Japan, should never tolerate Russia's action.
- In addition to Ukraine's strong resistance, the international community has united to implement strong sanctions and ongoing support for Ukraine, leaving Russia with no choice but to pay a heavy price. As an ally of the United States—a NATO member—and is located on the opposite side of Europe across the Eurasian continent, Japan must closely monitor future changes in the European situation, including their strategic impact, acknowledging that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable.



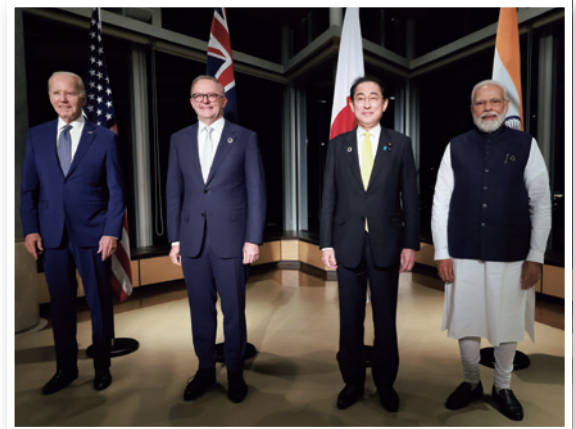
Damage in Kharkiv, Ukraine (January 2024) [AFP/Jiji Press]

Defense Policies of Countries

Chapter 3

The United States - Prioritizing its Response to China's Challenges with the Superiority of Alliances and Partnerships

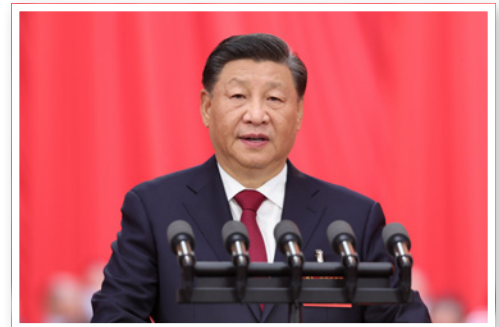
- The National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy released by the United States in October 2022 positioned China as a “pacing challenge,” Russia as an “acute threat,” and North Korea as a “persistent threat.”
- China is posing the most serious challenge and strategic competition to the United States, which is prioritizing efforts to address the relevant issues.
- The United States recognizes that it cannot address complex and interconnected challenges alone and that mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships must underpin its national defense strategy.
- In the Indo-Pacific region, the United States is committed to deepening its partnership with allies, including Japan, and promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) through multilateral frameworks such as QUAD and AUKUS.
- The United States is demonstrating its commitment to a FOIP through ongoing “Freedom of Navigation Operations” in the South China Sea and allowing U.S. Navy vessels to traverse the Taiwan Strait.



Quad Leaders' Summit (May 2023) [Website of the Prime Minister's Office to Japan]

China - Intensifying Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force and Such Attempts

- China's external posture, military activities, and other activities are a matter of serious concern for Japan and the international community and present an unprecedented and the greatest strategic challenge which Japan should respond with its comprehensive national power and in cooperation and collaboration with its ally, like-minded countries and others.
- For more than 30 years, China has sustained high-level growth of its defense budget without transparency, engaging in broad, and rapid improvement of its military power in qualitative and quantitative terms with focus on nuclear, missile, naval and air forces. China will probably have over 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030 and will continue growing its force to 2035. It has increased its production of surface combatants and submarines and built its second indigenous aircraft carrier, Fujian. It continues to develop and deploy modern fighter jets and wide-ranging UAVs.
- China has been intensifying its activities across the entire region surrounding Japan, including in the East China Sea, particularly in the area around the Senkaku Islands, the Sea of Japan, and the western Pacific Ocean, extending beyond the so-called the first island chain to the second island chain.
- China has intensified its military activities around Taiwan. China conducted military exercises in the sea and airspace in several times. It is believed that through the series of activities, China seeks to create a fait accompli where the PLA is operating, and improve its actual combat capabilities.
- China has intensified its activities in the South China Sea based on assertions, which are conflicting with existing orders of the seas, and promoting the establishment of military bases. Such actions to further promote unilateral change of the status quo by force and turning it into a fait accompli are serious concerns to Japan. Issues surrounding the South China Sea are directly connected to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and represent a legitimate concern, not only for Japan, which has major sea lanes in the South China Sea, but also for the entire international community.
- China is further strengthening cooperation with Russia, including in military activities. It has also conducted joint bomber flights and naval navigations with Russia in the vicinity of Japan. These repeated joint activities are clearly intended for demonstration of force against Japan and are a grave concern from the perspective of the national security of Japan.



Xi Jinping, currently in his third term as general secretary [EPA - Jiji Press]



The third PLA aircraft carrier “Fujian,” which is China's second indigenous one [China News Service/Jiji Press Photo]

Part I

Security Environment Surrounding Japan

U.S.-China Strategic Competition Escalates; Tension Grows in Taiwan

- The political, economic, and military competition between the United States and China has become even more evident in recent years due to various concerns such as changes in the balance of power caused by China's growing national power and various pending issues.
- The overall military balance between China and Taiwan is rapidly tilting in China's favor.
- Regarding Taiwan, China firmly maintains the principle that Taiwan is part of China and that the Taiwan issue is its internal affair. China has repeatedly stated that it has not renounced the use of force. In response to the strengthening US-Taiwan relationship, China has further intensified its military activities around Taiwan.
- The ruling party candidate, Lai Ching-te, won the Taiwan presidential election held in January 2024.



President Lai Ching-te delivers a speech at his inauguration ceremony (May 2024) [Website of Taiwan's Office of the President]

North Korea - Making Advances in Nuclear and Missile Development

- North Korea's military activities are posing an even more grave and imminent threat to Japan's security than ever before. They seriously undermine the peace and security of the region and the international community. They also represent a serious challenge to the entire international community with regard to non-proliferation of weapons including WMDs.
- North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests in the past and possesses the technological capability to mount a nuclear warhead on its ballistic missiles with their range covering the Japanese Archipelago and to strike Japan.
- In recent years, North Korea has continuously pursued missile development at an extremely rapid pace, launching ballistic missiles that fly with irregular trajectories as well as so-called "hypersonic missiles." North Korea is also pursuing operationalization of long-range cruise missiles designed to carry a tactical nuclear warhead.
- Since 2023, North Korea has conducted launches of the "Hwasong-18", a solid-fuel propelled intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-class as well as launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch. North Korea is focusing on qualitatively improving its nuclear and missile capabilities, such as diversifying its equipment systems and acquiring intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) means that complement its nuclear and missile operational capabilities.



An image released by North Korea on the launch of a "military reconnaissance satellite" [Korea News Service/ Jiji]

Russia - The Strategic Alliance between Russia Embracing the "Strong State" Model and China

- The Russian military is continuing active military activities in the vicinity of Japan and its surrounding areas, showing its tendency to deploy the latest military equipment in the Far East. Russia's military activities in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, coupled with its strategic partnership with China, are posing a strong security concern.
- Russia has been developing and deploying various new weapons under its "strong state" model. Since the start of its aggression against Ukraine, it has also been moving to increase troop numbers and expand and reorganize its military units.
- Russia is continuing active military activities in the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan, under illegal occupation. As well as the ongoing construction of facilities for its troops in the region, Russia has deployed new military equipment such as coastal (surface-to-ship) missiles belonging to its Navy and fighter jets belonging to its aerospace forces. It also conducts large-scale exercises in the surrounding seas and airspace.



President Putin (center) participating in the Russian Navy Day commemoration ceremony (July 2023) [SPUTNIK/Jiji Press Photo]

Other Regions

- Amid ongoing tensions between Israel and Palestinian armed groups, fighters from Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups invaded Israeli territory on October 7, 2023; killing and abducting Israeli soldiers and civilians. In response, the Israeli military launched a ground operation into the Gaza Strip.
- Since November 2023, there have been repeated attacks by the Houthis on commercial ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. On November 19, a vessel operated by a Japanese company was seized by the Houthis.



An Israeli tank rolling in the north of the Gaza Strip
(December 2023) [AFP - Jiji Press]

Trends and Challenges Facing the International Community Concerning the Space, Cyber and Electromagnetic Domains and Information Warfare

Chapter 4

Trends in Science and Technology that Are Expanding to Information Warfare and Elsewhere

- The creation of science, technology, and innovation are what underpin Japan's economic and social development. Using these technological capabilities appropriately is essential, not only for security but also to address global-scale issues like climate change.
- To ensure technological superiority, each country is focusing its efforts on the research, development and military applications of AI, quantum technology, next-generation information and communication technology and other advanced, potentially game-changing technologies that could dramatically change the future character of warfare.
- Information warfare by spreading disinformation and other means is ongoing.

Trends in the Space, Cyber and Electromagnetic Domains

- Space-based technologies and information and communication networks have become core infrastructures in people's everyday lives and for the military. Meanwhile, it has been pointed out that countries such as China and Russia are strengthening their capabilities to interfere with other countries' use of space and that their governments and militaries are involved in cyber-attacks.
- Countries are working to improve their capabilities in space, cyber and electromagnetic domains; aware that they represent methods of warfare that effectively deter enemies from demonstrating their war potential.

Transfer and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

- The transfer and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and the missiles delivering them, have been a grave threat since the end of the Cold War.
- In recent years, as competition and confrontation among states have intensified and as the current international security environment becomes complex and severe, there is concern that it is becoming difficult for the international community to rally together in taking on common challenges such as arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Impact of Climate Change on the Security and Military

- Climate change represents an urgent threat to world peace and security. As well as significantly influencing the strategic environment, it affects military equipment, infrastructure and operations themselves.
- Rising sea levels and extreme weather events make the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region complicated, and various exercises are being conducted with the possibility of an increase in military operations related to climate change in mind.



Pyongyang General Control Center of the National Aerospace
Technology Administration [Korea News Service - Jiji]



NATO cyber exercise [Website of NATO]

Part II

Japan's Security and Defense Policy

Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense Chapter 1

- What we must prioritize first and foremost is developing proactive diplomacy to protect the lives and livelihood of Japanese nationals. On that basis, it is essential to coordinate with like-minded countries and promote multilateral cooperation through the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a cornerstone.
- At the same time, diplomacy needs to be backed by defense capabilities. As part of its strategic approach, Japan will actively pursue diplomacy under the vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) and promote the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities, including the possession of counterstrike capabilities.
- Adhering under the Constitution to the basic precepts of maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses threats to other countries, Japan ensures civilian control and observes the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.



Prime Minister Kishida and Defense Minister Kihara at Air Review (November 2023)

The Three Documents, including the National Security Strategy of Japan Chapter 2

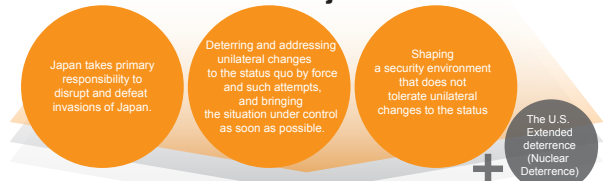
National Security Strategy (NSS)

- The NSS is Japan's supreme national security policy document. It provides strategic guidance for policies in wide-ranging areas, including not only diplomacy and defense, but also economic security, technology and intelligence.
- Japan will take the necessary measures to ensure that the budget level for both the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and complementary initiatives reaches 2% of GDP in FY2022 (approximately 11 trillion yen) in FY2027.

National Defense Strategy (NDS)

- The NDS comprehensively presents Japan's defense objectives and approaches and the means by which Japan accomplishes those objectives.
- The most consequential responsibility of the Government of Japan (GOJ) and the basis of Japan's national security, is to resolutely defend to the end the lives of Japanese nationals and their peaceful livelihoods as well as Japan's territorial land, airspace and waters. The international community, including Japan, is facing serious challenges and has entered into a new crisis. Japan needs to squarely face this grim reality and fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities, focusing on opponent capabilities and new ways of warfare.
- In fundamentally reinforcing its defense capabilities, Japan focuses on seven capabilities: (i) stand-off defense capabilities, (ii) integrated air and missile defense capabilities, (iii) unmanned defense capabilities, (iv) cross-domain operation capabilities, (v) command and control / intelligence-related functions, (vi) mobile deployment capabilities / civil protection and (vii) sustainability and resiliency.
- The NDS calls for the possession of counterstrike capabilities that mainly capitalize on capabilities (i), which are key to deterring invasion of Japan.

Defense Objectives



Approaches to Achieve Defense Objectives

1. Strengthening of Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense	2. Strengthening Deterrence and Response Capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance	3. Reinforcing collaboration with Like-minded Countries and Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities • Reinforcing the defense architecture of the whole country (Part III, Chapter 1)	Revealing the will and capabilities of Japan and the United States (Part III, Chapter 2)	reinforcing collaboration with as many countries as possible (Part III, Chapter 3)
The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) conducting landing training (February 2023)	MSDF destroyer "Ise" sailing with a U.S. aircraft carrier (January 2024)	Japan-Italy Formation Flight in Japan-Italy Bilateral Training (August 2023)

Three Defense Objectives and Three Approaches to Achieve them (image)

Defense Buildup Program (DBP)

- The DBP indicates the level of defense capability Japan should possess to fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities under the NDS. It also sets out total expenditure and the quantity of major equipment to be procured to achieve this end.
- By FY2027, five years after the formulation of the DBP, Japan will strengthen its defense capabilities to a point Japan will be able to take primary responsibility for countering any invasion of its nation and disrupt and defeat such threats while gaining the support of its ally and others. Further efforts will be made approximately ten years after formulating the DBP to better ensure that these defense objectives have been met and reinforce Japan's defense capabilities so that any invasion of Japan can be disrupted and defeated earlier and at places further afield.
- Total expenditure needed to achieve the level of defense buildup sought by the DBP for five years from FY2023 to FY2027 amounts to approximately 43 trillion yen.

Defense Buildup and the Budget

Chapter 3

- The international community is facing its greatest trial since the end of World War II and has entered a new era of crisis. With this basic understanding, the GOJ secured a budget that was necessary and sufficient for FY2024 defense buildup under the NDS and the DBP for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities.
- On an annual expenditure basis, the GOJ allocated 7,724.9 billion yen to steadily execute the budget, for the significant increase in contract amount.
- On a contract basis, the GOJ allocated 9,362.5 billion yen to early start equipment procurement and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) facility development that extend across multiple years. Allocations for FY2023 and FY2024 comprise some 42% of the contracted 43.5 trillion yen needed to implement the DBP.
- The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/SDF continues to support the seven fields of the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities. Special emphasis was placed on procuring various types of stand-off missiles and Aegis System Equipped Vessels as well as on improving the resiliency of camps, bases and other existing facilities nationwide.
- The GOJ worked to secure financial resources to reinforce defense capabilities.
- Total expenses for the DBP and complementary initiatives for FY2024 amount to 8.9 trillion yen, which is about 1.6% of the GDP at the time the National Security Strategy of Japan was formulated (FY2022).

① Stand-off Defense Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening the defense capabilities to oppose invading forces from a safe distance where we will not be attacked 
② Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening our capabilities to respond to increasingly diverse and complex airborne threats such as missiles  <p>Shipbuilding of an Aegis System-Equipped Vessel (Photo)</p>
③ Unmanned Defense Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening our capabilities via information gathering and combat support with unmanned assets  <p>Preparation of UAV for reconnaissance (for mid-range) (Photo)</p>
④ Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, land, sea and air capabilities necessary for combat by fusing all capabilities  <p>Development of Stand-off Electronic Warfare Aircraft (Photo)</p>
⑤ Command and Control and Intelligence-related Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening command and control and intelligence-related functions to accelerate and refine decision-making  <p>Acquisition of Signals Intelligence Aircraft (RC-2)</p>
⑥ Mobile Deployment Capabilities/Civil Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening maritime and air transport capabilities to quickly maneuver and deploy the necessary forces Implementing civil protection by utilizing the above capabilities  <p>Acquisition of transport vessels (Photo)</p>
⑦ Sustainability and Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of necessary and sufficient ammunition, guided missiles and fuel from an early stage Secure funds to acquire parts for equipment, repair equipment and improve resiliency of facilities  <p>Securing the ammunition storage facilities (Photo)</p>

Fig. II-2-2-3 Seven Functions and Capabilities on which to Focus in Fundamentally Reinforcing Defense Capabilities and Their Images

Organizations Responsible for Japan's Security and Defense

Chapter 4

- The MOD/SDF develops and executes policies based on the fundamental stance discussed at the National Security Council, which is a part of the Cabinet.
- To rapidly and effectively fulfill the duties of the SDF, the MOD/SDF has adopted a joint operations system in which the Ground SDF (GSDF), the Maritime SDF (MSDF) and the Air SDF (ASDF) are operated integrally.
- JSDF Joint Operations Command will be established in Ichigaya during FY2024 as a permanent joint headquarters that can unify the command of the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF. This will allow the command of joint operations by the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF to be integrated, as well as building capacity for cross-domain operations on a daily basis.

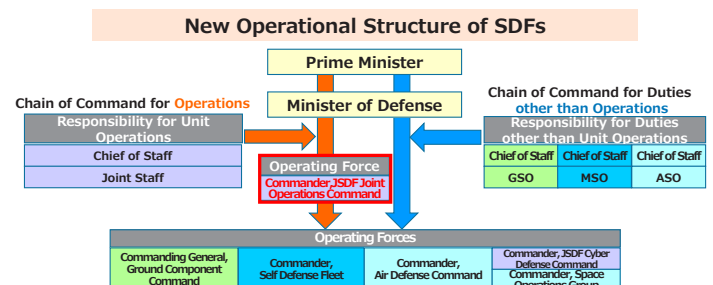


Fig. II-4-2-5 Operations System of the Self-Defense Forces and JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC)

Framework for the SDF Activities

Chapter 5

- Under the SDF Law and other laws and regulations, the SDF defends Japan and also maintains public order, responds to Important Influence Situation and engages in international peace cooperation activities.

Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense Chapter 1**Creating a Security Environment That Does Not Tolerate Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force**

- Diplomatic efforts underpinned by Japan's enhanced defense architecture are important for our efforts to prevent unilateral changes to the status quo by force. Coupled with diplomatic efforts, the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/Self-Defense Forces (SDF) will promote cooperation with our ally and multilayered coordination with like-minded countries to create a desirable security environment.
- As a maritime nation, it is crucial for Japan to reinforce the maritime order and ensure the freedoms and safety of navigation and overflight.
- Japan is responding to the North Korea's "illicit ship-to-ship transfers" in violation of the UN Security Council resolution, and conducting the necessary measures to secure Japan-related vessels in the Middle East region to secure the stable use of Japan's vital sea lanes.



P-3C patrol aircraft of the Deployment Air Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement (DAPE) engaging in information-gathering activities in the Middle East

Responses to Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force and Such Attempts

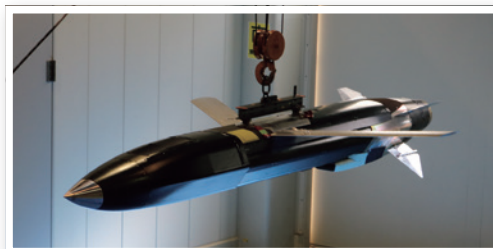
- To influence opponent's actions, Japan will improve and enhance training and exercises such as Flexible Deterrent Options (FDO) and Strategic Communication (SC) with a whole-of-government approach, as well as with its ally, like-minded countries and others.
- The MOD/SDF is conducting continuous intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and analysis from peacetime.
- To verify whether unmanned aerial vehicles can serve as replacements for some of its missions in future, the operation and verification of MQ-9B (SeaGuardian) aircraft of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) is promoted. The initial plan for three RQ-4B (Global Hawk) aircraft of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) has been completed.
- Followed by the establishment of the procedure to have the Minister of Defense control the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) in an armed attack situation, the MOD/SDF constantly strengthens cooperation with the JCG. In FY2023, new joint training was conducted under the simulation of an armed attack situation.
- In FY2023, ASDF aircraft scrambled 669 times (479 times in response to Chinese aircraft and 174 times in response to Russian aircraft).



Personnel responding to a scramble

Responses to Invasions of Japan, including Missile Attacks

- Japan will fundamentally reinforce its stand-off defense capabilities to respond from outside the threat zone, including anti-aircraft missiles, against naval vessels and landing forces that invade Japan, including its remote islands. Deployment on Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surfaced-launched variants) and acquisition of U.S.-made Tomahawks will be accelerated by one year, starting in FY2025, to promptly secure sufficient capabilities.
- To strengthen the integrated air and missile defense capabilities, the MOD/SDF will start of the construction of Aegis System Equipped Vessels and Japan and the United States will jointly develop a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) guided missile to counter Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs).
- The MOD/SDF will promote the introduction of unmanned assets that can minimize human loss and operate continuously for a long period of time compared to manned equipment (including the development of unmanned amphibious vehicles that can land on any shore of islands and perform tasks such as transporting supplies from the sea to the vicinity of troops).
- Japan will conduct cross-domain operations that organically integrate capabilities in the space, cyber and electromagnetic domains, as well as land, sea and air domains.
- Japan will improve mobile deployment capabilities to the southwest region, including the establishment of a new Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group (tentative name) as a joint force.
- The MOD/SDF will work closely with relevant organizations to respond to large-scale terrorist attacks, accompanying attacks on nuclear power plants and other critical infrastructure effectively and will smoothly implement civil protection measures, including evacuation guidance for residents.



Upgraded Type 12 SSM that withstood various tests on the ground (Prototype) [Courtesy of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd.]



LOA signing ceremony to advance Tomahawk acquisition (January 2024)

Initiatives to Strengthen Information Capabilities, including Responses to Integrated Information Warfare

- As military activities around Japan intensify, while striving to gather information quickly and accurately through various means on a regular basis, the MOD/SDF is reinforcing functions such as analysis.
- In the international community, information warfare is being emphasized, namely the action of establishing a security environment favorable to one's own country by spreading disinformation and strategic information to influence public opinion and decision-making elsewhere, even when a conflict has not yet erupted.
- From the perspective of the defense of Japan, the MOD/SDF is building a system and set-up that can handle integrated information warfare reliably, focusing on the cognitive dimension, as well as fact-checking and analyzing disinformation and disseminating information promptly and appropriately.

Sustainability and Resiliency Enhancement Initiatives to Ensure War Sustainability

- There is a need to strive to ensure and maintain sufficient warfare sustainability so that the SDF can continue persistent activities in contingencies, which serves as an effective deterrence
- The MOD/SDF is promoting of various types of ammunition and expansion of the necessary ammunition storage facilities.
- The MOD/SDF will promptly promote a system in which the capabilities of existing equipment can be fully demonstrated by securing sustainment and maintenance budgets and resolving equipment non-operational situations due to parts shortages.
- The MOD/SDF is promoting the move underground and structural reinforcement of major command headquarters and creating a plan (the master plan) to consolidate and reconstruct the SDF facilities nationwide efficiently, promoting the facilities' resiliency.



An improved aircraft shelter for F-15 fighters (ASDF Chitose Air Base)

Measures for Protection of the Life, Person and Property of Japanese Nationals

- Besides invasions of Japan, large-scale disasters and infectious disease crises are other serious threats. In the event of a large-scale disaster, such as the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, the MOD/SDF cooperates closely with relevant organizations to carry out life-preserving activities, emergency, livelihood support and other essential services effectively.
- The SDF maintains a state of readiness and regularly conducts Joint Exercises to swiftly and accurately implement the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas. The MOD/SDF transported Japanese nationals and others overseas twice in FY2023 (from Sudan and Israel).
- To secure the safety of Japanese nationals overseas, the counter-piracy unit was assigned an additional mission to maintain a temporary posture for possible rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals overseas based at the SDF facility in Djibouti.



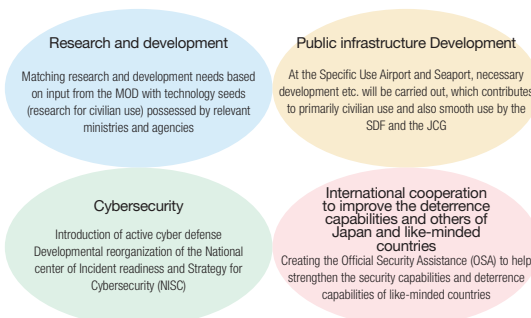
Personnel rescuing people in the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake (January 2024)



After landing at Haneda Airport for the transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Israel (October 2023)

Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country

- To protect Japan, besides strong Self-Defense Forces, it is essential for the whole country to work together.
- To this end, in addition to fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities, Japan builds an overall national defense architecture by integrating its national power, which includes diplomatic, intelligence, economic and technological capabilities and systematically combining all policy measures. As part of this effort, the government complements the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and, alongside, promotes initiatives in four areas under the framework of relevant ministries and agencies to strengthen the comprehensive defense system.



Part III

Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Japan-U.S. Alliance

Chapter 2

Outline of Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

- The alliance with the United States is a key pillar of Japan's national security policy. Fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities will also lead to more effective employment of U.S. capabilities, further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.
- Japan has maintained its peace, security and independence centered on the Security Arrangements with the world's dominant military power, the United States, with which it shares basic values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and a capitalist economy as well as interests in maintaining global peace and security and has strong economic ties.
- Policy discussions on security between Japan and the U.S. are closely conducted at various levels of the MOD and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including "2+2".

Strengthening Japan and U.S. joint deterrence and response capabilities

- Japan's defense strategy and the U.S. defense strategy are in agreement that the highest priority is to integrate all approaches and means to prevent unilateral changes to the status quo by force from occurring. Deeper discussions with the United States on both countries' respective roles, missions and capabilities further strengthen Japan-U.S. joint integrated deterrence capabilities.
- Japan will further deepen cooperation with the United States to smoothly implement allied cross-domain operations of the Alliance, including the space, cyber and electromagnetic domains. Regarding Japan's counterstrike capabilities, Japan and the United States will jointly establish a cooperative framework to demonstrate such capabilities more effectively. Japan will reinforce collaboration in areas such as air defense, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, amphibious operations, airborne operations, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting (ISRT), protection of assets and facilities and logistics support.
- Japan will work to improve the response capability of the Alliance, including its readiness and interoperability, through more advanced and practical exercises and training.
- To ensure that the United States extended deterrence with nuclear deterrence at its core remains credible and resilient, Japan will further actively engage in and deepen bilateral discussions on extended deterrence, including those at the ministerial level.

Enhancement of Alliance Coordination Function

- Japan and the United States established Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) to address a consistent joint response by the two countries seamlessly and effectively.
- Subsequently, Japan and the United States have collaborated closely, utilizing the ACM, to address, for example, the Kumamoto Earthquake and the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, North Korea's ballistic missile launches and China's activities in the sea and airspace surrounding the Senkaku Islands.

Strengthening of Joint Response Foundation

- It is necessary to strengthen the foundation to support effective Japan-U.S. joint response at all stages. Japan will fundamentally reinforce information security and cybersecurity initiatives and further enhance defense equipment and technology cooperation with the United States.

Initiatives for the Stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan

- While the presence of the U.S. Forces in Japan (USFJ) functions as a deterrence, it is necessary to make efforts that are appropriate for the actual situation of each area to mitigate the impacts of the stationing of the USFJ on the living environment of local residents.
- The realignment of the USFJ is a crucial initiative to mitigate the impact on local communities, including those in Okinawa, while further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Therefore, the MOD will steadily advance the realignment and other initiatives and continuously make efforts to gain the understanding and cooperation of the local communities hosting USFJ facilities and areas.



Japan-U.S. Joint Press Conference (April 2024)
[Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan]



Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (May 2024)



Japan-U.S. bilateral training in southern Okinawa (January 2024)



Lower Plaza Green Square Opening Ceremony (March 2024)

Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others Chapter 3

Strategic Promotion of Multilateral and Multilayered Defense Cooperation

- To create a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force, it is extremely important to reinforce collaboration, not only with the ally but also with as many countries as possible. The MOD/SDF is promoting multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).
- The MOD/SDF has been advancing high-level exchanges, bilateral/multilateral exercises, capacity building, and defense equipment and technology cooperation with various countries, both within and outside the Indo-Pacific region.
- The MOD/SDF is also expanding the establishment of institutional frameworks such as the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, with like-minded countries and others.
- Japan, the United States and the Republic of Korea have been advancing defense cooperation, including sharing missile warning data on North Korea in real time.
- The MOD/SDF is accelerating the promotion of changing mindset among all SDF personnel and international cooperation on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) under the Headquarters for WPS Promotion in MOD. By holding seminars on WPS for Indo-Pacific countries, the MOD/SDF is contributing to raising awareness of WPS among the defense personnel in each country.



2nd Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (March 2024)



Destroyer JS "IKAZUCHI" Engaged in Direct Escort in the Gulf of Aden (November 2023)

Ensuring of Maritime Security

- As a maritime nation, it is essential for Japan to reinforce the maritime order and ensure the freedom and safety of navigation and flights.
- The MOD/SDF is promoting multilateral cooperation concerning maritime security, such as the monitoring of maritime situations, including ongoing counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Initiatives for International Peace Cooperation Activities

- The MOD/SDF has been dispatching the personnel of Headquarters to the Multinational Force and Observer Mission (MFO) tasked with monitoring the ceasefire between Egypt and Israel and to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).
- The MOD/SDF is actively contributing to UN initiatives for international peace by dispatching SDF personnel to the UN Secretariat and PKO training centers and providing various types of support to the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (UNTPP).
- The SDF always maintains a posture to respond to urgent requests from affected countries for international disaster relief activities.



SDF personnel working at UNMISS

Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

- The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles that could serve as their means of delivery, as well as that of weapons, goods, and sensitive technologies that could be adapted for military use, pose an imminent challenge to international peace and stability.
- The MOD/SDF actively participates in the development of international systems and trainings related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.



SDF personnel participating in PSI training (May 2023)

Part IV

Reinforcing Common Bases

Reinforcing Defense Production and Technology Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capability itself

Chapter 1

Reinforcing Defense Production Base

- Currently, the SDF can fully demonstrate its capabilities and accomplish its mission of defending Japan only by using equipment that incorporates advanced technology. Defense production and technology bases are indispensable foundations for securing superior equipment; they are a virtually integral part of defense capability itself, and their fundamental reinforcement is essential.
- Japan's defense industry is responsible for each stage (research, development, production, sustainment and maintenance, supply, decommissioning, etc.) of the equipment life cycle, and the defense equipment and defense industry are inseparable. The Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases has been established and enacted to implement necessary measures to maintain and enhance the capabilities of the defense industry to produce advanced defense equipment and ensure high operational rates.
- The MOD has announced the basic policy based on the Act. According to this policy, in addition to the measures stipulated in the Act, the MOD will promote initiatives to reinforce the bases, such as revitalizing the defense industry, building a robust supply chain, and strengthening defense industrial security.



Launching ceremony of the Mogami class destroyer JS "Yubetsu" (November 2023)

Reinforcing Defense Technology Base

- How we utilize the technology possessed by our country is extremely important to acquire the equipment necessary for new ways of warfare. The creation of science, technology and innovation based on Japan's advanced technological capabilities is a source that brings about economic and social development in our country and a major element of the comprehensive national strength related to our country's security. Furthermore, strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense is essential to actively utilize the high technical capabilities cultivated over many years by our country in the public and private sectors without being bound by conventional thinking in the security field.
- The MOD has formulated the Defense Technology Guideline 2023, which defines the MOD policy for reinforcing defense technology bases and serves as a roadmap for the Ministry to drive various initiatives in a unified and robust manner. The MOD will promote initiatives based on this guideline to strengthen the bases with the aim of protecting Japan through technology into the future.
- For the defense of Japan, it is vital that Japan continues to employ superior, state-of-the-art fighters that can ensure air superiority well into the future. Regarding the next-generation fighter aircraft, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy will jointly develop an advanced fighter that ensures future air superiority by bringing together technological advantages and sharing costs and risks. The three countries have signed the Convention to establish GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO), an international organization essential for an efficient delivery construct.
- Fundamentally strengthening capabilities to create defense innovations and groundbreaking equipment are required. The Defense Innovation Technology Institute (tentative name) will be established within the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA), which institute will conduct breakthrough research to create innovative functions and equipment from a variety of rapidly evolving science and technology that will significantly change the future of warfare by adopting approaches and methods different from those used in the past with reference to the efforts of the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and others.



Defense ministers of Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy signs the Convention for establishing GIGO (December 2023).



Railgun (electromagnetic gun) under research at the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency

Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation and Promoting Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

- The transfer of defense equipment and technology overseas is a key policy instrument to ensure peace and stability, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force, create a desirable security environment for Japan, and provide assistance to countries that are subject to aggression in violation of international law, use of force, or threat of force.
- In December 2023, the government partially revised the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, its Implementation Guidelines, after the Working Team (WT) of the ruling parties held several discussions on the system revisions in order to promote the smooth transfer of defense equipment and technology of high-security significance and international joint development in a broad array of fields. These steps have enabled the transfer of defense equipment in a wide range of fields, but at the same time, the review process for transfers has been made more rigorous.
- The Implementation Guidelines were partially revised in March 2024 to permit the direct transfer of finished products related to the next-generation fighter aircraft from Japan to countries other than partner countries. A cabinet decision was taken, stating that the cabinet would decide for each case when actual transfers are made in the future.
- Japan will improve the capabilities of the partner country's armed forces and maintain and strengthen medium- to long-term relationships with the partner country by strengthening initiatives for defense equipment and technology cooperation, including the transfer of defense equipment and international joint development. In FY2023, Japan announced the start of the cooperative development of GPI with the United States and signed the "Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) Arrangement" with Australia. Concerning the Philippines, the first and the second air surveillance radar systems were delivered to the Philippine Air Force, the first finished equipment transfer from Japan to a foreign country.



The first air surveillance radar system turnover ceremony hosted by the Philippine Air Force (December 2023)

Reinforcing Foundation for SDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate their Abilities

Chapter 2

Reinforcing Human Resource Base

- The core element of defense capability is SDF personnel. To demonstrate the defense capabilities, the MOD/SDF will secure the necessary human resources and reinforce the human resource base to create an environment enabling all SDF personnel to demonstrate their abilities while maintaining high morale and pride.
- Based on the "Expert Panel on Reinforcing the Human Resource Base of the MOD/SDF," the MOD/SDF will implement various measures to secure diverse human resources, including those from outside the organization and promote the active participation of SDF personnel throughout their life cycle.
- The MOD/SDF will enhance recruitment activities and mid-career recruitment, expand the student loan system, utilize the SDF Reserve Personnel, raise the retirement ages of personnel, and reappoint retired uniformed SDF personnel.
- The MOD/SDF is implementing effective measures throughout careers, from entry as the SDF Personnel to retirement, to improve their treatment, and living and working environments, to take more responsibilities for their re-employment, and to increase opportunities for honors and privileges, etc.



The SDF Reserve Personnel in action during the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Disaster Relief Operations

Creating a Working Environment of Zero Tolerance for Harassment of Any Kind

- To create a working environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind, the MOD/SDF will promote a fundamental review of the handling process of harassment-related consultations, and harassment prevention measures.
- The "Harassment Prevention Task Force" was formed based on the result of the special defense inspection and the recommendations of the "MOD Committee of Experts on Harassment Prevention and Measures" established under the direction of the Minister of Defense. The Task Force will review of the effective measures, including counseling system and education.
- To create a working environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind, the MOD/SDF will regularly disseminate messages from the top management, including the Minister of Defense, review harassment prevention education, raise awareness of SDF personnel by using education opportunities, update the standard of disciplinary action to make it more appropriate and clearer, expand the counseling system, and share its contact information.

Part IV

Reinforcing Common Bases

Further Promotion of Work-life Balance and Women's Participation

- Ensuring preparedness to consistently respond to various situations requires creating an environment in which staff are both mentally and physically healthy and are able to maintain high morale and pride, and fully demonstrate their abilities.
- The MOD/SDF is promoting working from home and paperless work environment, implementing stringent management of work hours, encouraging male personnel to take parental leave, and establishing a comfortable work environment for all personnel, etc., to encourage the participation of women personnel and improve work-life balance.
- The MOD/SDF is promoting measures to support emergency attendance at work by temporarily taking care of children of SDF personnel at SDF camps in case emergency support is required during disaster relief operations, etc.
- In addition to expanding the recruitment and promotion of women and lifting restrictions on the assignment of female uniformed SDF personnel, the MOD/SDF is promoting the improvement of educational infrastructure to support women's activities and the establishment of quarters in barracks and MSDF vessels for women with a view to increasing the number of female uniformed SDF personnel.



Emergency attendance support for SDF personnel engaged in disaster relief during the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

Transformation of Medical Functions

- The SDF medical force needs to be transformed into an organization that focuses on not only maintaining the health and fitness of SDF personnel but also saving their lives from the perspective of sustainability and resiliency.
- The MOD/SDF will promote the strengthening of medical function to improve the combat trauma care capabilities with (i) Reinforcement of seamless medical care and transportation system from the frontlines to the final rear destination, (ii) Reinforcement of joint operation readiness for medical, and (iii) Fundamental management reform of the National Defense Medical College as the three pillars.
- The MOD/SDF will establish a system to autonomously secure and stockpile blood products based on the recommendations of the “Expert Panel on Blood Transfusion during Combat Trauma Care of the MOD/SDFs”.
- The MOD/SDF will reinforce the National Defense Medical College to serve as a clinical site for medical officers who provide combat trauma care by establishing the Trauma, Burn, and Emergency Medical Care Center (tentative name) in FY2024.
- The SDF provides medical care overseas in disaster-stricken areas as part of international disaster relief activities and support capacity building in the medical field, among other international cooperation.



Joint Logistics and Medical Training during the FY2023 Joint Exercise “05JX” (November 2023)

Reinforcement of Policy-making Function

- For the SDF to respond to the increasingly severe, complex and fast-paced strategic environment, strategic and agile defense policy planning and making are required.
- The “MOD Committee of Experts on Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities” will be convened as a body to obtain advice for policies from the experts, and will hold frank discussions on issues such as fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities.
- The MOD/SDF is closely cooperating with relevant ministries and agencies, private research institutions, and private companies particularly the defense industry as their core. In addition, the MOD/SDF is reinforcing its intellectual base by reviewing and reinforcing research systems of the MOD/SDF, including the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS).



International Conference on Policy Simulation “Connections Japan 2023/24” held by the National Institute of Defense Studies (January 2024)

Measures Relating to Training and Exercises

Chapter 3

Various Measures Relating to Training and Exercises

- For the SDF to fulfill its challenging mission of defending Japan, each SDF personnel and each unit, the core of the defense forces, must maintain and improve their high level of proficiency from peacetime. High capabilities and proficiency are the foundation of Japan's deterrence and response capabilities.
- The SDF actively conducts various high-level training and exercises to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of Japan jointly with the United States.
- Based on the awareness that the stability of the security environment of Japan is indispensable to maintain the peace of our country, the SDF actively promotes bilateral/multilateral exercises with the ally and like-minded countries and others in the Indo-Pacific Region to facilitate the realization of FOIP.



FY2023 Joint Exercise "05JX" (November 2023)



ASDF conducted the first Japan-France Bilateral Training in Japan (July 2023)

Improvement of Various Training Environments and Safety Management

- To further improve the training environment, the MOD/SDF is promoting initiatives to enhance the training infrastructure in Japan and overseas, utilizing opportunities for bilateral and multilateral exercises with other countries.
- The MOD/SDF strives to implement thorough safety management on a daily basis.

Initiatives on Coexistence with Regional Society and the Environment

Chapter 4

Measures Concerning Harmony with Regional Society

- The various activities of the MOD/SDF are hard to implement without the understanding and cooperation of every person, local governments and other organizations. It is necessary to deepen mutual trust between regional society and people, and the SDF.
- For stable stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan, which is an extremely important element in securing the safety of Japan, it is essential to gain the understanding and cooperation of local governments in the surrounding areas.

Responding to Climate Change and Environmental Issues

- As a member of the Government, the MOD/SDF will address and contribute to resolving various climate change and environmental issues. In addition, the MOD/SDF will promote initiatives that focusing more on the coexistence of the SDF/USFJ facilities/areas with the surrounding areas.
- The Bill for Adjustment between Defense and Wind Power was passed and enacted during the ordinary Diet session in 2024, promoting policies to balance national security and renewable energies.
- The MOD/SDF takes appropriate measures for aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS

Public Relations Activities, Public Records and Archives Management, Disclosure of Administrative Documents, etc.

- To gain the trust and cooperation of Japanese people and various other countries, the MOD/SDF proactively implements easy-to-understand public affairs efforts regarding MOD/SDF activities in various ways, and also manages administrative documents properly and responds appropriately to disclosure requests for administrative documents.

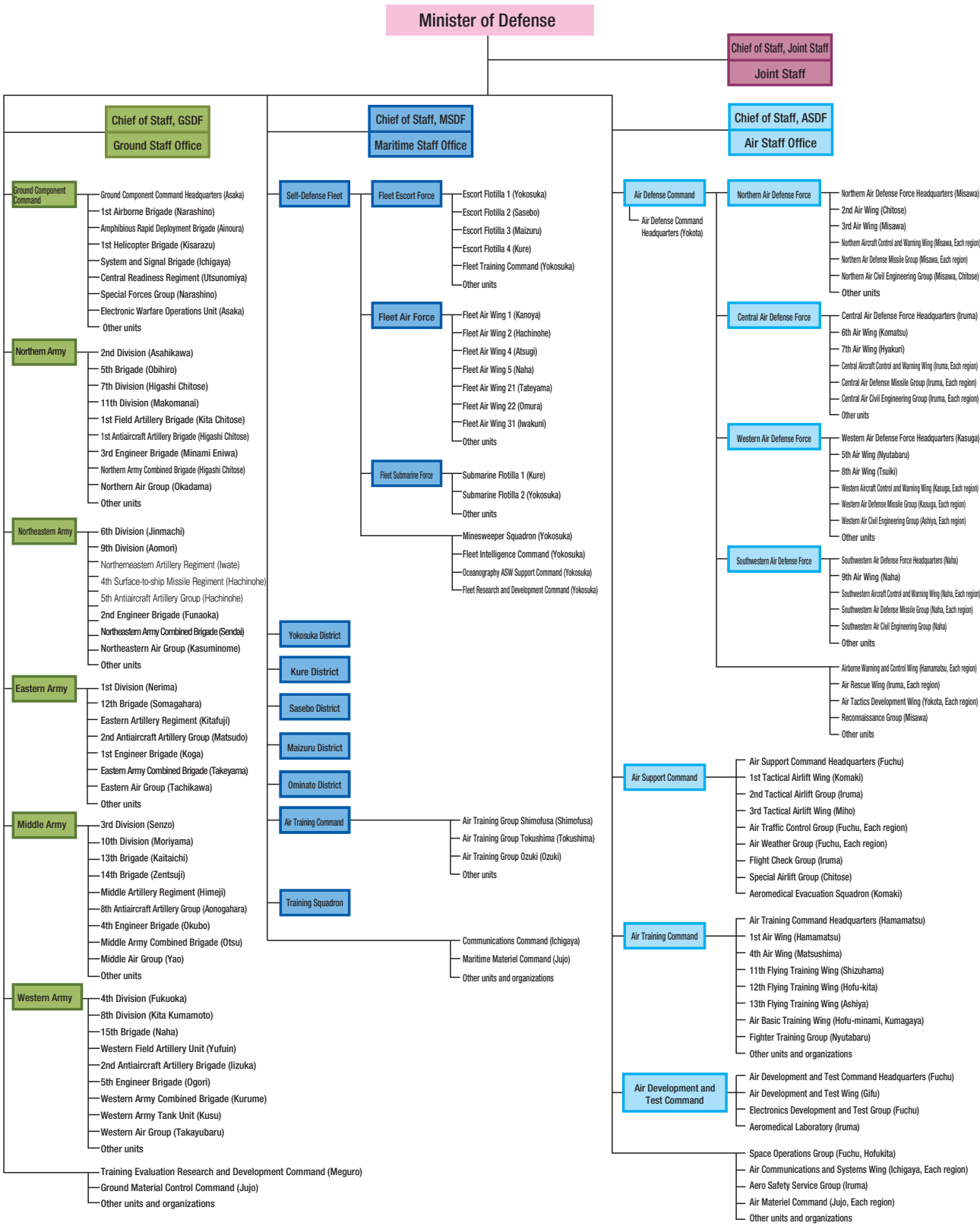


Defense seminar in Omitama City, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan (November 2023)

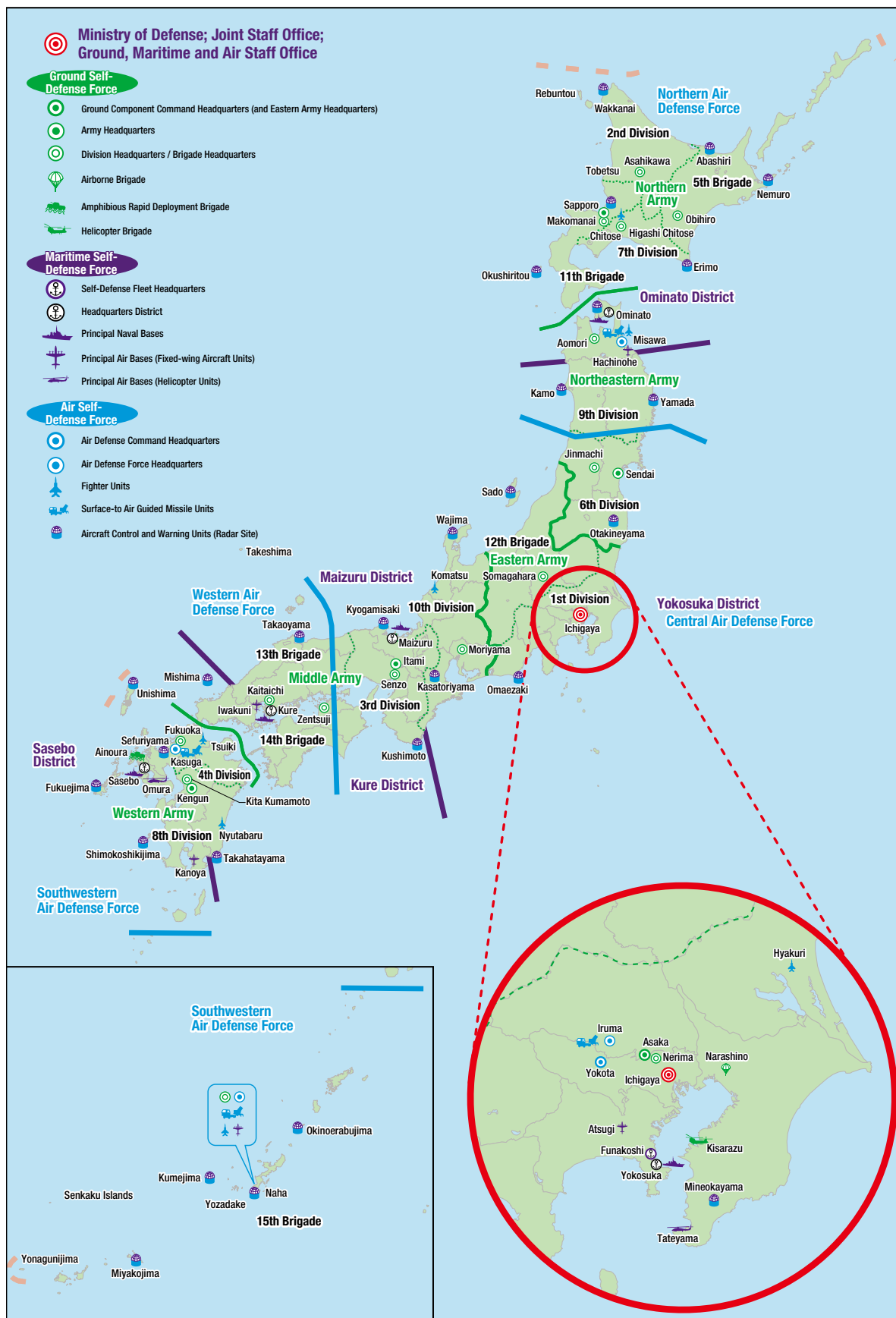


SDF music festival as part of the SDF Memorial Day commemorative events (November 2023)

Organizational Diagram of the Self-Defense Forces



Location of Principal SDF Units [for illustrative purposes] [As of March 31, FY2023]



70th Anniversary of the SDF's Establishment



50th Issue of the Defense White Paper

The Concept of the Drawing on the Front Cover ~ Swordsmith ~

Since its establishment, the MOD/SDF has been working very hard to forge its “sword” to avoid having to draw it. By forging the “sword,” i.e., deterrence, the MOD/SDF has been deterring a military invasion of Japan. Commemorating the 70th anniversary of the SDF's establishment, the drawing represents steady progress in bolstering deterrence capabilities and the determination of the MOD/SDF to make continuous efforts, under the National Security Strategy of Japan and other security documents.

The photo on the back cover shows uniformed SDF personnel saluting KIMURA Tokutaro, the first Director General of the Defense Agency, in the ceremony marking the agency's establishment.