防衛白書

2025 DEFENSE OF JAPAN

MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

DEFENSE OF JAPAN 2025

MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

On the Publication of “Defense of Japan 2025”

NAKATANI Gen
Minister of Defense
中谷 元

The international community is now facing its greatest trial since the end of World War II.

The existing order of world peace is being seriously challenged, and Japan finds itself in the most severe and complex security environment of the post-war era.

China has been swiftly increasing its national defense expenditures, thereby extensively and rapidly enhancing its military capability in a qualitative and quantitative manner and intensifying its activities in the East China Sea, including around the Senkaku Islands, and the Pacific. North Korea has concentrated its efforts on enhancing its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, and pushing ahead with the launch of ballistic missiles and others. Russia has been conducting intensive military activities in the region encompassing the Northern Territories, alongside continuing its aggression against Ukraine. Russia has also been observed engaging in joint activities with China involving aircraft and vessels.

Amid this security environment, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) are fundamentally reinforcing Japan’s defense capabilities with independence and initiative, in an effort to protect the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese people and resolutely defend Japan’s territorial land, waters, and airspace, as expressed in the three strategic documents.

Specifically, we are building future core defense capabilities such as stand-off and Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD). Furthermore, we are bolstering our unmanned defense capabilities, cross-domain operation capabilities, and command-and-control and intelligence-related functions. Enhancing mobile deployment capabilities together with sustainability and resiliency is also important. Japan is expediting efforts to improve equipment operational rates, secure ammunition and fuel, and promote investments to improve the resiliency of defense facilities.

In addition to Japan’s own efforts, cooperation and collaboration with our ally and like-minded countries is critical. The Alliance with the United States is a key pillar of our national security policy and the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Through my meetings with U.S. Secretary of Defense Hegseth, and as part of the upgrading of the respective command and control frameworks, the upgrading of U.S. Forces Japan to a joint force headquarters has commenced in step with the establishment of the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC). We are also discussing other

initiatives to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance, such as expansion of bilateral joint presence in the southwestern region of Japan and the promotion of defense equipment and technology cooperation, including co-production, development, and sustainment.

Promoting multilayered defense cooperation with like-minded countries is also essential. I visited Indonesia and the Philippines since the beginning of the year. We shared views on the mutual challenges facing the region and discussed deepening cooperation in a range of areas, including operational cooperation. During my visit to India in May, I suggested to proceed the collaboration as "Japan India Defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region (JIDIP)," and we concurred to enhance synergy through the coordination of initiatives led by each country and support regional peace and prosperity from the defense side.

At the Shangri-La Dialogue, on May 31, I proposed the spirit of One Cooperative Effort Among Nations: Perspective for the Indo-Pacific (OCEAN).[i] I stated that the spirit of OCEAN is grounded in a shared spirit—a collective commitment among defense authorities to restoring the rules-based international order, strengthening accountability, and advancing the international public good through cooperation, openness, inclusivity, and transparency. The spirit of OCEAN underscores the importance of countries sharing common values and interests to take a broad and panoramic view of the Indo-Pacific, to generate synergy through enhanced cooperation and collaboration among their respective initiatives, and to create new values and benefits. I pledged that Japan will continue to remain a partner of choice for all nations committed to these efforts, working together for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific in the field of defense.

The MOD is now undertaking efforts to reinforce the human resource base, including improving the treatment and working environments of the JSDF and establishing lifetime career plans covering recruitment and assistance.

"The people are your stone wall, the people are your castle." The MOD/JSDF is an organization where people matter and where people make a difference. Each and every JSDF personnel constitutes the greatest pillar of our defense capability. Stably securing personnel is an utmost priority, and it is essential to establish arrangements so that they can dedicate themselves with pride, honor, and a strong sense of mission to national defense, a duty critically important to the nation. With this in mind, the Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Japan Self-Defense Forces Personnel was convened under the Prime Minister's leadership, and necessary measures are being promptly implemented based on the basic policy compiled by the Ministerial Meeting. Furthermore, the reinforcement of defense production and technology bases, which are a virtually integral part of defense capability itself, is indispensable. We will continue to vigorously drive the implementation of the measures to reinforce these bases under the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases and other policies.

"Defense of Japan 2025" discusses the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts of the MOD/JSDF as have been outlined above. It comprehensively explains our progress towards the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities of Japan, including modifications and related topics. The opening pages contain a special feature article to give people an image of joint operations following the establishment of the JJOC, as well as a special feature article about the basic policy on improving the treatment and working environments of JSDF personnel that was mentioned earlier. In addition to the articles, personnel have shared their reflections and perspectives. I hope this white paper will help as many readers as possible to better comprehend the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts made by the MOD/JSDF.

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i One Cooperative Effort Among Nations: Perspective for the Indo-Pacific: It signifies that, from an Indo-Pacific perspective, nations with shared values and interests unite to create powerful synergies through cooperative initiatives.

2025 DEFENSE OF JAPAN

Table of Contents

FOCUS 1 **JSDF Joint Operations Command and Joint Operations** 1

FOCUS 2 **Improving the Treatment and Working Environments, and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of JSDF Personnel** 5

FOCUS 3 **This Year in Defense** 13

DIGEST The Digest presents a summary of Parts I to IV of the main text in a manner that is easy to understand. 19

Part I Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Chapter 1 Overview

1 Global Security Environment 31
2 Security Environment in the Indo-Pacific Region 32

Chapter 2 Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine

1 General Situation 37
2 Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and the Future Outlook 37
3 Effects of Russian Aggression against Ukraine on International Affairs and How Various Countries Respond to It 43

Chapter 3 Defense Policies of Countries

Section 1 The United States 47
1 Security and Defense Policies 47
2 Military Posture 52
Section 2 China 56
1 General Situation 56
2 Military Affairs 57
3 Relations with Countries and Regions 80
Section 3 Relations between the United States and China, etc. 85
1 Relations between the United States and China (General Situation) 85
2 Military Trends of the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific Region 87
3 Military Capabilities of Taiwan and Military Balance between China and Taiwan 89
Section 4 Korean Peninsula 96
1 North Korea 97
2 The ROK and the U.S. Forces Korea 117
Section 5 Russia 121
1 General Situation 121
2 Security and Defense Policies 121
3 Military Posture and Trends 123
4 Russian Forces in Japan's Northern Territories 129
5 Relations with Countries and Regions 130
Section 6 Oceania 135
1 Australia 135
2 New Zealand 138
3 Pacific Island Countries 139
Section 7 Southeast Asia 140
1 General Situation 140
2 Security and Defense Policies of Each Country 140
3 Intra-and Extra-Regional Cooperation 145
Section 8 South Asia 146
1 India 146
2 Pakistan 148
3 Disputes over the Sovereignty of Kashmir 149
Section 9 Europe and Canada 151
1 General Situation 151
2 Enhancement of Multilateral Security Frameworks 151
3 Security/Defense Policies of European Countries and Others 153
Section 10 Middle East, Africa, and Other Regions 156
1 Middle East 156
2 Africa 159
3 Trends in International Terrorism 163

Chapter 4 Trends and Challenges Facing the International Community Concerning the Space, Cyber, and Electromagnetic Domains and Information Warfare

Section 1 Trends Concerning Military Science and Technology That Have Expanded to Information Warfare, etc. 165
1 Science, Technology and Security 165
2 Trends of Military Cutting-edge Technology 166
3 Trends of Cutting-edge Technology in the Civilian Field 167
4 Diffusion of Information-related Technology and Information Warfare 168
5 Trends Concerning Defense Production and Technology Bases 169
Section 2 Trends in Space Domain 171
1 Space Domain and Security 171
2 Various Countries' Outer Space Initiatives 171
Section 3 Trends in Cyber Domain 175
1 Cyberspace and Security 175
2 Threat Trend in Cyberspace 175
3 Initiatives against Cyberspace Threats 177

Section 4 Trends in Electromagnetic Domain 180
1 Electromagnetic Domain and Security 180
2 Each Country's Electronic Warfare Initiatives 181
Section 5 Maritime Trends 183
1 Trends Related to the "Principle of the Freedom of the High Seas" etc. 183
2 National Maritime Security Initiatives 183
3 Trends in the Arctic Ocean 184
4 Trends in Undersea Infrastructure 185
Section 6 Transfer and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) 186
1 Nuclear Weapons 186
2 Biological and Chemical Weapons 187
3 Ballistic Missiles and Other Missiles 187
4 Growing Concerns about Transfer and Proliferation of WMDs and Other Technologies 188

Part II Japan's Security and Defense Policy

Chapter 1 Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense

Section 1 Measures to Ensure Security 191
Section 2 The Constitution and the Basis of Defense Policy 191
1 The Constitution and the Right of Self-Defense 191
2 The Government's View on Article 9 of the Constitution 192
3 Basic Policy 192
Section 3 Security Policy Framework 194

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

Section 1 Outline of the National Security Strategy (NSS) 195
Section 2 Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) 196
1 Transition from the NDPG to the NDS 196
2 Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) 198
Section 3 Outline of the Defense Buildup Program 205
1 Program Guidelines 205
2 Organizations of Self-Defense Forces 206
3 Quantities of Major Procurement 207
4 Expenditures 211

Chapter 3 Defense Buildup and the Budget

Section 1 Basic Concept of the FY2025 Buildup of Defense Capability 212
Section 2 Defense-Related Expenditures 214
1 Overview of Defense-Related Expenditures for FY2025 214
2 High-Priority Focuses 214
3 Initiatives for Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base 217
4 Breakdown of Defense-Related Expenditures 217
5 Optimization Efforts 220
6 Secure Financial Resources for Reinforcing Defense Capabilities 220
7 Comparison with Other Countries 220

Chapter 4 Organizations Responsible for Japan's Security and Defense

Section 1 National Security Council 223
Section 2 Organization of the MOD/JSDF 224
1 Organizational Structure Supporting Defense Capability 224
2 Joint Operations System of the JSDF 228
3 JSDF Joint Operations Command 229

Chapter 5 Framework for the JSDF Activities

1 Duties of the Self-Defense Forces 231
2 Defense of Japan 231
3 Maintenance of Public Order and Responses to Aggression that Do Not Amount to an Armed Attack 234
4 Responses to Important Influence Situations 238
5 Framework for Contributing to the Peace and Stability of the International Community 239

Part III Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Chapter 1 Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

Section 1 Responses to Invasion of Japan 243
1 Responses to Invasions of Japan, Large-Scale Terrorism, Etc. 244
2 Responses to Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force and Such Attempts 248
Section 2 Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities 262
1 Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities 263
2 Strengthening Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities 264
3 Strengthening of Unmanned Defense Capabilities 268
4 Strengthening Cross-domain Operation Capabilities 269
5 Strengthening of Command and Control/ Intelligence-related Functions 280
6 Strengthening of Mobile Deployment Capabilities and Initiatives to Protect Citizens 286
7 Strengthening Sustainability and Resiliency 291
Section 3 Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country 296
1 Research and development 296
2 Public Infrastructure Development 297
3 Cybersecurity 297
4 International Cooperation to Enhance the Deterrence Capabilities of Japan and Its Like-minded Countries and Others 298
5 Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance from Peacetime 299
6 Efforts Related to the Space Domain 300
7 Response to Large-Scale Disasters, etc. 301
8 Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas 305

Section 4 Training and Exercises to Reinforce Japan's Architecture for National Defense 307
1 Training to Reinforce Japan's Deterrence and Response Capabilities 307
2 Establishing the Respective Training Environments and Safety Management 310

Chapter 2 Japan-U.S. Alliance

Section 1 Outline of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements 313
1 Significance of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements 313
2 Content of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation 314
3 Policy Consultations between Japan and the United States 314
Section 2 Strengthening the Joint Deterrence and Response Capabilities of Japan and the United States 317
1 Cooperation in the Space and Cyber Domains 317
2 Integrated Air and Missile Defense 318
3 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Activities 318
4 Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and Other Forces 318
5 Logistics Support 318
6 Bilateral Training and Exercises 319
7 Extended Deterrence 319
8 Joint/Shared Use 320
Section 3 Reinforcement of the Alliance's Coordination Functions 321
1 Establishment of the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) 321
2 Strengthening Bilateral Command and Control (C2) 322
3 Closer Operational Coordination 322
Section 4 Reinforcing the Foundation for Allied Response 324
1 Information Security and Cybersecurity 324
2 Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation 324
Section 5 Efforts Concerning the Stationing of the USFJ 325
1 Significance of the Stationing of the USFJ 325
2 Efforts for the Realignment of the USFJ 328
3 Measures Concerning the Stationing of the USFJ 343
Section 6 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises 350
1 Training that Contributes to Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance 350
2 Multilateral Exercises Involving Japan, the United States, and Third-Party Countries 352

Chapter 3 Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries and Others

Section 1 Strategic Promotion of Multilateral and Multilayered Defense Cooperation 357
1 Significance, etc. of Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others 357
2 Promotion of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Various Countries 360
3 Promotion of Multilateral Security Cooperation 393
4 Proactive and Strategic Initiatives for Capacity Building 399
5 Initiatives to Promote Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 401
6 Ensuring Maritime Security 404
Section 2 Efforts to Support International Peace Cooperation Activities 406
1 Frameworks for International Peace Cooperation Activities 406
2 Initiatives to Support UN PKO and Other Activities 407
3 International Disaster Relief Activities 410
Section 3 Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation 413
1 Initiatives Focused on Treaties Relating to Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation 413
2 International Initiatives Aimed at Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction 415
Section 4 Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries 416
1 Bilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries 416
2 Multilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries and Others 417

Part Ⅳ Reinforcing Foundation for JSDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities

Chapter 1 Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel

Section 1 Improvement of Treatment for JSDF Personnel 424
Section 2 Improvement of Living and Working Environments 424
Section 3 Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans 424
Section 4 Other Initiatives 425

Chapter 2 Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 3 Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Section 1 Initiatives to Reinforce the Human Resource Base 427
1 Strengthening Initiatives in the Recruitment Phase 427
2 Utilization of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others 431
3 Improvement of Treatment and Other Initiatives for JSDF Personnel 434
4 Improvement of Living and Working Environments 435
5 Human Resources Development 436
6 Initiatives for Retirement and Re-employment 436
Section 2 Recruiting the Cyber Workforce 440
1 The MOD/JSDF's Duties and Cyber Workforce 440
2 Initiatives for Recruiting the Cyber Workforce 441
Section 3 Further Promotion of Work-Life Balance and Women's Participation 443
1 Working Style Reform to Promote Work-Life Balance 443
2 Reform to Promote Women's Participation 445
Section 4 Creating an Environment of Zero Tolerance for Harassment of Any Kind 447
1 Response to Harassment Victims 447
2 Directive of the Defense Minister on Measures to Eradicate Harassment among other things 448
3 Initiatives for Harassment Prevention Measures 449

Section 5 Support for JSDF Personnel and Their Families 449
1 Support for Life Planning 449
2 MOD Mental Health Initiatives 450
3 Initiatives to Combat Gambling and Other Addictions 450
4 Initiatives to Support Families 451
5 Commemorating Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty 451

Chapter 4 Other Initiatives

Section 1 Transforming Medical Functions 452
1 Fundamentally Strengthen the Combat Trauma Care Capabilities 452
2 Strengthening the Medical Function to Respond to Various Situations and Diverse Missions 454
Section 2 Reinforcement of Policy-Making Function 455
1 Efforts for Reinforcing Policy-Making Function 455
2 Efforts by the National Institute for Defense Studies 455
3 Efforts by Other Institutions 456

Part V Bases and Initiatives Necessary to Maintain and Reinforce Defense Capabilities

Chapter 1 Reinforcing Defense Production and Technology Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capacity itself

Section 1 Reinforcing Defense Production Base 459
1 Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases and its Basic Policy 460
2 Main Efforts in Addition to the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases 463
Section 2 Reinforcing Defense Technology Base 467
1 Necessity of Reinforcing Defense Technology Base 467
2 Direction for Reinforcing Defense Technology Base Shown in Defense Technology Guideline 2023 468
3 Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft 469
4 Active Utilization of Civilian Technology 471
Section 3 Promoting Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation and Transfer of Defense Equipment 474
1 Systems Regarding Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology 474
2 Efforts to Promote the Transfer of Defense Equipment 476
3 Deepening Relationships with the United States Regarding Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation 477
4 Building New Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation 479
5 Other Initiatives for Defense Equipment and Technical Cooperation 483
Section 4 Equipment Optimization Efforts 485
1 Initiatives for Construction of Optimized Equipment Structure 485
2 Initiatives to Make the Most of Limited Human Resources (Labor-Saving and Automation) 485
3 Project Management Throughout Equipment Life Cycle 485
4 Improving the Contract System and Other Related Matters 487
5 Initiatives Aimed at Increasing the Efficiency of Procurement and Other Related Initiatives 488
6 Advancing Initiatives Aimed at Effectiveness of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Procurement 488
Section 5 Initiatives for Economic Security 490
1 Basic Concep 490
2 Developments Within the Japanese Government 490
3 Initiatives of the MOD 490

Chapter 2 Initiatives to Live in Harmony with Local Communities and the Environment

Section 1 Measures to Harmonize with Local Communities and the Environment 491
1 Supporting Civilian Life 491
2 Cooperation from Local Governments and Other Relevant Organizations for the JSDF 492
3 Measures for Obtaining the Understanding and Cooperation of Local Governments and Local Residents 492
4 Measures to Promote Harmony between Defense Facilities and Surrounding Areas 493
5 Participation in National Events 496
6 Cooperation for the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition 497
7 Civil Engineering Consignments from Third Parties 497
8 Other Initiatives 497
Section 2 Responding to Climate Change and Other Environmental Issues 499
1 Efforts Related to the MOD/JSDF Facilities 499
2 Initiatives Related to USFJ Facilities/Areas 501
Section 3 Public Relations Activities, Public Records and Archives Management, Information Disclosure, and Related Activities 502
1 Various Public Relations Activities 502
2 Initiatives for Public Document Management and Disclosure of Administrative Documents 506
3 Initiatives for Policy Evaluation, etc. 507

■ Reference Contents 508

■ Index 509

■ Reference

https://www.mod.go.jp/en/publ/w_paper/index.html

COLUMN

Commentary "Commentary" provides more detailed explanations of specific topics from the perspective of the Japanese government.

VOICE "VOICE" contains thoughts and impressions from an individual standpoint by JDF personnel on the field and outside concerned parties.

Perspective "Perspective" is the analysis by a researcher of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) from a more academic point of view based on an individual standpoint. This is the researcher's own version of analysis, relying on publicly available materials, and does not represent the official view of the Japanese government or the Ministry of Defense.

Part I

Chapter 1 Overview

Commentary The Impact on Japan of the Links Among the Security Environments of Each Region 36
Commentary The Rising Threat of Missiles in the Area around Japan 36

Chapter 3 Defense Policies of Countries

Perspective Prospects for the Security Strategy of the United States after the Trump Administration 55
Perspective Chinese Military Trends Concerning Taiwan 84
Commentary Progress of Military Cooperation Between North Korea and Russia 116
Commentary Russia's Military Trends in the Area Surrounding Japan 134
Perspective Tensions in the Middle East Situation Caused by Clashes between Israel and Palestinian Militants 164

Part II

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

Commentary Counterstrike Capabilities 203
Perspective Significance of Deterrence 204

Chapter 3 Defense Buildup and the Budget

Commentary Defense Financing and Defense Capabilities Reinforcement 222

Chapter 4 Organizations Responsible for Japan's Security and Defense

Commentary Establishment of the JSDF Joint Operations Command 230

Part III

Chapter 1 Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

Commentary Senkaku Islands, Inherent Part of the Territory of Japan 249
Perspective The Battle in the Cognitive Dimension 255
VOICE Defense Attachés Working in Countries around the World 282
Commentary New Formation of the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group 287
VOICE Voice of an JSDF member who worked on the Noto Peninsula Earthquake and the Noto Peninsula Heavy Rain Disaster 304
VOICE Participating in the FY2024 Self-Defense Forces Joint Exercise for Rescue (JXR) 312

Chapter 2 The Japan-U.S. Alliance

VOICE What I Learned Through My Japan-U.S. Coordination and Interpreting Work/What I Learned Through the Mansfield Program 323
Commentary About the Soil Improvement Work for the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility (FRF) Construction Project 336
Commentary Relocation of the U.S. Military's Naha Port Facility 338
Commentary Commencement of the Relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa to Guam 341
Commentary FY2024 Japan-U.S. Bilateral/Joint exercise (Field Training Exercise) KS25 354

Chapter 3 Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries and Others

VOICE Voice of the First Liaison Officer to Australia's Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC) 363
Commentary About the First Participation of Japan in the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense and the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting 369
Commentary Track Record of Support for Ukraine by the Ministry of Defense (MOD) 378
VOICE Measures Through The Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024 (IPD24) 399
VOICE Voice of an JSDF Member Who Participated in the Malabar 2024 Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Multilateral Exercise 405
VOICE Voice of an JSDF Member Participating in UNMISS 412
VOICE Participating in Super Garuda Shield (SGS) 24 420
VOICE Participating in Royal Australian Air Force Exercise Pitch Black 24 420

Part IV

Chapter 3 Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

VOICE Personnel Recruitment Initiatives by the MOD/JSDF are Standing on a New Starting Line 428
VOICE Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of the JSDF Reserve Personnel System and the Voices of an Active Member of the JSDF Reserve Personnel and an Employer 433
VOICE Voices of Reemployed Personnel and the Employer 437
Commentary Toward the Expansion of Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel (MOD Cyber Workforce Comprehensive Strategy) 442
VOICE As JSDF Reserve Personnel in the Cyber Domain 442

Part V

Chapter 1 Foundations and Initiatives Necessary to Maintain and Reinforce Defense Capabilities

Commentary The Significance of the Fund to Facilitate the Transfer of Defense Equipment 463
Commentary Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft: Establishment of an International Organization 470
Commentary Establishment of the Defense Innovation Science and Technology Institute (DISTI) 473
Commentary About the Cooperative Development of a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) by Japan and the United States 478

Chapter 2 Initiatives to Live in Harmony with Local Communities and the Environment

Commentary The Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD/JSDF and the Commemorative Events for the 70th Anniversary of the ASDF 504
Commentary The Olympics and the Initiatives of the JSDF Physical Training School 505

Cover Illustration by Honoka Yoshifuku

Honoka Yoshifuku is an artist who receives tremendous support both in Japan and abroad for her retro-pop style that evokes a sense of nostalgia.

The cover of this white paper features the concept of "The Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) protecting the peaceful lives of the people of Japan." It expresses the familiar presence of the JSDF standing with the people, the sense of security the JSDF provides by supporting ordinary and peaceful daily life, and the JSDF's trustworthiness in protecting Japan.

- The Defense of Japan white paper was first published in 1970, and has been published annually since 1976. The purpose of publishing this paper is to make the current status, issues and initiatives of Japan's defense common knowledge for as many people as possible, as simply as possible.
- This edition of Defense of Japan covers the defense and security environment of Japan and the initiatives of the MOD/JSDF during the one-year period from April 2024 to March 2025. However, certain important events that took place in April 2025 and beyond are also described.
- Maps in this paper may contain omissions depending on the design and layout and may not necessarily show the entire Japanese territory.
- To facilitate access to the latest information even after this White Paper is published, QR codes have been included to link readers to the relevant pages on the MOD website (created based on URLs as of May 2025). Previous editions of Defense of Japan, including this edition, can be viewed on the MOD website, so please feel free to make use of it.

2025 DEFENSE of Japan
https://www.mod.go.jp/en/publ/w_paper/index.html

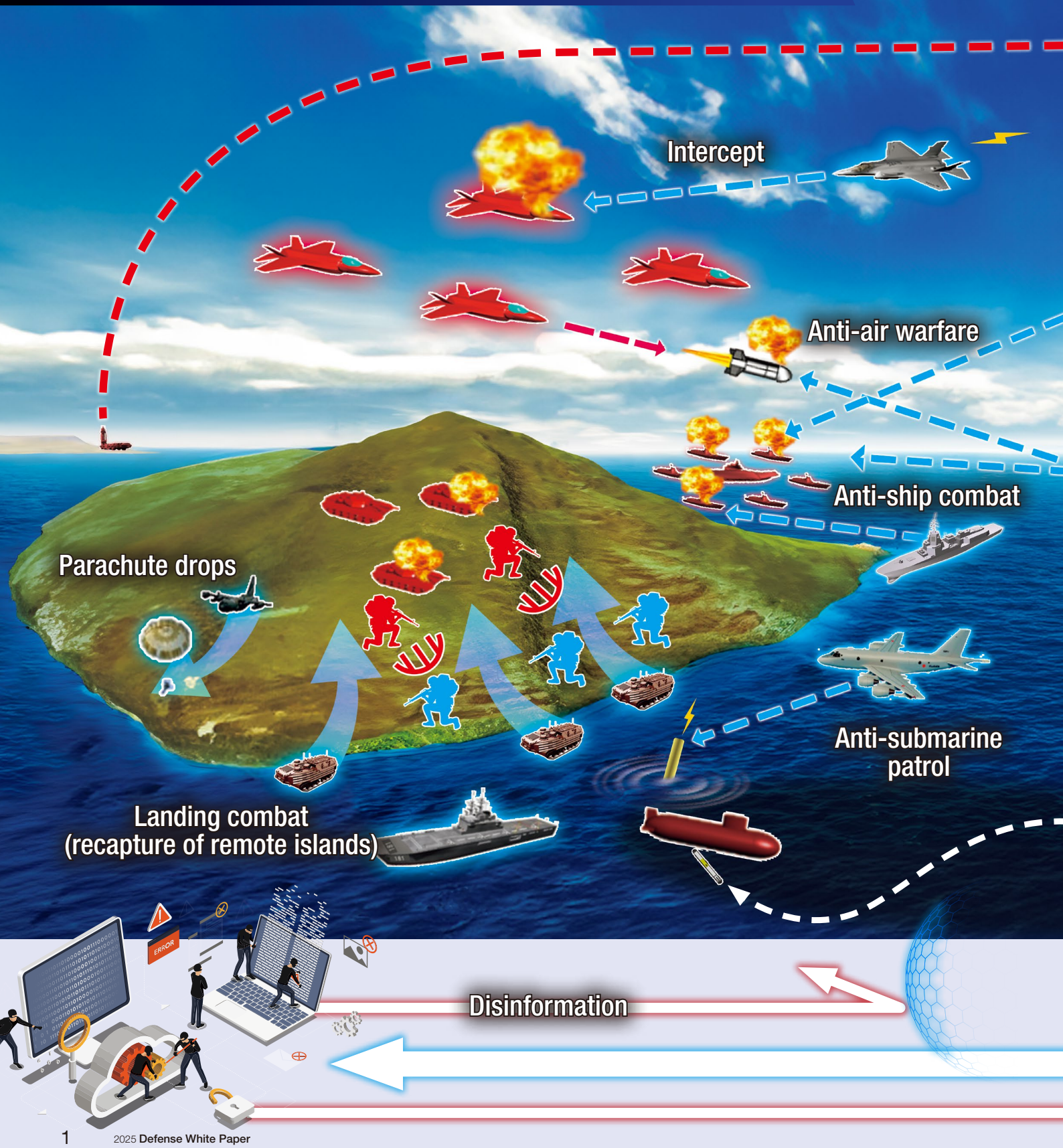
Legend

The terms below will be abbreviated as follows in this White Paper, and other terms may also be abbreviated appropriately.
(Official names may be used in some cases for explanatory purposes.)

1. Ministry of Defense	→	MOD
2. Japan Self-Defense-Forces	→	JSDF
3. Ground Self- Defense Force	→	GSDF
4. Maritime Self-Defense Force	→	MSDF
5. Air Self-Defense Force	→	ASDF
6. Joint Staff Office	→	JSO
7. Ground Staff Office	→	GSO
8. Maritime Staff Office	→	MSO
9. Air Staff Office	→	ASO
10. National Security Strategy of Japan	→	NSS
11. National Defense Strategy	→	NDS
12. Defense Buildup Program	→	DBP
13. United Nations	→	UN

FOCUS 1

JSDF Joint Operations Command and Joint Operations (Image)



The JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) was newly established in the MOD/JSDF on March 24, 2025.

In accordance with the Minister's orders on JSDF operations, the Commander of the JSDF Joint Operations Command (C-JJOC) is eligible to command centrally major units of the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces, as well as units operating in the space and cyber domains from peacetime, so that the JSDF will be able to establish a flexible defense posture depending on the situation. The C-JJOC also takes control of all aspects of operations and optimally distributes forces in order to ensure quick and effective joint operations.

JSDF Joint Operations Command and Joint Operations

(Voices of JSDF Personnel Executing Cross-Domain Operations)

Joint Operations Command, Ready to Go!

The author in front of the JJOC banner

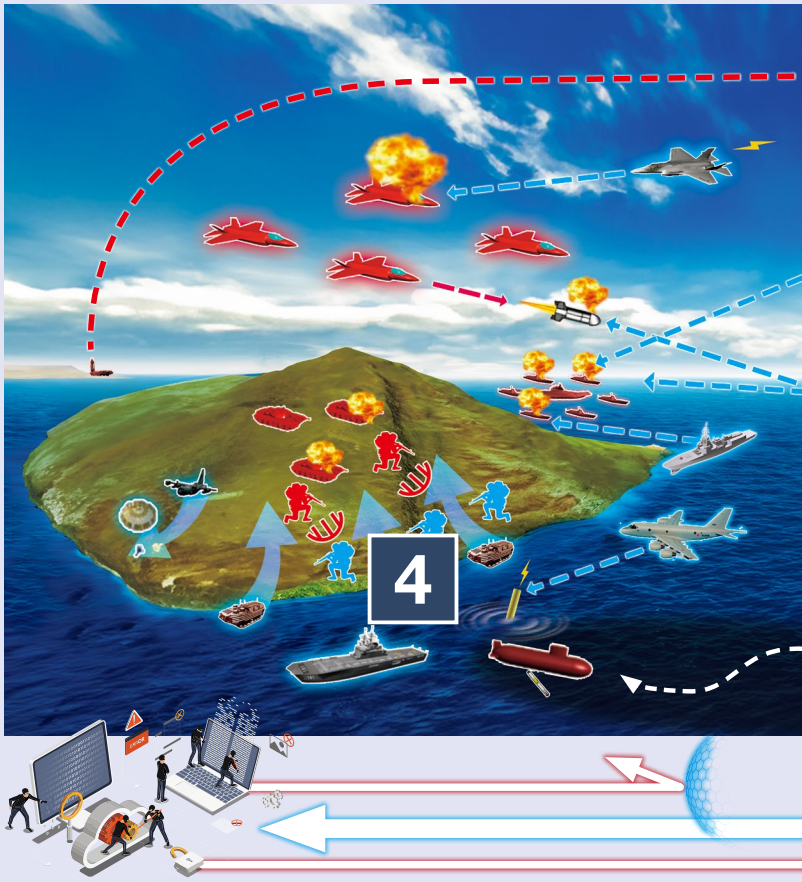
The JJOC was newly established in late March this year as the only unit in Japan capable of seamlessly conducting cross-domain operations at all phases from peacetime to contingencies. With the establishment of this new Command, the command and control over the JSDF operations can be centralized under the C-JJOC even in peacetime, within the scope of orders from the Minister of Defense, enabling quicker and smoother responses to various situations than ever before.

As a specific illustration of command, when a certain situation arises, the C-JJOC, upon receiving an order from the Defense Minister, assigns specific missions to be carried out to the commander best suited to conduct the operation. If multiple operations are underway at the same time, the C-JJOC considers the balance of the entire operation, reallocates units and other resources to individual operations, and controls the flow of the operations to accomplish the assigned mission.

To protect Japan's peace and independence, the JJOC will do its utmost from this moment forward to fulfilling its heavy responsibility of accomplishing assigned missions through central command of JSDF operations.

Lieutenant Colonel (GSDF) OKAMOTO Chikara
1 JJOC Readiness Office, Planning Division, Defense Plans and Policy Department, Joint Staff Office (at the time)
2 MOD Ichigaya Area (Shinjuku, Tokyo)
3 –

1



2

Voices of Personnel Engaged in Space Domain Awareness

The author exchanging opinions with fellow personnel with a variety of knowledge (first on the right)

Many countries are accelerating activities in the space domain, where there is no concept of national borders. The role of the Space Operations Group is growing more important than ever, with the MOD also planning to launch a Space Domain Awareness (SDA) satellite in FY2026 alongside other activities.

I used to work as a transporter, but wanted to challenge myself in a new field, and switched my specialty to space. Having initially served for one year in the Space Operations Squadron (now the 1st Space Operations Squadron) at Fuchu Air Base, I was assigned to the 2nd Space Operations Squadron at Hofu Kita Air Base, where I am now in my second year.

Scene from maneuvering a vehicle for equipment deployment

I have been involved in the operation of space-related systems and equipment to monitor interference against Japanese satellites in both squadrons. The monitoring and surveillance of space is becoming increasingly important, and our mission is evolving day by day, requiring us to take on and overcome unknown challenges as pioneers.

We believe that our efforts will come to fruition, enabling us to fulfill our mission with pride.

Technical Sergeant (ASDF) TANAKA Tomo
1 2nd Space Operations Squadron, Space Operations Group
2 Hofu Kita Air Base (Hofu, Yamaguchi)
3 Space

3

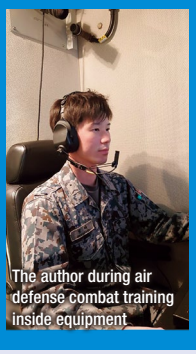
The Role of Air Defense Missile Units in Joint Operations

The author during training to load missiles on a launcher

The Fire Unit operates the Patriot system, and its main mission is to defend Japan against airborne threats such as aircraft and ballistic missiles under joint operations.

I participated in a Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercise conducted last year and realized the importance of joint operations and the difficulty of multilateral coordination. Moreover, during live-fire training conducted in the U.S. last year, I participated in a joint live-fire exercise with the GSDF and experienced firsthand the nerves from using real ammunition while working under close cooperation.

In light of the recent situation, and amid the growing importance of joint air missile defense, I will engage in training each day and strive to complete missions as a member of a fire missile unit playing a part in these efforts.


The author during air defense combat training inside equipment

Staff Sergeant (ASDF)
MIYAZAKI Tomohiro
1 24th Fire Unit, Northern Air Defense Missile Group
2 Naganuma Sub Base (Naganuma, Hokkaido)
3 Air defense operations

GSDF MSDF ASDF

Rank Name
1 Working unit
2 Location
3 Field / Position

Missions of the Amphibious Operations Unit

The author cooperating with the GSDF and other countries' militaries (left)

I work for the Mine Warfare Force, which is responsible for amphibious operations of the MSDF. Amphibious operations involve landing squadrons from the sea when necessary, with operations carried out in cooperation with the GSDF and ASDF. Meanwhile, at the outbreak of a disaster, we are also engaged in activities such as delivering relief supplies by water to isolated disaster areas using landing craft air cushions (LCACs) and other similar means. Last year, when we participated in Indo-Pacific Area deployment training, we visited Tahiti and Hawaii to carry out training in amphibious operations and disaster relief with other countries' militaries.

I feel that a "joint mindset" of taking pride in one's own unit while respecting other units and cooperating together to succeed in missions has taken root in each of the ground, maritime, and air units that conduct amphibious operations, and by doing so, we can combine the capabilities of the different organizations to achieve our goals. I believe that spreading this awareness throughout the JSDF will contribute to the development of joint operations.

GSDF helicopter landing on an LST, followed by an LCAC

Lieutenant Commander (MSDF)
AOYAMA Kohei
1 Mine Warfare Force Headquarters
2 Yokosuka Area (Yokosuka, Kanagawa)
3 Amphibious Warfare Staff B

4

5

For Improving Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities

The author reporting on collected and analyzed radio wave information

In joint operations, on top of integrated ground, maritime, and air operations, coordination with space, cyberspace, and electromagnetic domains is important, and thus, improving cross-domain operation capabilities has become essential. Electronic warfare units collect and analyze radio wave information and reduce or nullify the capability of the other side's communications (the mouths and ears in human terms) for command, control, and information sharing, and radar (the eyes in human terms) for early detection of JSDF's actions, thereby ensuring the defense of Japan even when our capabilities in other areas are inferior. I have been analyzing collected radio wave information and making the necessary adjustments and examination with maritime and air electronic warfare units through several training exercises. Feeling strongly about the importance of integrated electromagnetic spectrum operations among the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, I hope to play a part in strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations under the new structure through the newly established the JJOC. I will forge ahead with my mission by focusing on military technologies and trends that continue to evolve day by day.

Exchanging of ideas with the ASDF's electronic warfare unit

Captain (GSDF) HASHIMOTO Yukihiro
1 Electronic Warfare Operations Unit
2 Camp Asaka (Nerima, Tokyo)
3 System & Signal

6

As the Front Line of Defense for Cyberspace

The author attending the opening ceremony (far left)

As a member of Security Operation Center (SOC) personnel at the JSDF Cyber Defense Command, I am currently working to counter various types of cyberattacks.

I had the opportunity to participate in a capacity building program in the field of cybersecurity as an instructor in Vietnam last year. This is an activity aimed at enhancing knowledge and technology related to a wide range of cybersecurity issues together with several Asian countries including those from ASEAN, along with strengthening cooperation among participating countries. By training personnel working in cybersecurity from different countries, I was able to gain deeply valuable experience in communicating specialist knowledge in English and learning how much each country values cybersecurity.

While having no knowledge of cybersecurity or English language skills when I enlisted, I have acquired these skills through my education at the JSDF, and have been able to apply them during overseas missions, too.

I will continue to work with the goal of protecting cyberspace as the front line of defense.

The author giving technical instruction to participants from ASEAN countries (far left)

Sergeant First Class (GSDF) Undisclosed
1 JSDF Cyber Defense Command
2 Undisclosed
3 Undisclosed

FOCUS 2

Improving the Treatment and Working Envi and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans

The following is an example of the "Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) Personnel," which was compiled in FY2024 after four sessions of the "Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Japan Self-Defense Forces Personnel" established by the order of Prime Minister Ishiba.

3rd Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Japan Self-Defense Forces Personnel [Photo provided by the Cabinet Public Affairs Office]

1 Improvement of Treatment for JSDF Personnel

Example

It is necessary to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa era, in order that JSDF personnel can work with pride and honor. Accordingly, it has been decided to **newly establish or raise the amounts of over 30 different allowances, etc.,** which is an unprecedented change

Improving wages

- **Planned revision to JSDF salary schedule**
- **Enhanced allowances for special operations**

New — Allowance for JSDF personnel responsible for air traffic control operations (Air Traffic Controller Allowance)
[Example] O-3: Approx. **32,000 yen**/month etc.

Improving treatment of enlisted personnel (privates, seamen, and airmen)

- **Establishment of a new type of fixed-term JSDF personnel**
- **Enhancement of higher education support benefits and JSDF Scholarship Program**

New — Benefits for new personnel living in barracks or on board a ship (Designated Place Living Adjustment Allowance)
200,000 yen paid annually for the first six years following employment for a **total amount of 1.2 million yen over six years** etc.

Improving treatment of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others

- **Raising allowances**
- **Support and system development to facilitate participation in training**

Raise — Increase amount paid over one term (three years) by raising JSDF Reserve Allowance and Training Call-up Allowance
(Current) Approx. 270,000 yen ➡ **(After revision) Approx. 680,000 yen** etc.

ronments, of JSDF Personnel

See details of initiatives here!

2 Improvement of Living and Working Environments

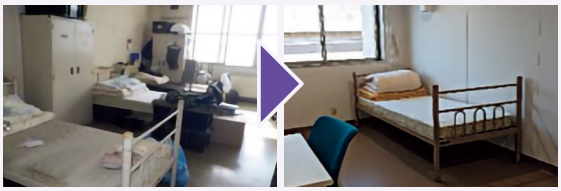
Example

Creating rewarding working environments by improving job satisfaction and working conditions, along with developing living and working environments aligned with the lifestyles of the younger generation

Installation of individual spaces for personnel in barracks

In consideration of privacy, promote the installation of individual spaces for personnel using partitions and similar; the GSDF aims for completion of facilities by FY2025, while the MSDF and ASDF aim for completion by FY2028

etc.



Shared rooms　　After introducing individual spaces (image)

Promoting the development of the communication environment

Along with expanding wireless LAN coverage at camps and bases, we will install communication environments to enable Internet access on major Japanese ships by FY2027

etc.

Crewmember watching a program on his cell phone on board a Japanese ship　　Personnel using the wireless LAN network for study

3 Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans

Example

Secure and raise post-retirement income of JSDF personnel, who retire at a younger age than civil servants in regular services, and establish a more fulfilling lifetime career plan than ever before so that JSDF personnel can devote themselves to their mission of national defense with peace of mind

Expansion of re-employment opportunities leveraging acquired knowledge, skills, and experience

- **The MOD and relevant ministries and agencies will work together** to expand re-employment opportunities by **reaching out to companies in a wide range of industries and economic organizations**, thereby enabling smooth re-employment and enhanced wages following re-employment
- **Further promotion of employment in various public sectors** such as the police, fire departments, coast guard, correctional departments, etc.

etc.

Compensation level from the government for JSDF personnel following early retirement

Consideration **toward raising Compensation for Retirees under Young-Age Retirement,*** aiming for implementation from FY2026, based on the opinions of external experts, while also expanding re-employment opportunities and enhancing wages following re-employment, etc.

*Policy compensation provided to JSDF personnel after retirement to compensate for any disadvantages arising from the early retirement system

etc.

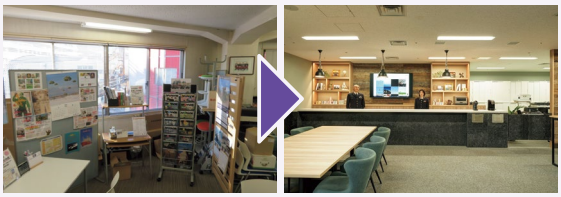
4 Others

Example

Enhancing public relations and recruitment to promote employment of JSDF personnel

Promotion of recruitment PR via social media, etc., and enhancement of Provincial Cooperation Offices' approach

etc.



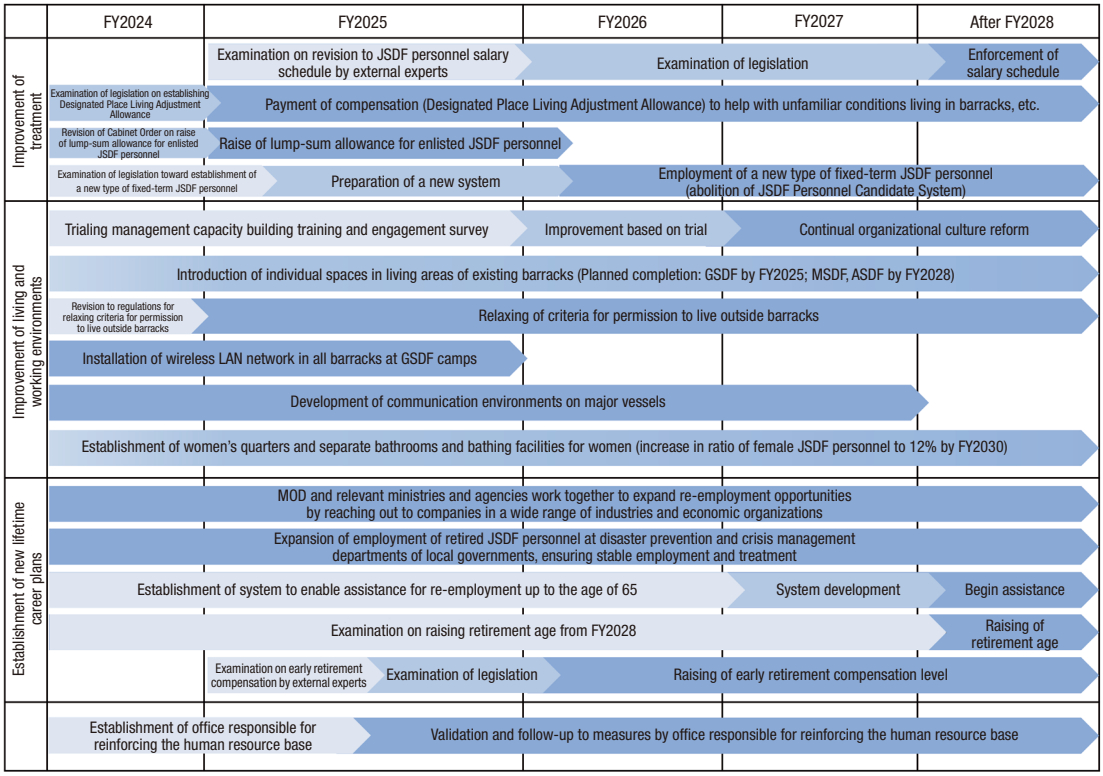
Relocation of recruiting office to a more effective location

FOCUS 2

Improving the Treatment and Working Environments, and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of JSDF Personnel (Voices of Personnel on the Ground)

Hear from JSDF personnel on the ground discussing the current situation of improvements to living and working environments in recent years.

1 How Major Specific Measures Will Be Implemented in Future



3 Voice of MSDF Personnel on Improvement of Living and Working Environments

Scene of training on the Training Squadron (1)

I participated in an overseas training cruise conducted in FY2024 as an officer trainee. The training environment has changed significantly from a classroom-based officer candidate school to practical training-oriented training cruises. I repeatedly underwent various types of training, including shiphandling and navigational duties on a training vessel specialized for practical training, becoming accustomed to life on a Japanese ship at sea for long periods of time and acquiring the necessary skills for working in a unit. Outside of the training, I was able to spend my time in a well-balanced way, such as carrying out physical education onboard and participating in events. During the training cruise, I learned new things from all aspects of my training and daily life, spending many productive days onboard.

In addition, Starlink communication was installed as a trial run this year, allowing us crewmembers at sea to keep in touch with our families on social media and watch videos of them uploaded to YouTube. Although we were out of port for an extended period of time, I was able to engage in my work with peace of mind because I was able to contact my family regularly using my own device and could see them and feel close to them on a daily basis.

Scene of training on the Training Squadron (2)

I am committed to fully utilizing the experience I gained through this enhanced training environment in my future work so that I can contribute to national defense.

Lieutenant Junior Grade (MSDF)
NOJIMA Yukiko
1 Destroyer JS Kirishima
2 Yokosuka Area (Yokosuka, Kanagawa)
3 Communications

GSDF MSDF ASDF

Rank Name
1 Working unit
2 Location
3 Field / Position

See details of initiatives here!

2 Current Situation of Improvements to Living and Working Environments of GSDF Personnel

The author sitting around the table in the well-equipped kitchen (left)

I have been serving at Camp Yao since 2022 and live in the women's JSDF personnel barracks within the camp.

Since 2023, the barracks have been renovated to improve shower and washroom facilities, along with heating, cooling, and other utilities.

In addition, furniture in living areas has been updated to more stylish options, and the carpets and wallpaper have been replaced to match the furniture, making rooms more to our liking.

Moreover, we can use the provided Wi-Fi for personal development through online lectures.

It seems that the MOD and all branches of the JSDF will continue to make improvements to living and working environments in order to make each personnel member feel comfortable. Improving living environments enables us to focus on our missions with a high level of motivation, on top of making our private lives more comfortable.

The author using the Wi-Fi to study

Leading Private (GSDF) MINAMI Norie
1 Middle Air Group
2 Camp Yao (Yao, Osaka)
3 Aviation

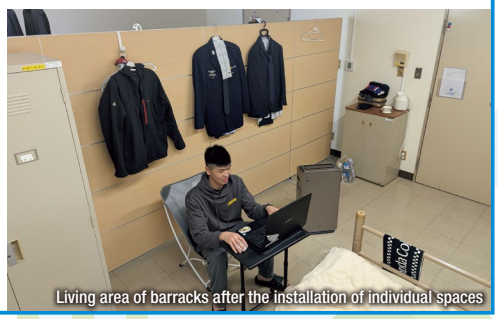
4 Initiatives for Improvement of Living and Working Environments at Shariki Sub Base

Living area of barracks before the installation of individual spaces

I was assigned to the Shariki Sub Base in 2018. When I got the assignment from Technical School, my honest impression was, "Where's Shariki?" At my new post, I was confused and didn't know anything, but seniors at the base welcomed me warmly. However, I was very concerned about the deteriorating facilities and equipment. When I asked, they told me that some facilities had been in use since 1980, when the base was established. The facilities were not exactly attractive. It was also difficult for me to get used to living together with several other people in one room.

Now, around seven years later, the Shariki Sub Base is being regenerated. The living and working environments are being improved: first, partitions have been added to the living quarters of barracks to ensure that each person can have a private space, enabling them to concentrate on their studies and hobbies. In addition, Wi-Fi is now available, which makes life a lot more comfortable. And, although the recent summer heat in Aomori Prefecture has been extremely severe, the living and working environment has been greatly improved by the installation of air conditioners.

While I am very grateful for the private space, we all communicate with each other and create a cheerful and pleasant atmosphere so that personnel living in the same barracks do not feel distant from one another. Just like the seniors who gave me a warm welcome, I will devote myself to my work with the aim of creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere at the Shariki Sub Base.



Living area of barracks after the installation of individual spaces

Staff Sergeant (ASDF) OMURA Sora
1 21st Fire Unit, Northern Air Defense Missile Group
2 Shariki Sub Base (Tsugaru, Aomori)
3 Missile equipment maintenance

FOCUS 3

This Year in Defense

(National and International Events in FY2024)

"This Year in Defense" takes a look back on the harsh security situation in and around Japan in FY2024, as well as responses and initiatives by the MOD/JSDF.

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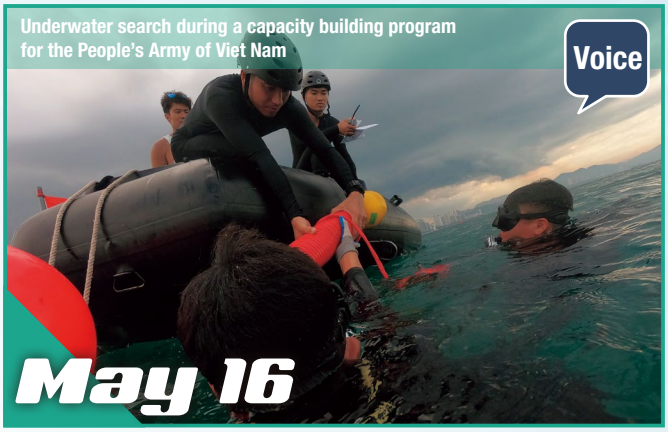
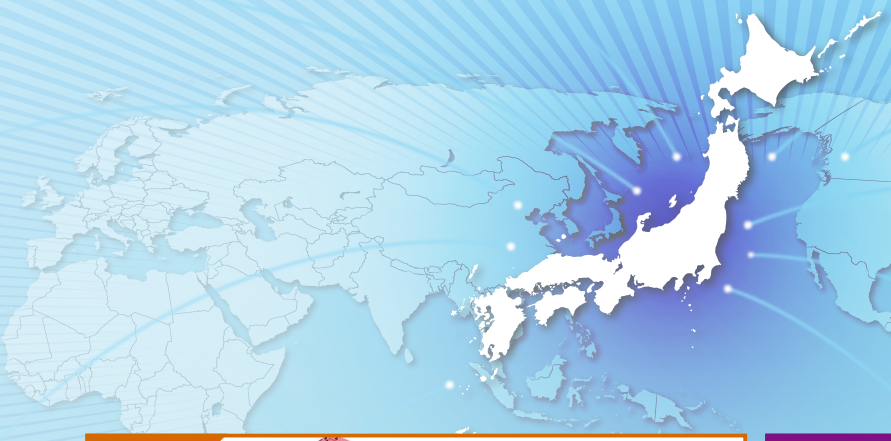


GSDF MSDF ASDF Administrative officials, etc.



September to November

Voice

JGSDF Exercise 2024

October 31

Chairman Kim Jong-un observes a ballistic missile launch

10 · 11 · 12 · 1 · 2 · 3

Transportation of Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic

Voice

October 4

Prime Minister Ishiba carries out Troop Review during the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of the MOD/JSDF

November 9

First successful landing of F-35B on JS Kaga

Voice

October 20

Inauguration of President Trump

Voice

January 20

This Year in Defense

(Voices of Personnel Serving in Japan and Overseas in FY2024)

Hear from Personnel Serving in Japan

May 16

Participating in a Capacity Building Program (Underwater Unexploded Ordnance Clearance Field) in Vietnam

I provided guidance and advice on searching for, identifying, and clearing underwater unexploded ordnance to instructors from the Viet Nam People's Navy, improving their capabilities and enabling the safe clearance of unexploded ordnance and similar devices submerged during the Viet Nam War.

As an explosive ordnance disposal diver and JSDF member, I am proud to have completed my mission in an environment of differing language, customs, and culture, while contributing to building trust and strengthening relations bilaterally.

Amid growing global instability in the international situation, I felt strongly that building trust between people through programs such as this activity would create a pathway to future cooperation in the international community.

The author conducting diving drills with officer trainees at an outdoor swimming pool of the Viet Nam People's Navy (left)

Underwater disposal instructor, Minesweeping, 1st Service School
Explosive ordnance disposal diver (EOD)

Petty Officer First Class (MSDF)
NASU Hayato
1 Minesweeping, 1st Service School
2 Etajima Area (Etajima, Hiroshima)
3 Explosive ordnance disposal diver

July 26 to August 12

Captain (GSDF) **TAKATANI Daichi**
1 Wrestling Section, JSDF Physical Training School
2 Camp Asaka
3 Transportation (Nerima, Tokyo)
4 Silver medal in Wrestling Freestyle 74kg

Petty Officer Second Class (MSDF)
SATO Taishu
1 Modern Pentathlon Section, JSDF Physical Training School
2 Camp Asaka
3 Physical trainer (Nerima, Tokyo)
4 Silver medal in Modern Pentathlon

First Lieutenant (GSDF) **NIIZOE Saki**
1 Judo Section, JSDF Physical Training School
2 Camp Asaka
3 Transportation (Nerima, Tokyo)
4 Silver medal in Judo Mixed Team

4 5 6

July 31

Engaged in Disaster Relief Operation Following Heavy Rain in Sakata City and Tozawa Village, Mogami District in Yamagata Prefecture

I work as a relief worker for the 20th Infantry Regiment. Following heavy rain hitting Sakata City and Tozawa Village, Mogami District, along with other areas in Yamagata Prefecture in July 2024, I was engaged in disaster relief operations in the area. As a relief worker, I accompanied the 3rd Company, which confirmed the safety of people in isolated areas of Sakata and transported relief supplies. When I was ordered to be dispatched, as a female JSDF personnel member, I headed to the area with the desire to quickly bring relief to people, especially the women, children, and elderly who had been affected by the disaster. Through my activities at that time, I realized that I was fulfilling my role as an JSDF member by providing health care support to the people affected and other JSDF personnel. I hope to leverage this experience for my own personal growth and to continue to pursue my duties as a member of the medical team.

The author carrying out health checks on other personnel

The author during training at the camp

Sergeant First Class (GSDF) **SATO Masaki**
1 20th Infantry Regiment
2 Camp Jinmachi (Higashine, Yamagata)
3 Medical

GSDF MSDF ASDF Administrative officials, etc.

Rank Name
1 Working unit 3 Field / Position
2 Location

(Note) Rank and workplace are correct as of March 31, 2025

Success of JSDF Physical Training School Medalists, and Their Experiences and Thoughts on Winning a Medal

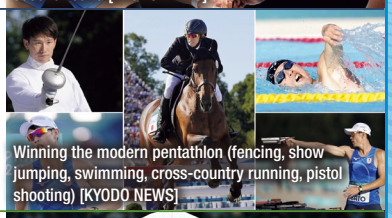
After securing my place in the Paris Olympics, I focused on meeting daily targets rather than aiming for a medal. I valued the new version of myself that emerged through a process of thinking about what I lacked and what I needed to work on, and working on those points. I realized that I was able to perform at wrestling thanks to the help of many people, which once again imbued me with a sense of gratitude.

Rather than keeping this experience just for myself, I want to keep working hard so that many others can benefit from this experience and leverage it in various situations.

Won by technical superiority over Cuban athlete in the second round [KYODO NEWS]

What ignited the fire inside me most was the time I was a modern pentathlon official at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics while still an active athlete. Watching the athletes competing on the grand stage right in front of my eyes instilled a strong desire to compete myself the next time and win a medal as a representative of Japan. There were many ups and downs between 2021 and the 2024 Paris Olympics, but as a result of training daily with a deadly fervor and repeated hard work, I qualified for the Paris Olympics, even managing to win a silver medal in Paris.

I would like to thank my family and team who supported me all the way, as well as each and every person who has cheered me on and stood by me.



Winning the modern pentathlon (fencing, show jumping, swimming, cross-country running, pistol shooting) [KYODO NEWS]

The Paris Olympics was a bittersweet time for me. I had been preparing to win the gold medal since being selected for the national team a year prior to the Olympics, but I was not able to achieve the results I was hoping for in the individual competition. Although I was feeling completely miserable, I was able to rouse my spirits in the team competition to help win the silver medal.

On my return to Japan, I was warmly welcomed home by my JSDF colleagues, feeling relief after having missed out on a medal in the individual competition. At the same time, I felt proud once again to have competed as a JSDF athlete. I would like to leverage this experience in my efforts to train future JSDF athletes.

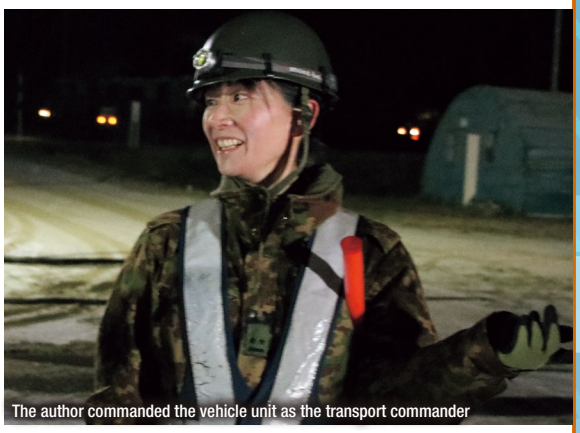
Scene from match in which the author won by ippon against an athlete from Serbia in the Mixed Team Quarter-Finals [KYODO NEWS]

7 8 9

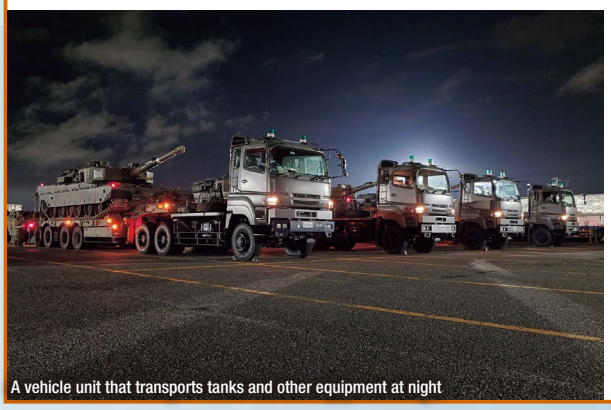
September to November

Alongside Fellow Personnel

The JGSDF Exercise 2024 was the first field training exercise for all units of the GSDF in three years, since 2021. The Ground Staff Office and units under the Ground Component Command carried out training as a sequence of actions from the operations preparation stage to the operations stage on a national scale. In particular, field training included the mobile deployment of divisions and brigades, the establishment and maintenance of a logistics support posture, and similar activities. I participated in the exercise as a transport commander. Normally, I am engaged in transportation within Hokkaido island, but in this exercise, I was responsible for transportation across the sea to Honshu island. Our unit is responsible for transporting tanks and other large pieces of equipment, which requires high-level maneuvering skills. The unit actively transports equipment overnight between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. I am proud that I was able to complete the transportation mission while sharing the highs and lows with my fellow personnel.



The author commanded the vehicle unit as the transport commander



A vehicle unit that transports tanks and other equipment at night

First Lieutenant (GSDF)
TAKAHASHI Rinka
1 314th Transportation Company, Northern Army Transportation
2 Camp Higashi-Chitose (Chitose, Hokkaido)
3 Transportation

This Year in Defense

(Voices of Personnel Serving in Japan and Overseas in FY2024)

September 23

Overview of Quick Reaction Alert against Airspace Intrusion at the Time

On Monday, September 23, 2024, a Russian IL-38 patrol aircraft intruded into Japanese airspace north of Rebun Island, Hokkaido three times. As a fighter pilot tasked with the mission of airspace intrusion countermeasures, in close coordination with the weapon controller on the ground, I gave the warning using flares for the first time as part of the ASDF.

Although the intrusions by the Russian aircraft were limited to approximately 30 seconds to one minute each, we were able to take action without hesitation because we usually conduct airspace intrusion countermeasure missions and flight training based on our understanding of relevant laws and regulations. I am sure that all pilots in the unit I belong to would have certainly been able to respond in the same way.

As we conducted the airspace intrusion countermeasure mission carried out in an orderly fashion, including the use of flares as a warning, we will demonstrate both domestically and internationally the MOD/JSDF's willingness and ability to resolutely protect the peace and independence of Japan.

The photograph is for illustrative purposes only.

Undisclosed Undisclosed
1 Northern Air Defense Force
2 Undisclosed
3 Pilot

10 11 12

October 4

Engaged in Mission to Transport Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas

In October 2024, I was assigned as a loadmaster of a C-2 transport aircraft to transport Japanese nationals and others from the tense situation in the Lebanese Republic to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Considering the feelings of evacuees, I wanted to be there for them so that I could relieve some of their anxiety and help them feel at ease on board the aircraft. With this in mind, I guided them through the flight and worked to complete the mission while taking care of their physical condition during the mission. When I arrived at our destination in Jordan and received words of gratitude from them, I felt a sense of relief and accomplishment.

The author (right) discusses guidance for Japanese nationals on board the aircraft

Female JSDF personnel engaged in the mission (front row) and C-2 transport aircraft

Many female JSDF personnel were assigned to this mission and actively contributed with their unique perspectives and approaches as women. As the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative further expands the opportunities for female JSDF personnel to play an active role in their duties, I will continue to strive for daily training to complete future missions to be assigned.

Staff Sergeant (ASDF) EZAWA Kiho
1 403rd Tactical Airlift Squadron, Flight Group, 3rd Tactical Airlift Wing
2 Miho Air Base (Sakaiminato, Tottori)
3 Air transport (tactical transport)

GSDF MSDF ASDF Administrative officials, etc.

Rank Name
1 Working unit
2 Location
3 Field / Position

(Note) Rank and workplace are correct as of March 31, 2025

October 20

Completed F-35B Shipboard Operational Testing

From October to November 2024, I was engaged in F-35B shipboard operational testing as Aviation Officer on board JS Kaga. Tests were conducted in the waters around San Diego, U.S., with the support of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and others. We collected various types of data, not only on short take-off and vertical landing on the vessel, but also on all aspects of shipboard operations, including transfers from the flight deck to the hangar. As Aviation Officer, I worked with U.S. officials in the air traffic control center during testing to ensure the testing was carried out safely and smoothly, building a strong bond of trust with the U.S. side through repeatedly coordinating together. I also gave various instructions on Japan-U.S. aircraft operations. As someone who was actually there on the ground, I would be delighted if the results of this testing lead to the on-board operation of F-35Bs on Izumo-class destroyers, which the ASDF has plans to introduce, and to enhancing Japan’s defense capabilities, in addition to strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Commander (MSDF) KUROGI Michitaka
1 JS Kaga
2 Kure Area (Kure, Hiroshima)
3 Rotary-wing pilot

F-35B belonging to the U.S. Navy VX-23 resting its wings in the hangar of JS Kaga

Japanese and U.S. testing officials engaged in flight testing from the air traffic control center

1 2 3

January 20

Facing the Turbulent U.S. at the Front Lines

I have been working at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. since June 2024. As new policies are introduced one after another under President Trump, I spend my days exchanging opinions with the Pentagon, along with various related parties including think tank experts, members of the U.S. defense industry, and congressional staff, in an effort to explore the background behind the policies and think over how Japan should respond to them.

Through my interactions with such “Washingtonians,” I have come to understand firsthand the high expectations for Japan in respect of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and I am keenly aware of the enormity of Japan’s responsibility as part of the international community. Facing the turbulent U.S. at the front lines, I would like to do my utmost, however minor, toward achieving a “new golden age of Japan-U.S. relations.”

Councilor KAWAI Junya
1 Embassy of Japan in the United States of America
2 Washington D.C.
3 Political Section

With the White House in the background

Part I

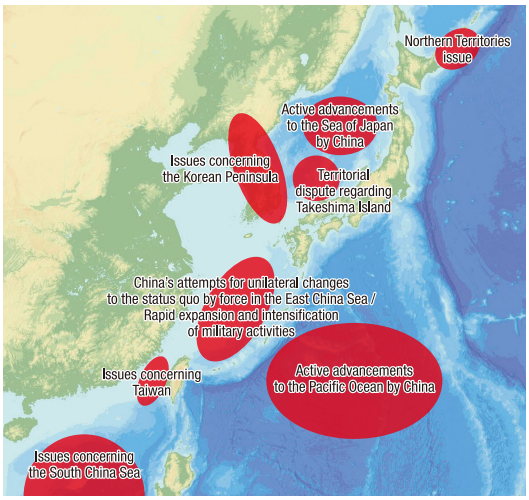
Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Overview

Chapter 1

International Society Faces Its Greatest Trial of the Postwar Era

- 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. In particular, the inter-state competition between the United States and China is likely 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 warfare, which combines military and non-military means, may become even more sophisticated.



Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Increasingly Severe Security Situation in the Indo-Pacific Region

- Such global security environment conditions and challenges are particularly prominent in the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is located, and are likely to intensify still further in future.
- It cannot be ruled out that a serious situation similar to the 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 other measures. As an ally of the United states — a NATO member — and a country 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

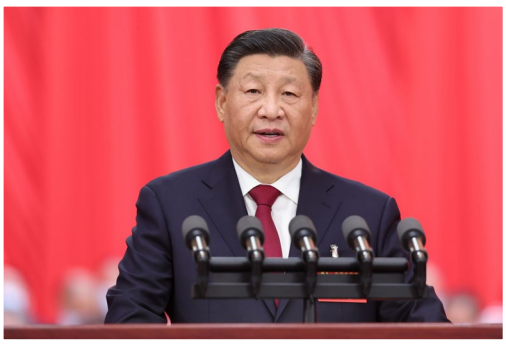
The United States - Establishment of the Second Trump Administration

- As a result of the U.S. presidential election held in November 2024, former President Trump was elected again as the 47th president. The second Trump administration was established in January 2025.
- Even prior to taking office, President Trump had been making statements on security issues such as the situations in Ukraine, the Middle East, and Taiwan. Since the establishment of his second administration, President Trump has been actively engaged in a variety of efforts along with the Secretary of Defense and others.
- Developments in the field of U.S. security have a significant impact on the security environment of the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is located, and future developments will continue to draw close attention.

President Trump's inauguration ceremony in January 2025 [EPA/Jiji]

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 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.
- In 2024, a series of incidents occurred, including a Chinese military aircraft intruding into Japan's territorial airspace in August, and the navigation of a Chinese Navy aircraft carrier through a maritime area close to Japan's territorial waters in September. China's intensified military activities have created a situation that could seriously impact Japan's security, which is a cause of grave concern.
- In May 2025, a helicopter intruded Japan's territorial airspace after taking off from a China Coast Guard vessel that was intruding into Japan's territorial waters near the Senkaku Islands. China has been relentlessly continuing its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force around the Senkaku Islands, leading to a matter of grave concern.
- China has intensified its military activities around Taiwan. China conducted military exercises in the sea and airspace several times. It is believed that through the series of activities, China seeks to create a fait accompli where the People's Liberation Army (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.



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

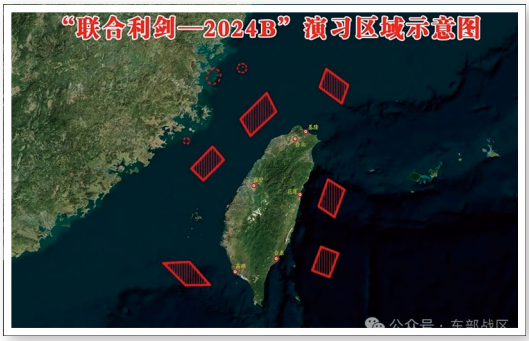
Image released by China at the time of the ICBM launch (September 2024) [EPA/Jiji]

- China is further strengthening its 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.

Part I Security Environment Surrounding Japan

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

- The political, economic, and military competition between the U.S. 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 growth 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. China has further intensified its military activities around Taiwan.
- There is growing concern over China's pursuit of unification through gray-zone military activities. Some point out that military intimidation, blockades, and other such means are currently China's main options to be used against Taiwan. In the event of a blockade of Taiwan, there is a possibility that China will deploy its coast guard at the forefront to carry out the blockade within the gray zone.



Exercise area in the vicinity of Taiwan announced by the Chinese military (October 2024) [Jiji]

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 weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).
- North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests in the past and is believed to possess 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 nuclear warhead.

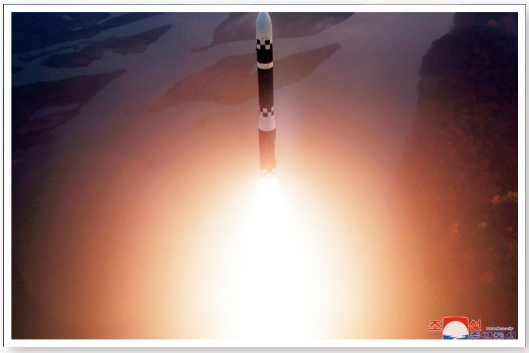


Image released by North Korea when it launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile “Hwasong-19” [Jiji Press Photo]

- Since 2023, North Korea has conducted launches of the solid-fuel propelled intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-class “Hwasong-18” and “Hwasong-19” 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.

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 (left) during his visit to Russia's Kursk oblast (March 12, 2025) [AFP/Jiji]

Other Regions

- Following the outbreak of conflict between Israel and Hamas, clashes also erupted between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and others. In 2024, a series of attacks and retaliation occurred between Israel and Iran, and heightened tensions between the two sides are ongoing today.
- In Syria, anti-government forces led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham launched an offensive against the Syrian government military and seized control of the capital city of Damascus in December 2024. The Assad regime collapsed, and it was agreed that governmental authority would be provisionally transferred to the "Syrian Salvation Government."

A school building in southern Israel heavily damaged by an Iranian missile strike (October 1, 2024) [AFP/Jiji]

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 cyberattacks.
- 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.

Pyongyang General Control Center of the National Aerospace Technology Administration [Korean Central News Agency - Jiji]

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.

NATO cyber exercise [Website of NATO]

Part II

Japan's Security and Defense Policy

Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense

Chapter 1

- The first priority in protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people of Japan should be the development of active diplomacy. It is essential to coordinate with like-minded countries and promote multilateral cooperation with 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.

Defense Minister Nakatani inspects the special guard of honor at his inauguration (October 2024)

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 security-related 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 in FY2027 for both the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and complementary initiatives reaches 2% of FY2022's GDP (approximately 11 trillion yen).

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 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 stand-off defense capabilities, which are key to deterring invasion of Japan.

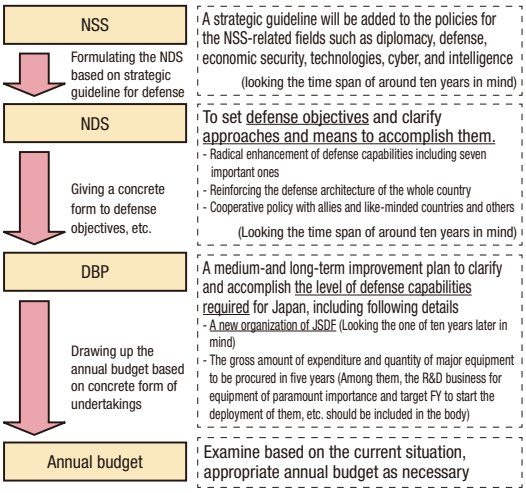


Fig. II-1-3-1 (Relationship among the NSS, the NDS, the DBP, the Fiscal Year Budget)

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 where it 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 10 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.
- The expenditure target for the buildup of defense capability required under the implementation of the DBP for the five years from FY2023 through FY2027 shall be approximately 43 trillion yen.

Defense Buildup and the Budget

Chapter 3

- With the basic understanding that Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, the GOJ has continued to allocate the necessary and sufficient budget for the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities in FY2025.
- On an annual expenditure basis, the GOJ steadily increased the budget, taking into account project progress and budget execution status, with a total of 8,474.8 billion yen.
- On a contract basis, the GOJ allocated 8,433.2 billion yen by adding up the projects scheduled to begin in FY2025.
- The seven fields for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities continue to be advanced. Priority was given to the buildup of various stand-off missiles, the construction of a satellite constellation, and the development of the next-generation defense communications satellite.
- Based on the "Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Japan Self-Defense Forces Personnel," the FY2025 budget allocates the necessary expenses for related projects.
- To reinforce defense capabilities, efforts will be made to secure financial resources, including tax measures.
- The total amount of expenses for the Defense Buildup Program and its "complementary initiatives" in FY2025 is set at 9.9 trillion yen, equivalent to 1.8% of Japan's GDP at the time of the formulation of the NSS (FY2022).

(1)	Stand-off Defense Capabilities	•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	•Strengthening our capabilities to respond to increasingly diverse and complex airborne threats such as missiles Shipbuilding of an Aegis System-Equipped Vessel (Note)
(3)	Unmanned Defense Capabilities	•Strengthening our capabilities, e.g., via intelligence gathering and combat support with unmanned assets Preparation of UAV for reconnaissance (for mid-range) (Note)
(4)	Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities	•Strengthening space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, land, sea and air capabilities necessary for combat by fusing all capabilities Development of Stand-off Electronic Warfare Aircraft (Note)
(5)	Command and Control and Intelligence-related Functions	•Strengthening command and control and intelligence-related functions to accelerate and refine decision-making Acquisition of Signals Intelligence Aircraft (RC-2)
(6)	Mobile Deployment Capabilities/ Civil Protection	•Strengthening maritime and air transport capabilities to quickly maneuver and deploy the necessary forces •Implementing civil protection by utilizing the above capabilities Acquisition of transport vessels
(7)	Sustainability and Resiliency	•Preparation of necessary and sufficient ammunition, guided missiles and fuel from an early stage •Securing expenditures for acquiring equipment parts, equipment repairing and improving the resiliency of facilities Securing the ammunition storage facilities (Note)

The (note) in the figure is an image.

Fig. II-2-2-2 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/JSDF develops and executes policies based on the fundamental stance discussed at the National Security Council, which is a part of the Cabinet.
- To fulfill the duties of the JSDF rapidly and effectively, the MOD/JSDF has adopted a joint operations system that operates the Ground SDF (GSDF), the Maritime SDF (MSDF) and the Air SDF (ASDF) integrally.
- The "JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC)," headed by the Commander of the JSDF Joint Operations Command, was established in Ichigaya in March 2025 to build a system that enables seamless cross-domain operations at all stages from peacetime to contingency, with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations of each JSDF service.
- This will allow the unification of the command of joint operations by the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, as well as building of capacity for cross-domain operations on a daily basis.

The JJOC activation ceremony (March 2025)

Framework for the JSDF Activities

Chapter 5

- Under the JSDF law and other laws and regulations, the JSDF defends Japan and also maintains public order, responds to important influence situations, and engages in international peace cooperation activities.

Part III

Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

Chapter 1

Responses to Invasion of Japan

- Surrounded by water and possessing an extensive coastline, Japan has numerous remote islands far from the main island, a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and a broad continental shelf. It is a challenge to defend to the end the lives, physical well-being, and property of its people, as well as its territorial land, airspace, and waters, and abundant resources widely distributed in these areas. In addition, as Japan relies on overseas trade for much of its resources and food, it is essential to reinforce the free and open maritime order and ensure the freedom and safety of navigation and flight.
- The MOD/JSDF organically integrates operational capabilities across land, sea, and air domains, as well as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. By coordinating GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF units to conduct joint operations, they deter and eliminate invasions of Japan.
- Moreover, in addition to responding to invasions as well as unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts, the MOD/JSDF is also continuously conducting intelligence and surveillance from peacetime to maintain a posture to respond swiftly and appropriately to any airspace violations and territorial intrusions.
- In FY2024, ASDF aircraft scrambled 704 times, including 464 times for Chinese aircraft and 237 times for Russian aircraft. In response to airspace violations by Chinese aircraft in August and Russian aircraft in September 2024, as well as airspace violations by Chinese aircraft in May 2025, ASDF aircraft scrambled and took appropriate action.
- Furthermore, necessary measures are taken by the Defense Intelligence Headquarters, which plays a central role in addressing integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension. This type of warfare influences people's perceptions, impacts public opinion, and affects government decision-making through means such as the spread of disinformation and the spread of information aimed at eroding trust in government and dividing society.

ASDF fighters engaged in a scramble

MSDF destroyer directly escorting a vessel in the Gulf of Aden (in the background of photograph)

- In addition, Japan continues efforts to respond to North Korea's "illicit ship-to-ship transfers" in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions. The MOD/JSDF also continues its efforts on counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and on the safety of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East, in order to ensure the stable use of critical sea lines.

Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities

- Japan's defense capabilities going forward will be fundamentally reinforced with an emphasis on seven fields to enhance deterrence and response capabilities, focused on adversaries' capabilities and new ways of warfare. These seven fields are as follows: stand-off defense capabilities, integrated air and missile defense capabilities, unmanned defense capabilities, cross-domain operation capabilities, command and control and intelligence-related functions, mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, and sustainability and resiliency.
- To bolster stand-off defense capabilities, which enable responses to invading vessels and landing forces from outside their threat zone, the FY2025 budget includes the deployment of Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surface-launched variants) and the acquisition of U.S.-made Tomahawks. In addition, Japan will begin building a satellite constellation to gather target information necessary for operating these missiles.

Signing of the Project Arrangement concerning Japan-U.S. cooperative development of GPI (May 2024)

- To respond to increasingly diverse, complex, and sophisticated aerial threats, integrated air and missile defense capabilities will be strengthened. This includes the construction of Aegis System-Equipped Vessels and the start of Japan-U.S. cooperative development of a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) to counter Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs).
- With regard to unmanned assets which can be operated in a dangerous environment and continuously for a long period of time, Japan decided to introduce the MQ-9B (SeaGuardian) long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle in FY2024. Japan is also planning to develop unmanned aircraft that will accompany and support its next-generation fighter aircraft, which are currently being co-developed with the United Kingdom and Italy.

- With regard to cross-domain operation capabilities, Japan will reinforce its Space Domain Awareness (SDA), including the establishment of the Space Operations Wing (tentative name) in FY2025. Cyberattack response capabilities will be further strengthened in coordination with whole-of-government initiatives. Japan will also continue to reinforce its electronic warfare capabilities and electromagnetic spectrum management functions.
- For command and control and intelligence-related functions, Japan will develop the MOD Cloud (tentative name) to enable unified command and control for the JSDF services, and also conduct a large-scale remodeling of the ASDF's Japan Aerospace Defense Ground Environment (JADGE). Efforts will also be made to build a seamless information gathering system by appropriately using various means, including the deployment of defense attachés.
- For mobile deployment capabilities, Japan is advancing the deployment of necessary units particularly in the southwestern region and promoting the acquisition of transport vessels and aircraft. In FY2024, Japan newly established the Japan Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group (in March 2025) as a joint force of the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF.
- With regard to civil protection, the MOD/JSDF will cooperate with various relevant ministries and agencies, including the police, fire departments, and the Japan Coast Guard, assess the damage, save lives, and support the evacuation of residents.
- As initiatives to reinforce sustainability and resilience, Japan promotes efforts to secure ammunition and fuel, increase the number of operationally available equipment, and improve the resiliency of defense facilities.

Participation in the multilateral space exercise "AsterX" (March 2025)
[Courtesy of the French Air and Space Force]

The Maritime Transport Group's LCU Nihonbare (October 2024 at the time of its launch)

Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country

- In addition to fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities, the GOJ builds an overall architecture for national defense by integrating its national power, which includes diplomatic, intelligence, economic and technological capabilities and systematically combining all policy measures.
- To this end, the GOJ is working to advance reinforcement of comprehensive architecture for national defense by promoting initiatives in four fields: research and development, public infrastructure development, cybersecurity, and international cooperation to enhance the deterrence capabilities, etc. of Japan and like-minded countries.
- In addition, continuous peacetime monitoring and surveillance, initiatives related to the space domain, and responses to large-scale disasters and the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas (R/TJNO) are also efforts that require the full power of the nation. Thus, the MOD/JSDF will carry out various activities in close cooperation with relevant ministries, agencies, and others.

Aerial firefighting operation in response to a forest fire in Ofunato City, Iwate Prefecture (February 2025)

- With regard to cybersecurity, in response to the enactment of the Cyber Response Capability Strengthening Act and necessary arrangement of relevant Acts in May 2025, the MOD/JSDF will actively contribute to the Government's efforts in cooperation with related ministries and agencies.
- Furthermore, with regard to disaster relief operations, in FY2024, the JSDF continued its operation in response to the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, and also cooperated with related ministries and agencies in disaster relief efforts for heavy rain, landslide, and forest fire disasters.
- For prompt and appropriate implementation of rescue or transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, the JSDF maintains readiness to dispatch its units swiftly. In FY2024, the JSDF transported Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic.

Training and Exercises to Reinforce Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

- The MOD/JSDF actively conducts various high-level bilateral/multilateral training and exercises, and various exercises involving other ministries, agencies and local governments to further improve deterrence and response capabilities.
- From September to November 2024, the JGSDF Exercise 2024 was conducted with participation from GSDF units across the country. Through a series of actions rehearsed by various units from the operations preparation stage to the operations stage, the exercise aimed to improve mission capabilities and operational effectiveness, and contributed to enhancing deterrence and response capabilities.

JGSDF Exercise 2024 (October 2024)

Part III

Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Japan-U.S. Alliance

Chapter 2

Outline of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

- Japan will maintain its peace, security, and independence centered on the Security Arrangements with the world's dominant military power, the U.S., with which it shares basic values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and a capitalist economy, as well as interest in maintaining the peace and security of the world; and has strong economic ties.

Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (March 2025)

Strengthening the Joint Deterrence and Response Capabilities of Japan and the U.S.

- Japan's NDS and the U.S. National Defense Strategy are consistent in prioritizing the prevention of unilateral changes to the status quo by force through integrating all approaches and means.
- Japan will further deepen discussions with the U.S. on each country's respective roles, missions, and capabilities to further reinforce Japan-U.S. joint deterrence capabilities.

Enhancement of Alliance Coordination Function

- Japan and the U.S. established the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) to seamlessly and effectively implement a well-aligned Japan-U.S. response.
- Japan and the U.S, have coordinated closely while utilizing the ACM in response to situations such as the Kumamoto Earthquake and the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, North Korea's ballistic missile launches, and Chinese activities in the waters and airspace surrounding the Senkaku Islands.

Strengthening of Joint Response Foundation

- Japan will fundamentally reinforce efforts related to information security and cybersecurity so that Japan and the U.S. can strengthen information sharing at all levels.
- Japan will further reinforce defense equipment and technology cooperation through joint analysis and joint research on cutting-edge technology, joint development and production of defense equipment, improvement in mutual interchangeability, shared use and reinforcement of various networks, expansion of production and maintenance capabilities of U.S. military equipment in Japan, and reinforcement of supply chains.

Japan-U.S. joint press conference by General Yoshida, Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan, and Admiral Stephen Koehler, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (October 2024)

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

- It is necessary to maintain the presence of the U.S. Forces in Japan (USFJ) and its readiness to make rapid and agile responses in case of emergency in Japan and its surrounding areas, so that the Japan-U.S. Alliance can sufficiently function as deterrence contributing to the defense of Japan and regional peace and stability.
- Japan will steadily advance efforts toward the realignment of the USFJ to further reinforce the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, while also mitigating the impact on local communities such as Okinawa.

Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises

- The Japan-U.S. Alliance is essential to Japan's national security, and Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises play a significant role in enhancing Japan's deterrence and response capabilities.
- The JSDF has been consistently conducting bilateral training involving each services as well as Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercises (field training exercises and command post exercises) to improve the JSDF's tactical skills and strengthen collaboration with the U.S. Forces, demonstrating the unified commitment and capacity of Japan and the U.S. for achieving peace and stability in the region.

FY2024 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercise "Keen Sword 25" (October 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/JSDF will promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges to realize FOIP.
- The MOD/JSDF advances high-level exchanges, bilateral/multilateral exercises, capacity building, and defense equipment and technology cooperation with countries in various regions, including the Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.
- The MOD/JSDF will also further advance 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 continues to promote its initiatives on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at both the domestic and international level, and contributes to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and, by extension, to the international community as a whole.
- For Japan as a maritime nation, strengthening a free and open maritime order and ensuring the freedom and safety of navigation and flight are essential. The MOD/JSDF will promote initiatives related to maritime security, including the monitoring of maritime situations and counter-piracy operations.

The 11th ADMM-Plus (November 2024)

Japan-UK-Italy Defense Ministerial Meeting (October 2024)

Initiatives for International Peace Cooperation Activities

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

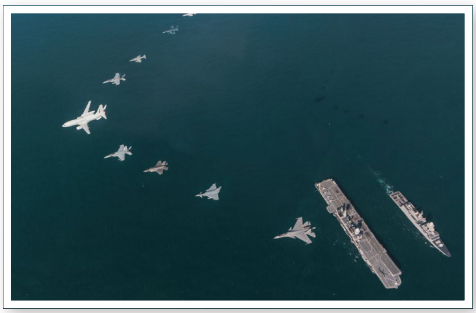
Dispatched JSDF personnel operating at the UNMISS force headquarters

Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

- The proliferation of WMDs 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, poses an imminent challenge to international peace and stability.
- The MOD/JSDF will actively participate in the development of international systems and training related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries

- As efforts toward realizing FOIP, Japan will actively promote bilateral/multilateral exercises with allies and like-minded countries throughout the Indo-Pacific region.
- In particular, Japan will work to create a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts, by maintaining and improving the capabilities and skills of each country through common efforts such as bilateral/multilateral exercises with allied and like-minded countries, and by strengthening deterrence and response capabilities through collaboration and cooperation, thereby creating a synergistic effect.



"Pitch Black 2024" Multilateral Exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (July 2024)

Part IV Reinforcing the Foundation for JSDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities

Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel

Chapter 1

Improvement of Treatment for JSDF Personnel

- To truly realize the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, it is essential to stably secure outstanding JSDF personnel. To this end, it is necessary to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa period, in which the generations, who will be responsible for Japan's future defense capabilities, can perform demanding duties with peace of mind and take pride and honor in choosing a career as JSDF personnel.
- In light of this situation, a variety of measures are being implemented, such as improvement of compensation by accounting for the unique nature of the duties and working environment; enhancement of conditions for securing a wide range of personnel including enlisted personnel; and improvement of treatment for JSDF Reserve Personnel and others, including the unprecedented introduction and raising of more than 30 allowances, and a review of appropriate conferment for distinguished service with decorations.

Improvement of Living and Work Environments

- To enhance the overall performance of the JSDF as an organization, it is essential to build an environment that improves both job satisfaction and ease of working, where each JSDF personnel member feels a sense of purpose in their work.
- To this end, the MOD/JSDF will take initiatives that include reforming organizational culture, converting shared quarters in barracks into private rooms, improving the living and working environments of ship crews, improvement of housing environments, promoting the development of the communication environment, and improving access to bases and garrisons located in areas with limited public transportation.

Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans

- Given that many JSDF personnel retire at the age of 56 due to the early retirement system, eliminating anxiety about post-retirement life is a key issue for securing personnel. It is essential to establish a fulfilling lifetime career plan that ensures and increases the post-retirement income of JSDF personnel who leave service at a young age, allowing them to devote themselves to their duties with peace of mind.
- To this end, the MOD/JSDF will consider the expansion of re-employment opportunities, the raise of the mandatory retirement age, the raise of the amounts of Compensation for Retirees under Young-Age Retirement, and the utilization of retired JSDF personnel as external human resources.

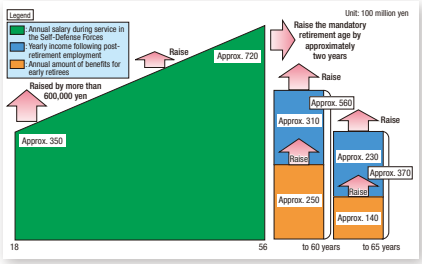


Fig. IV-1-1 Increase in the lifetime income of JSDF personnel (image) Model case of the current income for a member who enlisted as a private and retired as a sergeant major

Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 2

- In July 2024, the Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base, chaired by the State Minister of Defense, was established. Taking into account various social issues stemming from population decline and recent technological trends including AI, the Expert Panel released an interim report outlining measures to reinforce the human resource base essential for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities.
- The report presented three directions for initiatives: (i) Enhancing the appeal of the profession, including in terms of treatment, (ii) Enhancing unit capabilities through labor-saving and more unmanned systems utilizing AI and other such means, and (iii) Utilizing external human resources, including retired personnel and the private sector.

Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 3

Initiatives to Reinforce the Human Resource Base

- The core element of defense capability is JSDF personnel. To demonstrate defense capability, the MOD/JSDF will secure the necessary personnel and reinforce the human resource base to create an environment that enables all JSDF personnel to demonstrate their own abilities while maintaining high morale and pride.
- As a new initiative, the MOD/JSDF has newly established the Officer Candidate Sergeant position, for which individuals are recruited to become future officers after serving approximately five years as enlisted personnel. Its recruitment has begun in 2025. Furthermore, with regard to fixed-term JSDF personnel who are appointed for two- or three-year terms, the existing JSDF Personnel Candidate System will be abolished. A new type of fixed-term JSDF personnel will be established, for which individuals will be recruited as JSDF personnel from the outset. Its recruitment is scheduled to begin in FY2026.

- To improve the treatment of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others, measures include an increase in allowance, expansion of the Continuous Service Incentive Allowance, and the establishment of new subsidies for JSDF Reserve Personnel and others who run their own businesses such as sole proprietors.
- To ensure that salaries reflect the special nature of the duties and working environment of JSDF personnel, there is the aim to revise the salary schedule for JSDF personnel. In addition, to improve treatment in order to secure enlisted personnel and others, new subsidies will be introduced for general candidates for enlistment (upper) and candidates for JSDF personnel to support barracks life and other expenses. As a measure that lasts until the new type of fixed-term JSDF personnel is established, the lump-sum allowance for enlisted JSDF personnel will be increased.

Securing the Cyber Workforce

- The environment surrounding the human resources recruiting of the MOD/JSDF is becoming increasingly difficult, while cybersecurity is a common challenge for the entire world. In light of the increased importance of a cyber workforce, it is essential to integrate cyber workforce development initiatives with national initiatives.
- To this end, the MOD/JSDF will (i) ensure consistency in policies related to recruitment and development of human resources and promote consideration of human resources measures and cross-organizational cooperation related to human resources, and (ii) clarify the view on the cyber workforce, proactively engage individuals aspiring to join the MOD/JSDF as well as external cyber professionals, and develop and deepen cooperative relationships with external entities to secure the cyber workforce.

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 can fully demonstrate their abilities while maintaining high morale and pride. To that end, the MOD/JSDF is promoting working from home and creation of paperless work environments, implementing stringent management of work hours, encouraging male personnel to take parental leave, and establishing a comfortable work environment for all personnel, etc.
- In order to promote the participation of female personnel, the MOD/JSDF is undertaking efforts that include expanding the recruitment and promotion of women, development of educational infrastructure, and creation of female-only quarters in barracks and MSDF vessels, and the like with a view to increasing the number of female JSDF personnel.

Developing an Environment with Zero Tolerance for Harassment of Any Kind

- The MOD/JSDF is working on the response to harassment cases and prevention measures with a sense of urgency. These efforts include disseminating regular messages from the Minister of Defense, reviewing education, and raising awareness of JSDF personnel by using education opportunities, as well as establishing standard disciplinary actions across the MOD to ensure transparency and fairness in these disciplinary actions. Continued efforts will also be made to expand the counseling systems and raise awareness of contact information for these systems.

Support for Personnel and Their Families

- The MOD/JSDF will promote various mental health measures with a view to preventing suicide among personnel. In the event of large-scale disasters and other events, the MOD/JSDF will cooperate with relevant external groups and others to support JSDF personnel families, which will include receiving cooperation in confirming the safety of the family members of personnel and providing them with assistance in their livelihoods.

Other Initiatives — Chapter 4

Transformation of Medical Functions

- The JSDF medical force needs to be transformed into an organization that not only maintains the health and fitness of JSDF personnel but also saves their lives from the perspective of sustainability and resiliency.
- To this end, the MOD/JSDF promotes the strengthening of medical functions to improve the combat trauma care capabilities with (i) Reinforcement of seamless medical care and transportation systems 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. In particular, the MOD/JSDF will promote studies to establish a system for administering blood transfusions during combat trauma care, and establish a new system to autonomously secure and stockpile blood products.

Reinforcement of Policy-making Function

- For the JSDF to respond to the increasingly severe, complex, and fast-paced strategic environment, strategic and agile defense policy planning and making are required.
- The MOD/JSDF will closely cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies, private research institutions, and private companies centered on the defense industry. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will reinforce its intellectual base by reviewing and reinforcing research systems of the MOD/JSDF, including the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS).

Part V

Bases and Initiatives Necessary to Maintain and Reinforce Defense Capabilities

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

Chapter 1

Reinforcing the Defense Production Base

- Currently, the JSDF can fully demonstrate its capabilities and accomplish its mission of defending Japan only by using equipment that incorporates advanced technologies. Defense production and technology bases are indispensable foundations for securing superior equipment etc.; 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 of the life cycle of defense equipment (research, development, production, sustainment and maintenance, supply, decommissioning, etc.). In this context, defense equipment and the defense industry are inseparable. The Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases was enacted in 2023 in order to take 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 is promoting initiatives to reinforce defense production and technology bases, such as revitalizing the defense industry, building a resilient supply chain, and strengthening defense industrial security.
- In addition, based on the recognition that it is important for the defense business to become one of the core businesses within each company, the MOD is considering the development of a defense industrial strategy that sets out the desirable medium- to long-term direction of the defense industry in order to lead the industry toward becoming stronger and more sustainable.

Reinforcing the Defense Technology Base

- In order to acquire defense equipment required for the new ways of warfare, the use of our domestic technologies is extremely important. The development of scientific technologies and innovations based on Japan's advanced technological capabilities is at the source of its economic and social development and constitutes a key element of its comprehensive national power integral to security. In addition, the active utilization of Japan's advanced technological capabilities developed by both its public and private sectors over the years in the area of national security without being held back by existing approaches is an essential activity for strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense.
- Under the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) announced in December 2022, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy will jointly develop an advanced fighter that ensures future air superiority by bringing together their technologies. The GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO) was established in December 2024 to form an efficient trilateral cooperative framework while sharing development costs and risks.
- The Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute was established under the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) in October 2024 to fundamentally reinforce capabilities that create defense innovations and groundbreaking equipment that can transform the very nature of society. The Institute conducts breakthrough research to create new functions and technologies from a variety of rapidly evolving science and technology by actively introducing new approaches and methods.

Image of a next-generation fighter aircraft

Opening ceremony of the Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute (October 2024)

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

- The transfer of defense equipment and technology 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 by force.
- Japan is improving the capabilities of partner countries' armed forces and maintaining and strengthening medium- to long-term relationships with partner countries by strengthening initiatives for defense equipment and technology cooperation, including the transfer of defense equipment and international joint development. In FY2024, Japan and the U.S., in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, held a Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS), co-led by the Japan MOD and the U.S. Department of Defense. The purpose was to leverage each country's industrial base to meet long-term critical capability needs and maintain readiness.

Equipment Optimization Efforts

- In order to acquire sufficient capabilities for cross-domain operations in view of the aging population with a declining birth rate and the severe fiscal situation, it is essential to further promote initiatives to optimize equipment structure.
- In the underwater and other domains, research began in FY2024 on stealthy, combat-supporting, multi-purpose unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) that selectively carry functions such as warning and surveillance and launching of anti-ship missiles to support manned vessels. In addition, the development of unmanned amphibious vehicles that can act autonomously in amphibious operations and perform missions, including transportation of supplies from the sea to the vicinity of troops, began in FY2024, along with research and development on combat support UAVs that will be collaborating with manned aircraft such as the next-generation fighter aircraft.
- Next, in equipment acquisition, Japan will ensure the necessary quantity and quality for its defense capabilities by appropriately combining the introduction of new, high-performance equipment with the life extension and improvement of existing equipment. In doing so, it will strive to reduce costs and improve cost-effectiveness by enhancing project management throughout the life cycle of equipment, including research and development. In addition, by incorporating advanced civilian technologies, the MOD/JSDF will steadily realize acceleration of defense equipment deployment for areas that could directly affect the JSDF's current and future ways of warfare and are particularly urgent and significant from a policy perspective.
- In response to the issues identified in the interim report of the special defense inspection on submarine repair contracts published in December 2024, a review was conducted to further enhance the effectiveness of cost and system inspections and to expand the scope of contracts requiring the submission of authentic documentation. Through these efforts, the MOD is working to prevent the recurrence of misconduct, enhance fairness and transparency in procurement, and ensure proper contracts.

Initiatives on Coexistence with Local Communities and the Environment — Chapter 2

Measures Concerning Harmony with Local Communities

- Implementing various activities of the MOD/JSDF will not be feasible without the understanding and cooperation of the Japanese people and local governments. Therefore it is necessary to further deepen mutual trust between local communities, Japanese people, and the JSDF.
- For seamless 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 the local communities.

Explanation of the Defense White Paper by Regional Defense Bureaus to local governments

Responding to Environmental Issues Such as Climate Change

- The MOD/JSDF will address and contribute to resolving environmental issues such as climate change. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will promote initiatives that focus more on the coexistence of the JSDF/USFJ facilities/areas with the surrounding areas.
- By the end of September 2024, the MOD/JSDF had completed the replacement and disposal of all aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS in their possession.

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

- The MOD/JSDF is actively conducting PR efforts so that the public can understand its activities and initiatives in various ways, including through the official websites, social media, video streaming, cooperation in editing the PR magazine "MAMOR," coverage support for media outlets, and various events and PR facilities.
- In addition, efforts are also being made to promote the digital management of administrative documents and to appropriately handle administrative document management and responses to information disclosure requests.

The JSDF Marching Festival, which is held as part of the commemorative activities for the JSDF's anniversary (November 2024)

Part I

Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Chapter 1 Overview

Chapter 2 Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine

Chapter 3 Defense Policies of Countries

Chapter 4 Trends and Challenges Facing the International Community Concerning the Space, Cyber, and Electromagnetic Domains and Information Warfare

Chapter 1 Overview

1 Global Security Environment

Current trends in the security environment have several features. First, 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 significant challenges to the free and open international order underpinned by the rule of law. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has revealed this in a most blatant way. The international community is facing its greatest post-war trial yet and has entered a new era of crisis. In addition, the global power balance has significantly changed and interstate competition across the political, economic and military spheres is emerging. The interstate competition between China and the United States in particular is expected to further intensify in various fields.

Second, rapid advances in science and technology are fundamentally changing the paradigm of security. Countries are striving to develop cutting-edge technologies that could dramatically alter the character of warfare and thus prove to become "game changers." The organization of military, methods and means of warfare are changing.

Third, there exists a range of global security challenges such as increasingly serious risks in cyber and other domains, information warfare, including the spread of disinformation, and climate change.

In addition, **gray zone situations** over territories are constantly occurring. It is highly likely that **hybrid warfare**, combining military and non-military means to achieve military objectives, such as information warfare that utilizes the spread of disinformation prior to an armed attack, will be conducted in an even more sophisticated form in the time ahead.

In cyber, maritime, space, and electromagnetic domains and other areas, the risks that impede free access and utilization of these areas are becoming increasingly serious. In particular, the threat of cyberattacks, in which the risk of exposure is relatively low and where attackers have an advantage, is growing rapidly. Cyberattacks have been used constantly to disable or destroy critical infrastructures, interfere in foreign elections, demand ransoms, and steal sensitive information, even in the form of state-sponsored cyberattacks.

Furthermore, addressing those issues not necessarily deemed as security targets in the past, such as supply chain vulnerabilities, increasing threats to critical infrastructures, and leadership struggles over advanced technologies, has also become a major security challenge. As a result, the scope of security has expanded to include the economic sector, making economic measures even more necessary to ensure security.

KEY WORD

Gray Zone Situations

So-called "gray zone" situations simply represent a wide range of situations that are neither peacetime nor wartime.
In a gray zone situation, for example, a country that confronts another over territory, sovereignty or maritime and other economic interests uses some forceful organization to demonstrate its presence in the relevant disputed region in a bid to alter the status quo or force other countries to accept its assertions or demands.

KEY WORD

Hybrid Warfare

The so-called "hybrid warfare" represents methods intentionally blurring the boundaries between the military and non-military realms, forcing affected actors to take complex measures that are not limited to military actions.
The means of hybrid warfare include operations using military units of unidentified nationality, cyberattacks to affect communications and other critical infrastructure, the spread of false information through the internet and the media, and other influential operations. The combination of these measures is considered to amount to hybrid warfare. In hybrid warfare, a country takes measures that are difficult to identify definitively as an "armed attack" based on its outward appearance. It is said that such an approach is taken with the intent to make it difficult for the target country to address the situation, such as delaying the military's initial response, while denying the attacker country's own involvement.

2 Security Environment in the Indo-Pacific Region

The global security environment and challenges articulated above are particularly prominent in the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is situated, and may get still severe in the future. The Indo-Pacific region is the core of global vitality, home to more than half of the world's population. The dynamism of the intersection of the Pacific and the Indian Oceans is a growth engine for the global economy. Japan, situated in this region, is well positioned to benefit from this.

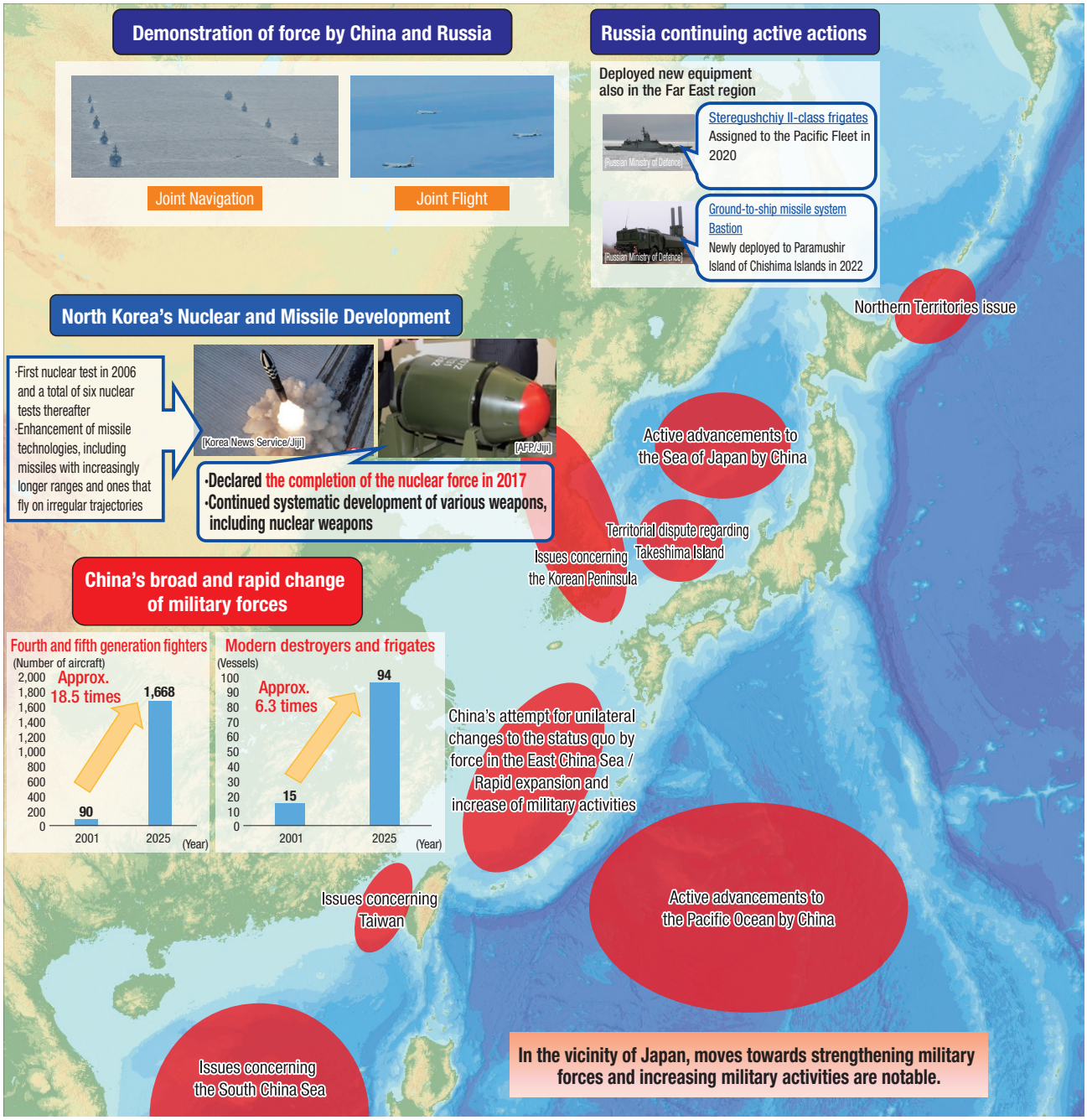
At the same time, the Indo-Pacific region faces a host of security challenges. For example, several nations and regions that possess large military forces, including nuclear weapons, do not share universal values, nor political and economic systems based on such universal values. Furthermore, there exists a complex intertwining of diplomatic and other relations based on historical backgrounds. In the case of Japan, the territorial issues of the Northern Territories and Takeshima, which are inherent territories of Japan, remain unresolved. In addition, Japan faces threats and challenges of various types and intensities, such as unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts in the East and South China Seas and other areas, piracy, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and natural disasters.

Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has easily breached the very foundation of the rules that shape the international order. The possibility cannot be precluded that a similar serious situation may arise in the future in the Indo-Pacific region, especially in East Asia. Across the globe, historical changes in power balances, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, are occurring.

See Fig. I-1-1 (Regional Security Environment Surrounding Japan), Fig. I-1-2 (Military Strength of Major Countries/Regions (approximate numbers)), Fig. I-1-3 (Main Military Forces Surrounding Japan (Approximate Strength))

REFERENCE: Security Environment Surrounding Japan
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/surround/index.html

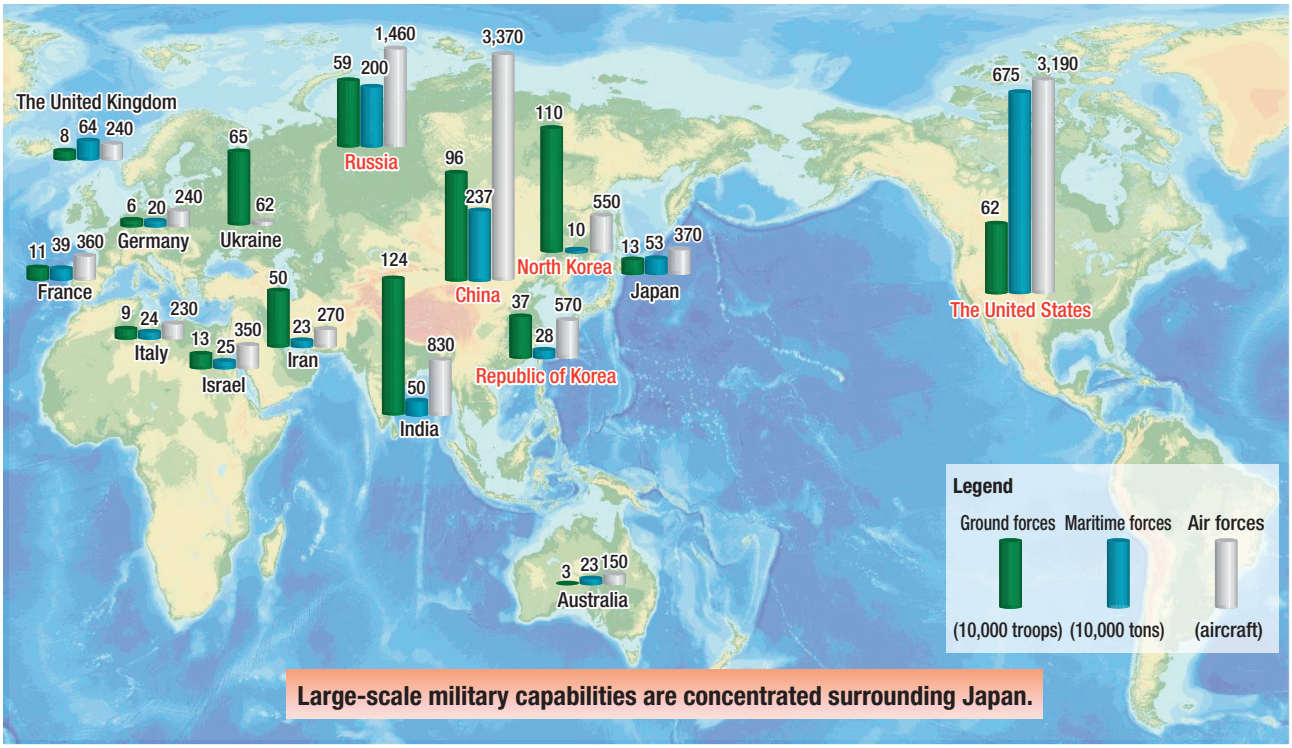
Fig. I-1-1 Regional Security Environment Surrounding Japan



○Indo-Pacific region has many security challenges.
- There are several nations and regions in this region with large military forces, including nuclear weapons, do not share universal values, nor the political and economic systems based on such universal values.
- There exists a complex intertwining of diplomatic and other relations based on historical backgrounds.
- Diverse threats and challenges of various types and intensities exist in this region, such as unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts in the East China Sea and South China Seas and other areas, piracy, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and natural disasters.

(Note) Figures for modern destroyers and frigates for China show the total number of Renhai-class, Luhu-class, Luhai-class, Sovremenny-class, Luyang-class, and Luzhou-class destroyers and Jiangwei-class and Jiangkai-class frigates. Additionally, China has 49 Jiangdao-class corvettes (in 2025).

Fig. I-1-2 Military Strength of Major Countries/Regions (approximate numbers)



Ground forces (10,000 troops)		
1	India	124
2	North Korea	110
3	China	96
4	Ukraine	65
5	United States	62
6	Russia	59
7	Pakistan	56
8	Iran	50
9	Viet Nam	38
10	Republic of Korea	37
-	Japan	13

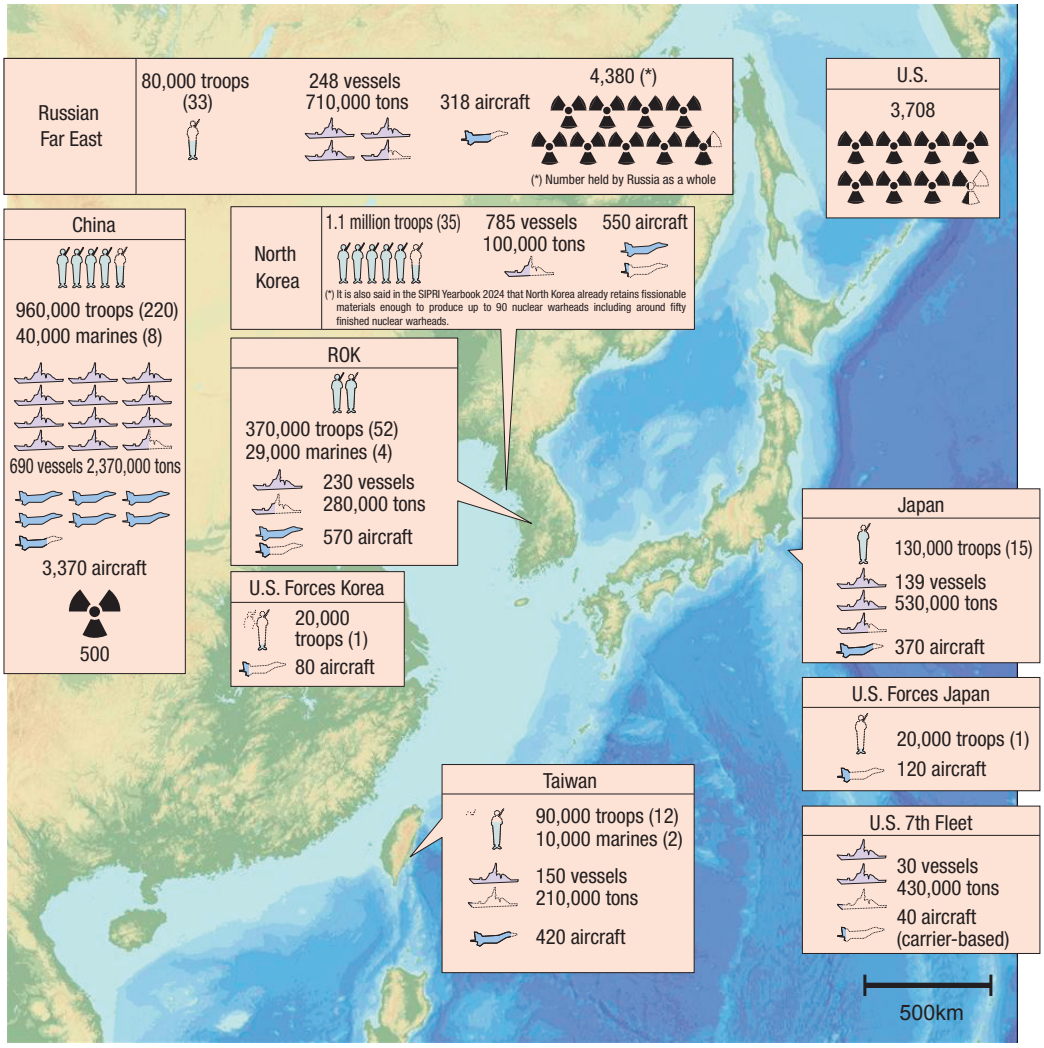
Maritime forces (10,000 tons (vessels))		
1	United States	675 (990)
2	China	237 (690)
3	Russia	200 (1,180)
4	United Kingdom	64 (150)
5	India	50 (320)
6	France	39 (300)
7	Türkiye	29 (270)
8	Republic of Korea	28 (230)
9	Indonesia	26 (190)
10	Italy	24 (160)
-	Japan	53 (139)

Air forces (aircraft)		
1	China	3,370
2	United States	3,190
3	Russia	1,460
4	India	830
5	Republic of Korea	570
6	North Korea	550
7	Egypt	510
8	Pakistan	510
9	Saudi Arabia	460
10	Taiwan	420
-	Japan	370

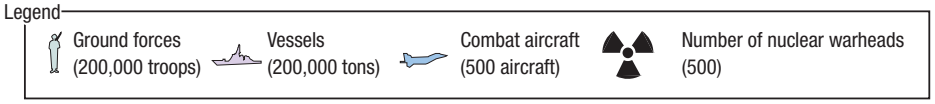
(Notes) 1. Figures for ground forces are basically the numbers of Army personnel in "The Military Balance 2025."* Figures for maritime forces show their tonnages compiled by the MOD based on "Jane's Fighting Ships 2024-2025." Figures for air forces are the total numbers of bombers, fighters, attack aircraft, surveillance aircraft, etc., compiled by the MOD based on "The Military Balance 2025."
2. Figures for Japan indicate the strength of each JSDF as of the end of FY2024; the number of combat aircraft (air forces) is the sum of the ASDF aircraft (excluding transport aircraft) and the MSDF aircraft (fixed-wing aircraft only).

* Figures are rounded off to the nearest 10,000 personnel. Figures for the United States include 450,000 Army personnel and 170,000 Marines personnel. Russia's strength includes 550,000 Ground Force personnel and 35,000 Airborne troops personnel. Regarding Ukraine, 500,000 ground troops, 100,000 regional defense forces, and 45,000 airborne troops are included. Figures for Iran include 150,000 ground force personnel of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in addition to 350,000 Army personnel.

Fig. I-1-3 Main Military Forces Surrounding Japan (Approximate Strength)



(Notes) 1 Source: Documents published by the DoD, "The Military Balance 2025" and "SIPRI Yearbook 2024," etc.
2 Figures for Japan indicate the strength of each JSDF as of the end of FY2024; the number of combat aircraft is the sum of the ASDF aircraft (excluding transport aircraft) and the MSDF aircraft (fixed-wing aircraft only).
3 Figures for the ground forces of U.S. Forces Japan/Korea indicate the combined total for Army troops and U.S. Marines.
4 Figures for combat aircraft include naval and marine aircraft.
5 Figures in parentheses indicate the total number of major units such as divisions and brigades. That for North Korea includes only divisions.
6 The figures for the U.S. 7th Fleet indicate forces forward-deployed to Japan and Guam.
7 The figures for the combat aircraft of U.S. Forces Japan and the U.S. 7th Fleet include only fighter aircraft.



Commentary

The Impact on Japan of the Links Among the Security Environments of Each Region

The Indo-Pacific is a region in which a complex mix of continents, peninsulas, and islands are located within a vast geographical area. Japan is not in an environment in which it is connected to other countries primarily by land borders as are China, Russia, the Korean Peninsula, and Europe, but taking into account cases such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the deteriorating Middle East situation, we cannot deny the possibility that even regions far away across the ocean could have an impact on Japan's security.

Generally speaking, as cross-border economic activities and flows of people grow, events occurring in geographically distant regions begin to have an impact on other regions through the transactions and flows of people among regions. In the military sphere, these kinds of links are being seen in the form of the transfer of military equipment and military technologies among regions, the stationing of units in other countries, and the dispatch of personnel and military assets to other countries, among other developments. There is a possibility that these activities could have an impact on the military balance and the military activities in the region.

It is believed that the aggression against Ukraine and the deterioration of the Middle East situation show the military links between Europe and the Indo-Pacific and between the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific, respectively. One notable example of this is the progress in Russia-North Korea military cooperation. It has become clear that Russia-North Korea military cooperation is progressing, in the form of the procurement of weapons and ammunition made in North Korea, including ballistic missiles, in the aggression against Ukraine and their use against Ukraine, as well as the dispatch of soldiers to Russia by North Korea. In addition, there is a risk that nuclear and missile-related technologies could be transferred to North Korea by Russia, and the possibility that this could have an impact on the military balance in the Indo-Pacific region in the long term has not been denied. As the Middle East situation deteriorates, the United States is taking measures such as the additional deployment of military assets to the Middle East. There is a possibility that the deterioration of the Middle East situation could further distract the attention of the international community from the Indo-Pacific, thus having an impact on the strategic priorities of each country in the long term.

In this way, events in one region can have a multilayered impact on the security environments of other regions. Therefore, as its neighboring countries and others increase their military forces and intensify their military activities, it is necessary for Japan, which is located in the Indo-Pacific, to be aware of the links among the security environments of each region and closely monitor their developments.

Commentary

The Rising Threat of Missiles in the Area around Japan

There are several countries and regions surrounding Japan that have large-scale military forces, including nuclear weapons, and missile forces that can serve as a means of delivering nuclear weapons have increased significantly in both quality and quantity, so missile attacks on Japan are a real threat.

The increase in missile forces is being seen in the form of development of hypersonic weapons, enhancement of precision strike capability, and increase and diversification of launch platforms, among other developments. In particular, hypersonic weapons fly at lower altitudes than normal ballistic missiles, thus delaying detection. It is considered that their great maneuvering capabilities make it difficult to predict their trajectories and impact points, making their interception more difficult. Therefore, the development and deployment of hypersonic weapons are believed to be progressing with the intent to breach the missile defense networks of adversaries.

For example, it has been pointed out that in 2020 China began operating DF-17s, which are said to be medium-range ballistic missiles, as ballistic missiles capable of carrying Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs), and it has been pointed out that China may have deployed DF-27s, which are said to be long-range ballistic missiles, as well. North Korea has been repeatedly launching missiles it calls "hypersonic missiles." Russia is also proceeding with the deployment of the HGV "Avangard" and the Hypersonic Cruise Missile (HCM) "Zircon" and is using the "Zircon" against Ukraine.

The Ministry of Defense (the MOD) is working to ceaselessly strengthen the quality and quantity of Japan's missile defense capabilities. However, it is believed that it will become increasingly difficult to fully respond to this threat with the existing missile defense network alone, particularly if Japan continues to rely solely on the means of missile defense. Therefore, in the event of a missile attack by an adversary, Japan will use its missile defense network to intercept incoming missiles while preventing further armed attacks from the adversary through counterstrike capabilities as an absolute minimum self-defense measure that is unavoidably necessary in cases where it is recognized that no other means are available. Through these initiatives, the MOD hopes to deter the occurrence itself of armed attacks by enhancing Japan's deterrence and response capabilities.

Chapter 2 Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine

1 General Situation

Russia's aggression against Ukraine undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It is a serious violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter, which prohibits the use of force. Such unilateral changes to the status quo by force have shaken the very foundation of the international order, including in Asia. In addition, brutal and inhumane acts committed by Russian soldiers have been revealed in many parts of Ukraine. The murder of numerous innocent civilians is a grave violation of international humanitarian law (IHL) and a war crime, and utterly unforgivable.

After the end of World War II, denial of unilateral changes to the status quo by force became one of the foundations of international order. But, Russia, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which is supposed to take primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, is now openly taking military actions challenging international law and the international order, claiming innocent lives and repeatedly making threatening mention about nuclear weapons, which can be called an unprecedented situation. If such Russia's aggression is tolerated, it could send a message with the wrong implication that unilateral changes to the status quo by force are acceptable in other regions as well, including Asia. Therefore, the international community, including Japan, should never forgive Russia's action.

The international community works together in solidarity against this Russia's aggression by imposing sanctions against Russia and continuing to provide Ukraine with equipment such as tanks, artillery, and ammunition in order to support Ukraine's efforts to defend itself and eject the Russian military from Ukraine. The future developments surrounding Russia's aggression against Ukraine remain unpredictable. But Japan needs to monitor the related situation closely with grave concern.

2 Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and the Future Outlook

1 The Failure of Russia's Blitzkrieg and Ukraine's Successful Defense

On February 24, 2022, Russia started full-scale aggression against Ukraine. Mr. Zelenskyy, the president of Ukraine, clearly expressed his intention to remain in Kyiv from the early stage of the aggression, and the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) and other military and para-military units obstructed the advance of the main units of Armed Forces of Russian Federation (AFRF) at suburbs of the capital, which caused heavy losses for AFRF aiming at taking control of the city within short time period. It is pointed out that Russia's goal to eliminate the Zelenskyy administration was finally failed after AFU fought off the AFRF in the Kyiv direction in the end of March through the early April.

The AFU successfully defended Kharkiv, the second largest city in Ukraine as well as a major transportation hub. Meanwhile, it is believed that the Russian forces made territorial gains in southern Ukraine more quickly than in other area. The AFRF occupied Kherson, the capital city of Kherson oblast on the western bank of the Dnieper River in early March 2022, and advanced further west in the direction of Mykolaiv, the capital city of Mykolaiv oblast. It is also believed that the AFRF made territorial gain in the southern Zaporizhzhia oblast and the southern Donetsk oblast on the northern coast of the Sea of Azov.

See Fig. I-2-1 (Map of Ukraine)

Fig. I-2-1 Map of Ukraine

2 Redeployment of Russian Forces and Start of Ukrainian Counteroffensive

(1) Redeployment of Troops and Territorial Expansion in Eastern and Southern Ukraine

The AFRF, which failed to take control of the capital Kyiv, on March 25, 2022, announced that previous military action had been at "the first phase of operation" and that the primary goal of its operation would shift to the pursuit of expanded territorial gains in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in eastern Ukraine.

It is said that after withdrawing its forces from the Kyiv area and regrouping, AFRF seized Sievierodonetsk, the temporary capital city of Luhansk oblast, and its surroundings from late June to early July 2022.

The AFRF concentrated its forces on seizing the Azovstal Iron and Steel Works (AISW) in Mariupol, Ukraine's last stronghold in the south of Donetsk oblast on the coast of the Sea of Azov. In May 2022, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that the AFRF completed the operation in Mariupol.

As a result of the seizure of Mariupol, Russia secured the whole coast of the Sea of Azov and the land bridge connecting to the Crimean Peninsula.

(2) Start of Ukrainian Counteroffensive

The AFU continued fierce resistance to the AFRF along the entire front line as well as intensified its attacks on Russian positions from April 2022, which seemed to prepare for the future counteroffensive.

The AFU reportedly sank the Slava-class guided missile cruiser "Moskva," the flagship of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Navy, with a "Neptune," a domestically produced surface-to-ship cruise missile, in May 2022 in southern Ukraine. In June 2022, General Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of the AFU (then), announced that the AFU had attacked AFRF units on Zmiinyi (Snake) Island in the Black Sea, occupied in the early stages of the war and forced them to withdraw from the island.

These Ukrainian attacks degraded the Russian air defense network that had been provided by the vessels of Russian Black Sea Fleet in southern Ukraine, which made it difficult for Russian Air Forces to conduct operations in the area, as a result, it was easier for Ukraine to launch a counteroffensive in the region.

It can further be seen that the AFU used the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) supplied by the United States, in action from late June 2022. In July 2022, the AFU mentioned starting a counteroffensive in the south. The Ukrainian military effectively attacked Russian command posts and logistics bases using a long-range precision

strike weapons system such as HIMARS in the region, and interdicted bridges and other crossing sites over the Dnieper River. Difficulties in logistics caused by these attacks decreased fighting capabilities and morale of Russian troops in the north of the river and improved conditions for the Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Ukrainian Military's High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) being launched (Kherson oblast, southern Ukraine) [EPA-Jiji]

3 Ukrainian Counteroffensive on the Kharkiv and Kherson Fronts in 2022 and Russia's Response

(1) Full-fledged Ukraine Counteroffensive

In early September 2022, the Ukrainian military conducted a successful counteroffensive in Kharkiv oblast in eastern Ukraine, and regained most of the Russian-occupied area in the oblast. It is probable that the AFU strived to conceal its plan for the counteroffensive in the east, unlike in the south where the counteroffensive was conspicuous. It is also pointed out that the vulnerable Russian forces in the east as a result of the redeployment of its troops from the east to the south to prepare against Ukraine's southern counteroffensive was a factor in the AFU's successful counteroffensive.

On the other hand, in the south, as a result of efforts to cut off and undermine each AFRF unit using the Dnieper River, the AFU forced Russian troops to withdraw and successfully regained the northern part of the Dnieper of Kherson oblast including Kherson, the capital city of the oblast, in mid-November of 2022.

(2) Russia's Response

Russia responded in various ways to Ukraine's full-fledged counteroffensive, such as with troop buildups and making its occupation of Ukrainian territory a fait accompli.

With respect to the buildup of forces, President Putin signed executive orders related to partial mobilization in September 2022. Regarding the mobilization, then Defense Minister Shoigu said that he was planning to mobilize some 300,000 reservists.

Regarding Russia's fait accompli of the occupied areas in Ukraine, Russia illegally "annexed" four regions of the occupied areas in the oblasts of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson based on the results of a "referendum" conducted in the area in September to ask the people whether their territory was to be "annexed" to Russia or not.

President Putin (center) and the "heads" and "governors" of the eastern and southern four regions of Ukraine, at the ceremony for incorporating the regions (oblasts) (September 2022) [Presidential Executive Office of Russia]

In addition, the AFRF has built multi-layered defenses, including trenches, anti-tank ditches, concrete anti-tank obstacles known as "Dragon's Teeth" and minefields along the entire contact line in anticipation of counterattacks by the AFU. At the same time, the AFRF intensify bombardments with missiles and loitering munitions all over Ukraine. It is pointed out that this was aimed at depleting Ukraine's air defense missile reserves, as well as weakening war sustainability and the fighting spirit of Ukrainian people by damaging power grids critical for civilian life in cold winter. While the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) estimates the number of noncombatant victims caused by the Russian attack in Ukraine amount to be over 12,000 as of December 2024, the actual number is possibly much larger as accurate numbers cannot be determined due to the ongoing fighting, and the number is likely still increasing now.

In January 2023, the Russian military and the private military company (PMC) "Wagner" intensified their offensive in the eastern Donetsk oblast. In May 2023, they seemed to have taken control of Bakhmut, a key transportation hub in the oblast.

"Wagner" fighters holding Russian flags (May 2023) [AFP-Jiji]

4 Stagnation of Ukrainian Counteroffensive on the Zaporizhzhia Front in 2023 and Russian Eastern Offensive

(1) Provision of Western Weapons to Ukraine and Stagnation of the Ukrainian Counteroffensive

While thrown on the defensive in the face of the offensive on the Bakhmut front by the Russian military and other forces, the Ukrainian military received various equipment from Western countries, including main battle tanks such as the "Leopard 2A6" and "Challenger 2" and air-launched long-range cruise missiles such as the "Storm Shadow." It seems to have been preparing for a counteroffensive by reorganizing its new units and training its soldiers in Europe.

The Ukrainian military is believed to have launched a counteroffensive in early June 2023 and sequentially recaptured multiple villages; centering on the front of southern Zaporizhzhia oblast. However, the Ukrainian military is also said to have suffered significant losses in personnel and equipment as its advance was blocked by numerous antipersonnel mines and tank mines laid by Russian forces and anti-tank missiles from attack helicopters.

The Ukrainian military's counteroffensive is reportedly meant to break through the Russian military's defensive line in the southern Zaporizhzhia oblast and advance southward to the Sea of Azov, thereby cutting off the Russian military's land logistics route connecting mainland Russia and the Crimean Peninsula. However, it appears that the originally envisioned goals have not been achieved.

The following have been pointed out as reasons behind the stagnation of the Ukrainian military's counteroffensive: the shortage of firepower, short-range air defense systems to protect advancing ground forces, obstacle-clearing equipment to break through minefields and trained soldiers in the Ukrainian military.

In October 2023, the United States provided Ukraine with the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS), a surface-to-surface ballistic missile system. However, no major breakthrough was achieved in ground operations. In November 2023, President Zelenskyy ordered the construction of defensive positions in preparation for a Russian military offensive, and it is believed that the Ukrainian military was on the defensive.

(2) Intensifying Russian Military Offensives and Missile Attacks in Eastern Ukraine

Russian forces allegedly intensified their offensive on the Avdiivka and Bakhmut fronts in Donetsk oblast and the Kupyansk front in Kharkiv oblast from October 2023 and seem to have seized control of Marinka in Donetsk oblast by the end of 2023. In February 2024, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that it had taken control of Avdiivka.

In addition, since late December 2023, the Russian military has intensified its missile attacks across Ukraine, but while the missile attacks in the winter of 2022 targeted power grids, some observers have pointed out that the targets of the missile attacks in the winter of 2023 are military industries, with an eye on a protracted war. This trend continued into the spring of 2024, with a shortage of air defense equipment said to be exacerbating damage to Ukraine.

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

5 Ongoing Eastern Offensives and the Kharkiv Offensive by Russia, and Cross-border Attacks into Russia by Ukraine in 2024

(1) Ongoing Eastern Offensives and the Start of the Kharkiv Offensive by the AFRF

As the AFU faced a shortage of artillery, its shells, air-defense missiles, and other supplies, the AFRF, after taking control of Avdiivka, continued with its offensives to the west, towards Pokrovsk, a key transportation hub. From April 2024, the AFRF also strengthened its offensive operations against Chasiv Yar, which is located in the highlands of the Bakhmut front.

At the same time, although it was pointed out that support

from the United States had stagnated since December 2023 due to delays in approving the budget, the Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act was enacted at the end of April 2024. Due to the resumption of its support, it has been pointed out that Ukraine's shortage of air-defense missiles has been mitigated and that the artillery-firepower gap has been reduced.

On May 10, 2024, the AFRF launched an offensive against Kharkiv oblast, reportedly occupying many villages in the border region of the oblast by May 18. No additional occupation by the AFRF has been announced since May 19, suggesting that Russian advances on the Kharkiv front has stalled. It has been pointed out that the purpose of the above offensive was likely to establish a buffer zone to prevent cross-border attacks from Ukrainian to Russian territory and to cause the Ukrainian forces to withdraw from eastern Ukraine, the main fronts of attacks, thereby dispersing them.

(2) Cross-border Attacks into Russia by the AFU and Territorial Expansion in Eastern Ukraine by the AFRF

Around June 2024, in response to Russia's offensive against Kharkiv, the United States and certain European countries, including the United Kingdom, gave Ukraine permission to attack Russian territory near the border using weapons provided by them other than long-range missiles.

In early August 2024, the AFU launched an attack on the Russian oblast of Kursk, which is adjacent to the border of northeastern Ukraine, by shelling the oblast, deploying unmanned aerial vehicles, and subsequently sending ground forces over the border to occupy Sudzha, Kursk. In February 2025, as the meaning of this cross-border attack, President Zelenskyy proposed a plan to exchange the occupied Kursk oblast area for territory held by Russia if Russia would commence negotiations.

Meanwhile, the Russian military continued its offensive against eastern Ukraine beyond August 2024, while responding to cross-border attacks into Kursk Oblast, steadily expanding its occupied territory, particularly in the direction of Pokrovsk and further south toward the Kurakhove area. In December 2024, the AFRF reached the vicinity of Pokrovsk, and, in January 2025, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that it had taken control of Kurakhove.

Since late August 2024, the Ukrainian military is believed to have been striving to maintain control over the occupied areas in the Kursk Oblast. However, in March 2025, Russian Chief of the General Staff Gerasimov reported to President Putin that more than 86% of the Ukrainian-occupied territory had been liberated, and further reported at the end of April that the entire region of the oblast had been recaptured. He also stated that North Korean soldiers participated in the recapture of the area. Meanwhile, the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces declared that Ukrainian forces were continuing defensive operations in Kursk on the same date. The Ukrainian military reportedly has launched cross-border attacks in the neighboring Belgorod Oblast in March 2025, and in April 2025, President Zelensky acknowledged the presence of Ukrainian forces there.

6 Russia's Attack on Nuclear Power Stations and Nuclear Facilities and the Situation Surrounding Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons

Russia repeatedly takes dangerous actions around nuclear facilities in ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Russia occupied the Chornobyl nuclear power plant near the Belarusian border in February 2022 and also occupied the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southeastern Ukraine in March 2022. In addition, Russia attacked the Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology (the KIPT), which has experimental reactors and handles nuclear substances, multiple times on and after March.

Regarding nuclear weapons, in September 2022, President Putin stated that Russia would use every possible means to repel threats to the territorial integrity of the nation, including nuclear capabilities. In addition, in May 2024, in response to provocative statements and threats from Western officials, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced its intention to conduct exercises to test non-strategic nuclear forces for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union and then carried them out in three stages from May to July. In November 2024, it was reported that Western countries had given their permission to utilize long-range missiles provided by them in attacks against Russian territory, and Ukraine used ATACMS missiles to launch an attack against Russian territory for the first time. On the day of this attack, Russia announced a revised version of a policy document they had previously indicated, Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence, which is equivalent to its so-called nuclear doctrine. Two days later, as a countermeasure in response to the attack on Russian territory using long-range weapons supplied by Western countries, President Putin announced his intention to attack the Ukrainian city of Dnipro by using newly developed "Oreshnik" intermediate-range ballistic missiles, an attack he called a test. In this way, with nuclear weapons clearly in mind, Russia has repeated behavior and statements, including similar statements from other high officials.

Debris of the 'Oreshnik' released by the Security Service of Ukraine [AFP/Jiji Press]

Russia has repeatedly claimed that Ukraine may use chemical and biological weapons. However, the United States and the United Kingdom evaluate it as showing that Russia is preparing for the so-called "false flag campaign."[1] In March 2022, then U.S. President Joe Biden made a statement to the effect that there are certain signs that President Putin is considering using biological and chemical weapons in Ukraine. In May 2024, the U.S. Department of State pointed to a suspicion that Russia had used chemical weapons. In November 2024 and February 2025, the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) announced the detection of riot control agents in hand grenades and soil samples collected from the battlefield in Ukraine. The use of these agents as a method of warfare is prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

7 Future Outlook

While there is no predicting about what may happen in the future regarding aggression against Ukraine, there are many indications about the strategy, tactics and human and material war sustainability of both the AFRF and the AFU which may impact future developments.

Some difficulties in the chain of command of the AFRF were indicated from the very early stages. It has been pointed out that, at the start of aggression, the AFRF allocated the chain of command and assigned troops of a Joint Strategic Command (Military District) to each operational front as it is in peacetime and thus did not have a centralized command chain covering the entire projected force[2] consisting of mechanized infantry forces said to be as many as 200,000-strong and missile units belonging to the Army, Navy, or Air Force, as well as sea power and air power. In early April 2022, a Joint Task Force Commander was reportedly appointed to command all actions of the AFRF. This is seen as a measure to improve cooperation among services and theaters. Also, in January 2023, Russia announced that General Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the AFRF, was named as the Joint Task Force Commander, aiming to improve cooperation among services, the quality of logistics support and command efficiency of the unit. In May of 2023, Prigozhin's private military company "Wagner" is said to have contributed to the capture of Bakhmut in the eastern Donetsk oblast by deploying numerous troops. However, subsequent discord between the military and "Wagner" led to Prigozhin instigating an "armed rebellion" in June 2023, allowing "Wagner" to advance into Russia. At one point, the "Wagner" offensive reportedly came within 200 km of Moscow, but the situation was brought under control through the mediation of the Belarusian president. In an effort to prevent the recurrence of such an armed uprising, Russia's Defence Ministry has been encouraging former "Wagner" soldiers to sign contracts with the military. It has also been pointed out that the Ministry is trying to centralize the chain of command by managing other private military companies under the control of the General Staff Office.

The AFU continues fighting until today undauntedly against the AFRF which has superior quality and larger numbers. Continuation of fighting is made possible by several factors such as a number of reservists with combat experience derived from the eastern front campaign since 2014, significant progress in training non-commissioned officers who assume leading roles in battle realized with the reorganization of the Defense Ministry and the AFU aiming to achieve the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standard and the introduction of rapid and highly accurate fire coordination systems based on commercial off-the-shelf technologies including the command and control support software "GIS Arta" and situational awareness system "Delta."

For human war sustainability, it is pointed out that the number of casualties was about 480,000 for the AFU as of September 2024, and over 648,000 for the AFRF as of October 2024[3]. As a result of the fighting dragging on, it seems that both Russia and Ukraine are facing an increasingly serious shortage of personnels. In June 2023, President Putin signed a law allowing prisoners and suspects, excluding felons, to sign military service contracts. In October 2023, the military personnel registration regulations were revised to include a new provision for "special military personnel registration," which has facilitated the enlistment of prisoners without requiring a physical examination. Such measures have created an environment for deploying prisoners more

1 An operation to create the appearance of receiving political or military attack for the purpose of denouncing the enemy or enhancing the legitimacy of one's own country

2 In addition to the AFRF, paramilitary forces including the following are participating in the aggression: the National Guard of the Russian Federation (former Internal Troops of Russia), the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, and a troop called "Kadyrovites" under the control of the Head of the Chechen Republic Kadyrov.

3 According to the Wall Street Journal, September 17, 2024 (announced by the UK Ministry of Defence on October 7, 2024)

quickly in actual combat operations. In addition, in July 2024, President Putin signed an executive order to approximately double the enlistment bonus paid by the federal government to newly contracted military personnel. This seems to be part of the government's efforts to secure personnel by increasing the number of contracted military personnel.

Meanwhile, in Ukraine, in December 2023, President Zelenskyy revealed that the military is requesting the mobilization of an additional 500,000 troops. In addition, in January 2025, General Syrskyi Commander-in-Chief of the AFU stated that such mobilization alone is not enough to satisfy the needs of the front line and indicated that it is also necessary to transfer personnel from other divisions to infantry, saying they are taking steps to lower logistics, support, and servicing components to sustainable level. Ukraine also faces problems that include the desertion of soldiers, and it has been pointed out that, last year, many members of the newly established 155th Separate Mechanized Brigade deserted. In November 2024, President Zelenskyy signed a law that would protect first-time deserters from criminal liability if they voluntarily returned to their units. This seems to suggest that Ukraine is struggling to secure personnel.

It is pointed out that Russia's war sustainability for material has been undermined by hindered equipment acquisition caused by economic sanctions against the country. Even in this situation, the Russian military maintains its power by various means, such as the ammunition industry operating around the clock, diverting missiles not used for ground attacks, the acquisition of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) made in Iran, taking over tanks from Belarus, and the procurement of ammunition and missiles from North Korea. Furthermore, it is pointed out that Russia is capable of prolonged battle, even under sanctions, because it has sufficient production capacities for equipment including ammunition belonging to the technical scope of the former Soviet Union.

In contrast, it is believed that the Ukrainian military's equipment consists mainly of former Soviet weapons and arms supplied by Western countries and others. In terms of equipment manufactured in the former Soviet Union, only limited parts and ammunition can be acquired from outside of Russia. In addition, although some equipment can be repaired or acquired domestically, it is difficult to carry out repair or acquisition, because the major ammunition industrial cities, such as Kharkiv and Dnipro, are within the attack range of the AFRF. Therefore, support from foreign countries is important in the acquisition of equipment and ammunition as well as in education and training to change over former Soviet Union equipment to Western equipment to maintain war sustainability.

There have been movements toward a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine. It is announced that the United States has conducted multiple meetings with Russia and with Ukraine to discuss the situation in Ukraine since February 2025. However, progress remains uncertain, and hostilities between Russian and Ukrainian forces are expected to persist even as ceasefire discussions continue.

Prosecutors examining the wreckage of a missile allegedly made by North Korea used in an attack on Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine (Kharkiv, Ukraine) (January 2024) [AFP-Jiji].

3 Effects of Russian Aggression against Ukraine on International Affairs and How Various Countries Respond to It

1 General Situation

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Ukraine has strongly resisted, and the international community has imposed strong coordinated sanctions against Russia. In Europe, the security environment has reached a major turning point in the wake of the aggression against Ukraine, with countries not only increasing their defense spending but also Finland and Sweden, which had previously advocated policies of neutrality, joining NATO. Clearly, the aggression by Russia, which saw NATO's eastward expansion as a threat to itself, prompted European countries to shift their security policies in this manner.

In this view, Japan needs to pay attention to the future developments of the situation in Europe, including its strategic effects and recognize that European-Atlantic security and Indo-Pacific security are indivisible. This is because Japan is a close ally of the United States, a NATO member state and is located on the opposite side of Europe across the Eurasian Continent where Russia also sits. In addition, the change in the European situation in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine can also have an impact on global affairs including developments of the strategic competition between the United States and China and impact on Asia. In any case, it is necessary to monitor the related situations closely with great interest.

2 How NATO Member States and Other Countries Deal with the Situation

Russia's aggression against Ukraine prompted a rapidly growing alarm amid European countries, and Russia's aggressive actions are being viewed as the most severe and direct threat to European and northern Atlantic security.[4] With renewed awareness of the threat of Russia, NATO member states direct their efforts at enhancing defense cooperation under the collective defense system of NATO and pursue the development of defense capabilities in each country. For example, the unit scale in the eastern direction is expanded as needed and an agreement has been made to put 300,000 and more troops into high readiness conditions in place of NATO Response Forces.

See Chapter 3, Section 9-2 (Enhancement of Multilateral Security Frameworks)

Several nations including NATO member states provide equipment, training support and the like to Ukraine depending on the progress of the war. At the beginning of the war, the donor countries provided portable anti-tank missiles and man-portable surface-to-air missiles that seemed to contribute to preventing front-line expansion by delaying the advancement of Russian military armored units and reducing the strength of airborne troops. After the AFU stopped Russia's full-scale aggression, the countries moved towards providing large equipment that helps suppress and secure wide areas in ground fighting, such as tanks, armored vehicles and howitzers, for the Ukrainian military's counteroffensive. In January 2023, each country announced for the first time the provision of tanks and infantry fighting vehicles not made by the former Soviet Union, beginning with the delivery of German tanks to Ukraine by Poland in February of the same year.

They also came to provide longer-range artillery to attack enemy bases, following the concentration of AFRF troops in the eastern Ukraine region.

Furthermore, the handing over of air defense systems from various countries rapidly progressed as a result of Russian armed forces commencing missile attacks targeting the entirety of Ukraine, including civil facilities, starting in October 2022. It was also reported that an air defense system called "Patriot," capable of coping with ballistic missiles, was provided.

Some NATO member states stated that they would deliver fighter jets made by the former Soviet Union in March 2023 and the United Kingdom and the Netherlands stated in May that the two countries would establish an "international union" for fighter jets acquisition and flight training. Furthermore, the United States stated in the G7 Hiroshima summit meeting that it would support the multilateral initiative for the flight training of fourth-generation fighter jets including F-16 fighters. By early 2024, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, and Norway offered to provide F-16 fighters. In August 2024, President Zelenskyy announced that F-16 fighters had been provided and that Ukraine had commenced related operations. It appears that, by January 2025, fighters had already been provided by the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway.

In addition, in November 2024, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France apparently granted their permission to use long-range missiles on Russian territory.

The cumulative security support from the United States to Ukraine since the Biden administration amounts to at least USD 66.5 billion, including USD 65.9 billion announced after the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine (as of January 9, 2025). In addition, the United States provides not only various kinds of equipment in large quantities but also familiarization training for newly delivered equipment and boot camp training for newly enlisted soldiers and other personnel outside Ukraine.

The United Kingdom also provided continuous support to Ukraine through equipment support and dispatching training instructors with the United States and other countries from when Russia "annexed" the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and since the regime change from the Johnson administration to the Sunak administration, it has continuously and actively supported Ukraine by providing a variety of equipment and conducting boot camp training. In particular, the United Kingdom took the plunge to announce that it would provide its main battle tanks in January 2023 ahead of any other country. It also provided air-launched long-range cruise missiles. Subsequently, the Starmer administration stated that it would strengthen its support further and announced that it would provide a new mobile air defense system in 2025. In addition, similarly to the United States, the United Kingdom has been actively disclosing information about the Russian military movement to counter Russia's disinformation and contain the action of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF) through announcements by high officials and posting on social media.

France, together with Germany, has been acting as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine in the "Normandy Format[5]," to peacefully resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In addition, France has announced the delivery of equipment

4 NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept for the first time since 2010 in the summit meeting held in June 2022. In the previous strategic concept, the Europe-Atlantic region was considered peaceful and the possibility of an attack on the NATO territory was considered small; however, in the current strategic concept, the Europe-Atlantic region is not considered peaceful and the possibility of an attack on the member states' territories is deemed impossible to rule out. Furthermore, Russia, with which a "genuine strategic partnership" was pursued in the previous strategic concept, has been positioned as "the most serious and direct threat to the security of the member states and the peace and stability of the Europe-Atlantic region."

5 The framework of dialogue between Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany that have had consultations for a settlement of the situation based on the Minsk agreements since 2014 when the Ukraine situation deteriorated.

such as wheeled combat vehicles, missile air-defense systems and air-launched long-range cruise missiles to Ukraine.

Germany drastically changed its defense strategy after Russia's aggression against Ukraine, announcing to deliver infantry fighting vehicles and surface-to-air missile systems and started to deliver its main battle tanks directly to Ukraine as well as permit the transfer of German-made main battle tanks from third-party countries to Ukraine in January 2023. Since then, Germany has been continuously supplying artillery shells and air defense missiles.

Canada has been providing training support to the AFU since 2015. Since Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Canada has been actively supporting Ukraine, such as by promising to provide military support of more than CAD 4.5 billion as of April 2025.

The EU has also been providing military support to Ukraine. As of May 2025, the total amount of support has reached $54 billion, including $6.6 billion provided through the European Peace Facility, an EU fund. In March 2025, the EU also announced plans to supply Ukraine with over 2 million artillery shells annually.

In December 2024, NATO Secretary General Rutte announced the establishment of the 'NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU)' at a U.S. military base in Germany, and stated that the organization had already commenced operations. As a result, control of the coordination of Ukrainian military support by Western countries was transferred from the United States to NATO.

In addition, technical support provided by private companies to Ukraine is also attracting attention. Satellite internet services using a satellite constellation provided by U.S. companies in response to the request from the Ukrainian government are used not only as a means of communication for the Ukrainian people but also are utilized to operate the Ukrainian military's unmanned aircraft. Moreover, it is pointed out that some European and U.S. IT/security companies have been supporting Ukraine's cybersecurity since before aggression against Ukraine began, and have successfully reduced and localized damage from Russian cyber-attacks.

While players such as NATO member states and other countries moved towards supporting Ukraine, some countries are taking their own measures. Türkiye, which has deep relations with both Russia and Ukraine, shows consideration for Russia to some extent. Concretely, Türkiye declares support for Ukraine while basically not implementing economic sanctions against Russia. Additionally, Hungary, a NATO member state highly dependent on Russia economically, has adopted a conciliatory stance toward Russia and has not supplied Ukraine with weapons, citing national interests.

3 How Other Regions Respond

On February 23, 2023, ahead of the first anniversary of the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for, among other things, the immediate cessation of the invasion. A total of 141 countries—over 70% of all member states—voted in favor of the resolution. On the other hand, in addition to Russia, some countries and regions do not sympathize with this movement. For example, six countries and regions including Belarus and North Korea were against the draft resolution, and thirty-two countries including India and China abstained from voting.

North Korea is showing its stance of standing by Russia, for example, as it voted against the UN General Assembly's resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine and claims that the United States and other Western countries are to be blamed for the conflict in Ukraine. It was also revealed that missiles provided by North Korea to Russia since the end of December 2023 were used against Ukraine. In addition, it was confirmed in October 2024 that North Korean soldiers had been dispatched to eastern Russia and then participated in fighting against Ukraine. Japan continues to strongly condemn North Korea's deployment of troops to Russia, its participation in combat operations against Ukraine, and its transfer of weapons, including ballistic missiles, to Russia, stating that such actions further exacerbate the situation in Ukraine and constitute violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions that comprehensively prohibit the transfer or procurement of weapons and related materials involving North Korea.

See Chapter 3, Section 4-1-5 (Relations with Countries and Regions)

Since the United States' withdrawal from the nuclear agreement in 2018, Iran has intensified its confrontational stance toward the West, while strengthening its ties with Russia, particularly in the economic and military fields. Although Iran advocates a diplomatic resolution to the invasion of Ukraine, it has shown a certain degree of understanding toward Russia's position and has criticized the sanctions imposed on Russia by the United States and its allies.

The United States announced in July 2022 Iran's plan to provide UAVs to Russia and in September 2022, pointed out that Russia was using Iran-made UAVs for attacks as well as Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). The Ukrainian military also announced that Russia conducted attacks in various points of Ukraine using Iranian UAVs. To this, Iran claims that the delivery of Iranian UAVs to Russia was carried out before the aggression against Ukraine and suggests that their purpose was not for use in war with Ukraine. In February 2023, William Burns, then Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), pointed out that Russia is investigating the possibility of supporting Iran's missile plan and providing fighter jets in return for Iran's support. In September 2024, he also indicated that Russia had received

ballistic missiles from Iran and that the progress of cooperation between the two countries must be closely observed.

China avoids direct criticism of Russia in respect of the aggression, requesting "self-restraint and dialogue" to both Russia and Ukraine and takes a standpoint from which China will play constructive roles in its own ways towards a solution to the Ukraine issues. However, China insists that Russia's actions are caused by the "Cold War mentality" of the United States and other NATO countries and that it understands Russia's reasonable concerns about security issues and criticizes sanctions against Russia and equipment delivery to Ukraine from Western countries. In September 2022, President Xi Jinping, during the first in-person China-Russia summit since the invasion began, expressed strong support for issues related to each other's core interests. Furthermore, during the China-Russia summit held online in December of the same year, Xi stated that China would continue to uphold an objective and impartial stance on the invasion of Ukraine and would play a constructive role in promoting international unity and cooperation toward a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis. Furthermore, he stated that China will play constructive roles in peace negotiations and reconstruction after the conflict in a document titled "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis" published in February 2023. During his visit to Russia in March of the same year, Xi held talks with Putin and released a joint statement. In the statement, Xi positively evaluated Russia's commitment to resuming the early resumption of peace negotiations and expressed opposition to unilateral sanctions not based on UN Security Council resolutions. In October the same year, President Putin visited China for the first time since the aggression against Ukraine and held a summit meeting with President Xi Jinping, mutually confirming the deepening relationship of trust between the two countries. Russia, which is internationally isolated with its aggression against Ukraine will find its political and military cooperation with China more important than ever. In addition, it has been pointed out that China is boosting Russia's war sustainability by transferring dual-use items (items that can be used for both civilian and military applications) to the country.

On the other hand, it is seen that Western countries are taking action to contain China which is deepening cooperation with Russia. In September 2022, NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg pointed out that China continued to cooperate with Russia and opposed expanding NATO even after the aggression against Ukraine and the notion that NATO should regard China as a challenge to international security was adequately reasonable. The United States added Chinese entities including companies regarded as providing satellite images to Russian private military company Wagner to the list of entities subject to regulations for export from the United States. Furthermore, Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State (then), warned Wang Yi, Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, during their meeting in February 2023 that delivery of lethal weapons to Russia would have serious consequences for the U.S.-China relationship.

Japan, as a country neighboring both countries, must continue to monitor with concern the trend of cooperation between the two countries, which has deepened further since Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

See Chapter 3, Section 2-3 (Relations with Countries and Regions)

India emphasized the need for an immediate stop to hostile operations and violence, as well as the need for a solution through diplomatic means and dialogue regarding the aggression against Ukraine and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated "Now is not the age of war" to President Putin at the Indo-Russia Summit Meeting in September 2022, while India, which has traditionally deep relations with Russia, avoids explicit criticism of Russia. As stated above, India maintains a strong military cooperative relationship with Russia and responses such as increasing the import of Russian crude oil with lower prices due to the economic sanctions have been observed. Close attention should be paid to India's movement in future.

See Chapter 3, Section 5-5 (1) (Relations with Asian Countries)

REFERENCE: Information related to Ukraine
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/exchange/ukraine2022.html

Chapter 3 Defense Policies of Countries

Section 1 The United States

1 Security and Defense Policies

During the term of office of former President Biden from January 2021 to January 2025, the United States released the National Security Strategy[1] (NSS) in October 2022, in which the United States expressed its recognition that it faces two strategic challenges of "geopolitical competition between the major powers" with China and Russia, and "shared challenges" which are cross-border issues such as climate change. Also, it stated that it has a vital interest in deterring aggression by China, Russia, and other states and expressed its intention to promote Integrated Deterrence[2] that achieves maximum effect in deterring acts of aggression through combining capabilities with domestic agencies and allied countries, based on the understanding that the United States cannot afford to rely solely on its conventional forces and nuclear deterrence against competitors promoting new strategies.

In addition, the Department of Defense (DoD) released the National Defense Strategy (NDS) in October 2022 and expressed its intention to advance "Integrated Deterrence" while identifying top level priorities that the DoD must pursue to strengthen deterrence such as defending the homeland and deterring strategic attacks.

The NSS states that China presents America's most consequential geopolitical challenge and is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power to do it. Based on those recognition, the DoD shows its idea to out-compete China while constraining Russia which poses an acute threat to the international system. The NDS also stated that China remains the most consequential strategic competitor for the coming decades and is the most comprehensive and serious challenge to U.S. national security. The NDS directed the DoD to act urgently to sustain and strengthen U.S. deterrence, with China as the "pacing challenge" for the Department, which indicated a stance to prioritize addressing challenges posed by China.

In this context, a presidential election was held in the United States in November 2024. In the Democratic Party, incumbent President Biden withdrew from the presidential election in July the same year, so Vice-President Harris became the party's nominee. Meanwhile, in the Republican Party, former president Trump became the nominee, and the two nominees competed over issues such as the economy, border control, and foreign affairs. As a result, former President Trump was elected as the 47th president. Furthermore, the federal election was held on the same day as the presidential election, and the Republican Party won a narrow majority in both houses of Congress.

Inauguration ceremony of President Trump in January 2025

During the election campaign, President Trump focused mainly on economic policy under the slogans "America First" and "Make America Great Again" while claiming with regards to security that he would "end wars." Specifically, he mentioned an early end to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, deterrence of the activities of pro-Iranian armed groups in the Middle East through strengthened pressure on Iran, and the stabilization of the Taiwan situation through the

1 Both the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS) are required by law to be submitted to Congress within a certain period of time. Titles 50 and 10 of the United States Code respectively stipulate that the NSS shall be submitted to Congress no later than 150 days after the date on which a new President takes office and the NDS shall be submitted as soon as possible after a newly elected President has nominated a new Secretary of Defense, once the Senate has approved the nomination.

2 The approach in which a seamless combination of capabilities including integration among areas and integration with allies deter aggression by convincing an opponent the cost of hostile behavior would outweigh the benefit of it.

introduction of tariffs on China and other measures.

Of these issues, regarding an early end to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, President Trump expressed his intention to meet with President Putin soon after taking office, and in February 2025 after the inauguration of the second Trump administration, the first U.S.-Russia Summit Telephone Talk of the second administration was realized. Subsequently, talks between U.S. and Russian authorities were held in Saudi Arabia, and after each of these consultations, the U.S. and Ukraine held talks as well. Although the U.S. side held consultations with authorities from both Russia and Ukraine the following March, there is still no prospect of a ceasefire as of April 2025. Going forward, attention will continue to be paid to the progress of ceasefire talks mediated by the United States.

See Chapter 2, Section 2 (Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and the Future Outlook)

Furthermore, regarding the Middle East situation, from before the inauguration of his second administration in January 2025, President Trump had officials from his incoming administration participate in ceasefire talks conducted by the former Biden administration with Israel, Egypt, and Qatar, and he achieved a three-stage ceasefire on January 19. Regarding relations with Iran, in February after its inauguration, the administration decided on a policy of applying maximum pressure on Iran over its development of nuclear weapons and destabilizing activities in the Middle East region. On the other hand, President Trump demanded talks with Iran on the development of nuclear weapons and expressed his intention to attack Iran if it did not reach a deal. The Iranian side opposed this, but consultations between their authorities were held in Oman and Italy in April, and it was decided to continue dialogue going forward. Attention will continue to be paid to the engagement of the Trump administration in the Middle East situation.

See Section 10-1 (Middle East)

After the presidential election in November 2024, Mr. Trump nominated Mr. Pete Hegseth to be the Secretary of Defense in the incoming administration. After the confirmation process in the United States Senate, Mr. Hegseth took office as Secretary of Defense on January 25, 2025. On that day, Secretary of Defense Hegseth gave a message to each service in which he stated that the U.S. would achieve Peace through Strength under the leadership of President Trump in three ways — by restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding the military, and reestablishing deterrence. In particular, regarding the reestablishment of deterrence, the U.S. would work with allies and partners to deter aggression in the Indo-Pacific region by China.

Since taking office, Secretary of Defense Hegseth has held talks with the defense ministers of various countries. Defense Minister Nakatani held his first meeting with Secretary Hegseth by telephone on January 31. Subsequently, Secretary of Defense Hegseth visited Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, and Japan in March. During these visits, Secretary of Defense Hegseth confirmed the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific and declared the commitment of the U.S. to its allies located in the Indo-Pacific region.

See Section 7 (Southeast Asia), Part III, Chapter 2, Section 1-3 (Policy Consultations between Japan and the United States)

Furthermore, Secretary Hegseth participated in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group and Meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence held in Belgium in February 2025, where he stated that the fighting in Ukraine should be stopped and that it must be recognized that returning to Ukraine's pre-2014 borders is an unrealistic objective, and that the United States is facing a peer competitor, China, in the Indo-Pacific, so the NATO member countries should take responsibility for the security of Europe, for example by increasing their national defense budgets. He then stated that the European countries should face the security issues in their region while the United States remains committed to defense cooperation with NATO and Europe.

Secretary of Defense Hegseth speaking at an international conference [EPA/Jiji]

In addition, President Trump expressed the view that the United States should own Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, for reasons including security in the Arctic, and the Panama Canal, due to China's presence and other activities there. The governments of Denmark and Greenland expressed opposition to this. Meanwhile, Secretary of Defense Hegseth visited Panama in April 2025 and announced that he had reached an agreement with that country regarding the use of the Panama Canal by U.S. military ships and the deployment of the U.S. military to bases located there.

See Section 9 (Europe and Canada)

1 Perception about the Security Environment

The National Security Strategy (NSS) announced by the former Biden administration states that the most pressing strategic challenges to pursuing a free, open, prosperous and

secure world are coming from great powers that combine authoritarian governance with a revisionist foreign policy. The NSS also showed its recognition that the next ten years would be the decisive decade in setting the terms of the competition with China, managing the acute threat posed by Russia and in its efforts to deal with shared challenges, particularly climate change and pandemics. The NDS states that China seeks to undermine U.S. alliances and security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region and leverage its growing capabilities, including its economic influence and the People's Liberation Army's growing strength and military footprint, to coerce its neighbors and threaten their interests. As a result, the United States has positioned China's coercive and increasingly aggressive endeavor as the most comprehensive and serious challenge to U.S. national security. On the other hand, the NDS indicated that the DoD would support robust deterrence of aggression by Russia that poses acute threats such as its aggression against Ukraine with its allies and partners. North Korea was mentioned as a persistent threat continuing to expand its nuclear and missile capability to threaten the U.S. homeland and East Asia and Iran was mentioned as further undermining Middle East stability by supporting terrorist groups and malicious cyber operations. Also, the NDS showed the perception that these competitors seek adverse changes in the status quo using gray zone activities.

It appears that the second Trump administration is continuing to perceive China to be a peer competitor in the Indo-Pacific region. Furthermore, it has expressed the view that Iran is continuing to support terrorist groups and develop nuclear weapons. On the other hand, some developments different from the Biden administration era have been seen. For example, the Trump administration has declared that returning to Ukraine's pre-2014 borders is an unrealistic objective while commencing talks with the Russian side. As for climate change, President Trump issued an executive order immediately after taking office, declaring that the U.S. would withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Attention will be paid to the developments going forward.

2 NSS and NDS

The NSS announced by the former Biden administration presents three lines of effort to realize a free, open, prosperous and secure international order: 1) investing in the U.S. national power; 2) building the strongest coalition of nations; and 3) modernizing and strengthening the U.S. Military. The NSS also indicates six pillars as concrete approaches to realize these directions: 1) breaking down the dividing line between foreign policy and domestic policy; 2) alliances and partnerships; 3) perception of geopolitical challenges; 4) involvement in other areas; 5) correspondence with new economic situations; and 6) maintaining and increasing international cooperation. Based on the above, the NSS showed the policies that the United States focuses on investment in domestic strength as a source of American power, positioning allies and partnerships as its most important strategic assets and dealing with strategic challenges. Furthermore, the NSS presented a policy that the United States cooperates in a constructive manner with non-democratic nations intending to deal with "shared challenges" which cross borders including climate change.

The NDS announced by the former Biden administration presented four top-level defense priorities to support a stable and open international system and defense commitments: 1) defending the U.S. homeland; 2) deterring strategic attacks; 3) deterring aggression while being prepared to prevail in conflict; and 4) building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem. The NDS also indicated an idea to advance the top-level defense priorities through 1) Integrated deterrence, 2) Campaigning (of DoD), and 3) Building enduring advantages. With regard to deterring aggression while being prepared to prevail in conflicts, a policy to prioritize China's challenge in the Indo-Pacific region, then the Russia challenge in Europe was presented.

Going forward, attention will be paid to the kinds of policies announced by the second Trump administration.

3 Engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region

The NSS announced by the former Biden administration expressed the stances of deepening partnerships with allies in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) through multilateral frameworks such as Japan-Australia-India-U.S., AUKUS, which is a security cooperation framework by the three countries of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.,[3] and other frameworks. With regard to the relationship with Japan, the United States reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, which covers the Senkaku Islands. In addition, the NSS shows an intention to expand its regional diplomatic, development and economic engagement, with a particular focus on Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. Regarding the relationship with India, which is the world's largest democratic country and a major defense partner, the NSS stated that the United States and India will work together, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support their shared vision of "FOIP" and that the United States will promote prosperity and economic connectivity across the Indian Ocean region by addressing climate change and China's coercive behavior with regional partners in South Asia, including India.

The Indo-Pacific Strategy, which was released in February 2022, clearly indicated that the United States would continue to place the highest priority on the Indo-Pacific region where it faces increasing challenges from China. It also made

3 Established in September 2021 and aimed at deepening diplomatic, security and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

clear that the United States would cooperate with allies and partners in efforts to advance "FOIP" and strengthen regional security.

Regarding China's maritime expansion, in July 2020 the U.S. Department of Defense deployed two Carrier Strike Groups in the South China Sea for the first time in about six years and conducted naval exercises. Since then, the United States has continued Carrier Strike Group operations in the same region to demonstrate continuously its commitment to promote FOIP to allies in the region. In January 2022, the State Department released a study examining China's claims regarding its maritime rights in the South China Sea in light of international law. The study noted that China's claims over most of the South China Sea are inconsistent with international law and gravely undermine the rule of law in the ocean. In May 2023, the U.S.-Philippines summit reaffirmed the applicability of the "Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America" in the event of an armed attack against the Philippines in the Pacific Ocean, including the South China Sea. The same month, the U.S.-Philippines Bilateral Defense Guidelines were formulated and released for the first time to serve as a roadmap for modernizing alliance cooperation. In 2024, the two countries expressed their commitment to freedom of navigation and overflight in the first Japan-U.S.-Philippines Summit, which was held in April, and the Philippines-United States Fourth 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held in July, and in the latter it was also declared that USD 500 million and other support would be provided in order to enhance the capability of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine Coast Guard.

As part of its activities around strengthening its presence in the Indo-Pacific region, the U.S. Navy, which promotes Distributed Maritime Operations (DMO)[4], deployed the USS America, an amphibious assault ship with enhanced ability to carry F-35B fighters and other carrier-based aircraft to Sasebo in December 2019, and deployed for the first time the MQ-4C Triton unmanned maritime reconnaissance vehicle in Guam in January 2020. The U.S. Air Force promotes Agile Combat Employment (ACE)[5] and conducts ACE exercises in the Indo-Pacific region using fighter jets and unmanned aircraft. Furthermore, the U.S. Army promotes the multi-domain operation concept, and announced in September 2022 the deployment of a Multi-Domain Task Force[6] that conducts operations in all domains including human cognitive behavior parallelly, in Hawaii. The U.S. Marine Corps promotes Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations[7] (EABO) and deployed its first Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) with capabilities to conduct EABO activities in Hawaii in March 2022. The 12th Marine Regiment stationed in Okinawa is scheduled to transition to the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment by 2025 and as part of this effort, the unit was redesigned in November 2023. Moreover, in the Japan-U.S. 2+2 held in July 2024, it was announced that through a phased approach the USFJ would be reconstituted as a joint force headquarters (JFHQ) reporting to USINDOPACOM. At the end of March this year, the USFJ commenced its upgrade in alignment with the establishment of JJOC (JSDF Joint Operations Command).

In addition, in March 2018, the U.S. military brought the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson to Viet Nam, as the first U.S. aircraft carrier port call in Viet Nam in more than 40 years. In 2023, various U.S. strategic assets were frequently deployed[8] around the Korean Peninsula, including a strategic nuclear submarine having made its first port call in Korea in about 40 years.

The United States has continued to conduct "Freedom of Navigation Operations" in the South China Sea and U.S. Navy vessels and aircraft have passed through the Taiwan Strait to show the U.S. commitment to "FOIP."

In September 2023, the United States further demonstrated its growing engagement in the region, which has seen China's attempt to expand its influence, by hosting the U.S.-Pacific Island Countries Summit and announcing initiatives to strengthen partnerships with island nations.

In contrast, while talks between the United States and North Korea have been conducted since their first summit meeting in history held in June 2018, no specific progress has been seen with regard to the dismantlement of North Korea's missiles and weapons of mass destruction. The United States and the ROK have been expanding the scope and scale of exercises since the former Yoon Suk Yeol administration of ROK, which exhibits a firm stance against North Korea, was inaugurated in May 2022. The reaction of Kim Jong-un, the Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of North Korea, towards this situation is intensifying and he reportedly stated the aim of the United States was "to disrupt my regime anytime," and, to restrain the United States on a long-term basis, "we can never abandon nuclear weapons."

The U.S. Government expressed in the NSS announced by the former Biden administration its intention to confront the threat of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and missiles by reinforcing expanded deterrence while also seeking a sustained diplomatic relationship with North Korea to achieve concrete progress toward compete

4 An operational concept that concentrates overwhelming combat power by dispersing each asset and integrating them through a network.
5 An operational concept aiming to rapidly deploy Air Force powers from dispersal airfields they have been located.
6 The Multi-Domain Task Force is an army unit with the mission of forward execution of the "multi-domain operational concept," an operational concept that aims to defeat the enemy's Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) strategy by conducting operations in all domains (land, sea, air, space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, the information environment including cognitive aspects, etc.).
7 An operational concept that executes front-line operations by rapidly dispersing and deploying within the enemy's firepower zone and establishing temporary bases.
8 A South Korean government official has said that U.S. strategic assets were deployed around the Korean Peninsula 17 times in 2023, a significant increase from the five-time deployments in 2022.

denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, the NDS also announced by the former Biden administration stated that the DoD will deter attacks through forward posture of U.S. Forces and nuclear deterrence against North Korea, which continues to expand its nuclear and missile capability and has been trying to drive wedges among the allies.

The second Trump administration is continuing to express a stance which places importance on the Indo-Pacific region, so it is necessary to collaborate closely with the United States in order to respond to the various issues in that region.

See Section 4-1-5 (1) Relations with the United States

4 Innovation in the National Defense Field

In former President Biden's remarks at the DoD in February 2021, the President, emphasizing the importance of technologies in national defense strategies, stated that the United States would deal with dangers and opportunities generated through emerging technologies, enhance its capabilities in cyberspace and lead in a new era of competition from deep sea to outer space. In addition, the NDS announced by the former Biden administration stated that the DoD will support the innovation ecosystem to develop defense equipment through cooperation among research institutes, private companies, and government agencies as one of the approaches to building enduring advantages. It also aimed to promote research and development for advanced capabilities including in directed energy and cyberspace as well as create opportunities in biotechnology and quantum science. Attention will be focused on activities in this field in the second Trump administration.

5 Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy

In October 2022 during the former Biden administration, the DoD released the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and the Missile Defense Review (MDR) on the same day as the NDS, which had previously been published individually, to ensure tight linkages between each strategy.

In the NPR the DoD expressed that China is the overall "pacing challenge" for U.S. defense planning and a growing factor in evaluating its nuclear deterrent and evaluated that China will become a major nuclear power following Russia by the 2030s and the United States will, for the first time in its history, face two major nuclear powers. It also stated that Russia would continue to emphasize nuclear weapons in its strategy, modernize and expand its nuclear forces, and brandish its nuclear weapons in support of its revisionist security policy, while recognizing that Russia's modern nuclear arsenal presents an enduring existential threat to the United States and its allies and partners, and the possibility of the limited use of nuclear weapons to avoid a defeat. The NPR mentioned that North Korea is not a rival on the same scale as China and Russia, but it poses a persistent threat as it expands non-nuclear capabilities as well, including its chemical weapon stockpile, in addition to nuclear and ballistic missiles. Furthermore, the DoD evaluated that a crisis or conflict on the Korean Peninsula could involve a number of nuclear-armed actors, raising the risk of broader conflict.

The U.S. Government expressed its goal to reduce the role of nuclear weapons, as well as its plan to pursue engagement with other nuclear powers continuously to mitigate nuclear risks based on its understanding of the situation in respect of nuclear weapons as mentioned above. The following were raised as the roles for U.S. nuclear weapons: (1) deterrence of strategic attacks; (2) assurance of allies and partners; and (3) for achievement of U.S. objectives if deterrence fails, while "hedging against an uncertain future," which was raised as one of roles for nuclear weapons in the NPR published under the first Trump administration in 2018, was eliminated. Also, according to the NPR, under the declaratory policy, the basic role of nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attacks by enemies and the United States would only consider the employment of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances. Although the U.S. Government conducted a thorough review of a broad range of options for nuclear declaratory policy including both "No First Use" and "Sole Purpose" policies, it concluded that those approaches would result in an unacceptable level of risk in light of the range of non-nuclear capabilities being developed and fielded by competitors that could inflict strategic-level damage to the United States and its allies and partners, but it indicated that the government retains the goal of moving toward a sole purpose declaration.

Based on the understanding that the U.S. nuclear deterrence strategies require tailored strategies for potential adversaries, the NPR mentioned that the United States would maintain a flexible deterrence strategy and force posture against China, while it would bolster the nuclear Triad[9] against Russia through fielding a modern nuclear Triad and with flexible, tailorable nuclear forces to deter both large-scale attacks and limited strikes. It also indicated that the United States would work on the replacement program for the nuclear triad, which most systems are operating beyond their original design life, to avoid any gaps in its nuclear deterrent, ensuring that the United States can withstand any strategic attack, tailor its deterrence strategies as needed, and assure allies in support of its extended deterrence commitments by maintaining a modern Triad. The NPR states that, although the submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) loaded with low-yield nuclear warheads that are currently in action will be maintained as flexible and adjustable nuclear power, the sea-launched nuclear-armed cruise missile program mentioned in the previous NPR has been canceled. Also mentioned

9 The nuclear triad consists of "ICBM Minuteman III," "a strategic nuclear submarine armed with Trident II D5," and "B-52 and B-2 strategic bombers armed with nuclear cruise missiles and nuclear bombs."

was a plan to transfer the roles of dual-capable aircraft (DCA) from F-15E fighters to F-35A fighters to support NATO nuclear missions.

Moreover, the U.S. Government withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in August 2019 as the government alleged that Russia violated the treaty. In the same month, the United States conducted a flight test of a conventionally configured ground-launched missile with a range of more than 500 km. In this regard, the United States has been working on the development of intermediate-range, conventional, and ground-launched missiles whose test launches, production and possession had been restricted by the treaty.

President Putin stated in his annual presidential address to the Federal Assembly of Russia in February 2023 that the implementation of the New START Treaty (New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), extended for five years in February 2021 based on the agreement between the United States and Russia, has been halted. Attention will be focused on future movement of nuclear arms control.

The MDR, whose contents strongly reflect the "integrated deterrence" concept mentioned in the NDS, expressed a concept that to protect the United States and deter attacks, missile defenses are positioned as a top priority area and that they offset benefits of an enemy attack and are useful to limit damage even though deterrence has been breached. Also, the U.S. Government declared that it would recognize attacks on any U.S. territory overseas including Guam as attacks directed at the U.S. mainland and stated that Guam is vital as an operation base to maintain FOIP and that defending Guam helps realize integrated deterrence.

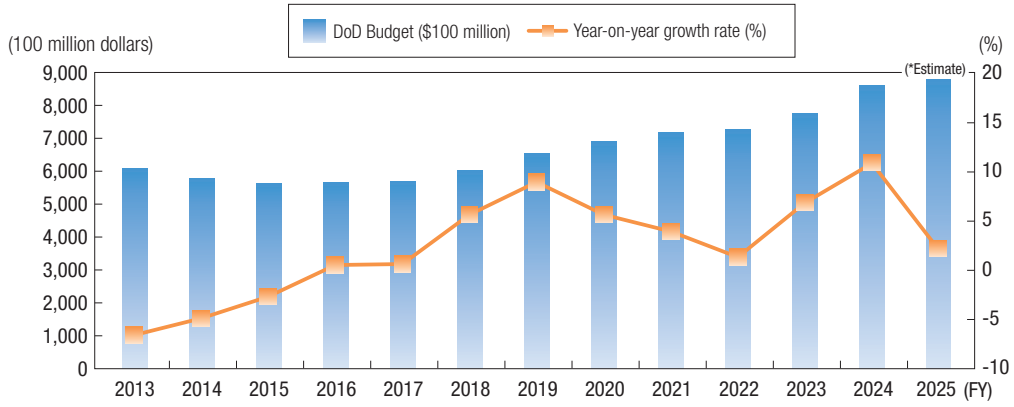
Attention will be focused on the nuclear and missile defense policy adopted by the second Trump administration.

6 FY2026 Budget

As of April 2025, the United States government had not released the President's request for FY2026 discretionary funding. Meanwhile, in the same month, President Trump declared that he would request a national defense budget of USD 1 trillion, the largest in the history of the United States. Attention will be paid to the details of the DoD budget requests announced going forward.

See Fig. I-3-1-1 (Changes in the U.S. Department of Defense Budget)

Fig. I-3-1-1 Changes in the U.S. Department of Defense Budget



(Notes) 1. Figures shown are the DoD expenses based on historical tables (outlays).
2. The amount for FY2025 is an estimate.

2 Military Posture

1 General Situation

The operation of the U.S. Forces is not controlled by the individual branches of the broader armed forces; rather it is operated under the command of the Unified Combatant Commands, composed of forces from multiple branches of the armed forces. In May 2018, the Cyber Command, which had been under the U.S. Strategic Command, was elevated to a unified combatant command and in August 2019, the Space Command was founded to serve as a geographic unified combatant command. The Unified Combatant Commands now consisted of four functional combatant commands and seven geographic combatant commands. In December 2019, the Space Force was established as the sixth branch of the military within the Department of the Air Force.

The U.S. ground forces[10] have about 440,000 Army soldiers and about 170,000 Marines, which are forward-deployed in Germany, the ROK and Japan, among other countries.

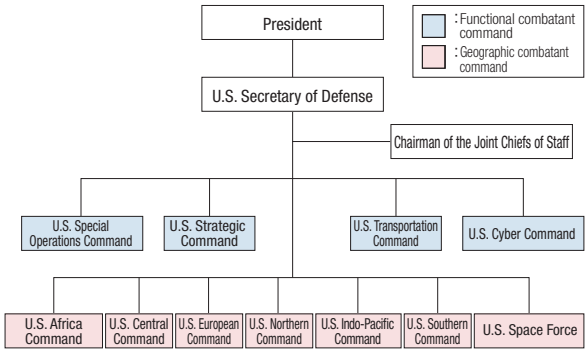
The U.S. maritime forces have about 990 vessels (including about 70 submarines) totaling about 6.75 million tons. The 7th Fleet is responsible for the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean; the 3rd Fleet in the eastern Pacific; the 4th Fleet in South America and the Caribbean Sea; the 2nd Fleet in U.S. East Coast, North Atlantic Ocean and Arctic Ocean; the 6th Fleet in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea and Africa; and the 5th Fleet in the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the northwest Indian Ocean.

The U.S. air forces have roughly 3,200 combat aircraft across the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. In addition to carrier-based aircraft deployed at sea, part of the tactical air force is forward-deployed in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan and the ROK, among others.

In regard to strategic offensive weapons including nuclear force, the United States proceeded with its reduction based on the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START Treaty) that came into force in February 2011. It announced that its deployed strategic warheads[11] stood at 1,419, while its deployed delivery platforms stood at 662.[12]

See Fig. I-3-1-2 (Structure of the Unified Combatant Command)

Fig. I-3-1-2 Structure of the Unified Combatant Command



2 Current Military Posture in the Indo-Pacific Region

The United States, a Pacific nation, continues to play an important role in ensuring the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region by deploying the Indo-Pacific Command, a combatant command integrating the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Space Force, in the region. The Indo-Pacific Command is a geographic combatant command which is responsible for the largest geographical area and its subordinate unified commands include U.S. Forces Japan and U.S. Forces Korea.

The Indo-Pacific Command consists of the U.S. Army Pacific, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific, U.S. Pacific Air Forces, and U.S. Space Forces Indo-Pacific, all of which are headquartered in Hawaii.

The Army Pacific's subordinate commands include the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii, the 8th U.S. Army in the ROK, which is the Army component of the U.S. Forces Korea and the U.S. Army Alaska. Additionally, the Army Pacific assigns approximately 2,500 personnel to commands in Japan, such as I Corps (Forward) and the Headquarters, U.S. Army Japan Command.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet consists of the 7th Fleet, which is responsible for the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean and the 3rd Fleet, responsible for the East Pacific and Bering Sea. The 7th Fleet mainly consists of a carrier strike group with main stationing locations in Japan and Guam. Their mission is to defend territorial lands, people, sea lines of communication and the critical national interests of the United States and its allies. An aircraft carrier, amphibious ships and Aegis cruisers among others are assigned to the 7th Fleet.

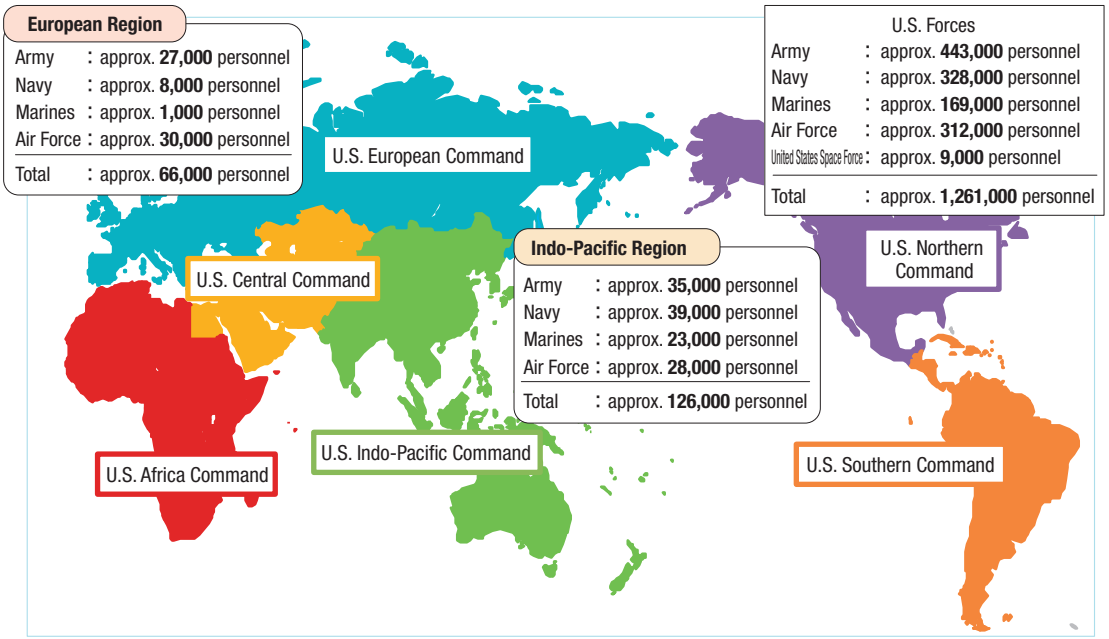
The U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific deploys one Marine Expeditionary Force each in the U.S. mainland and Japan. Of this force, about 20,000 personnel are in the 3rd Marine Division, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, which employs F-35B fighters and other aircraft, and other divisions in Japan. In addition, the force deploys maritime pre-positioning ships loaded with heavy equipment and others in the Western Pacific.

The U.S. Pacific Air Force has three air forces, of which three air wings (equipped with F-16 fighters, C-130 transport aircraft and others) are deployed to the 5th Air Force stationed in Japan and two air wings (equipped with F-16 fighters) to the 7th Air Force stationed in the ROK.

See Fig. I-3-1-3 (U.S. Forces Deployment Status), Fig. I-3-1-4 (U.S. Engagements to the Indo-Pacific Region (image))

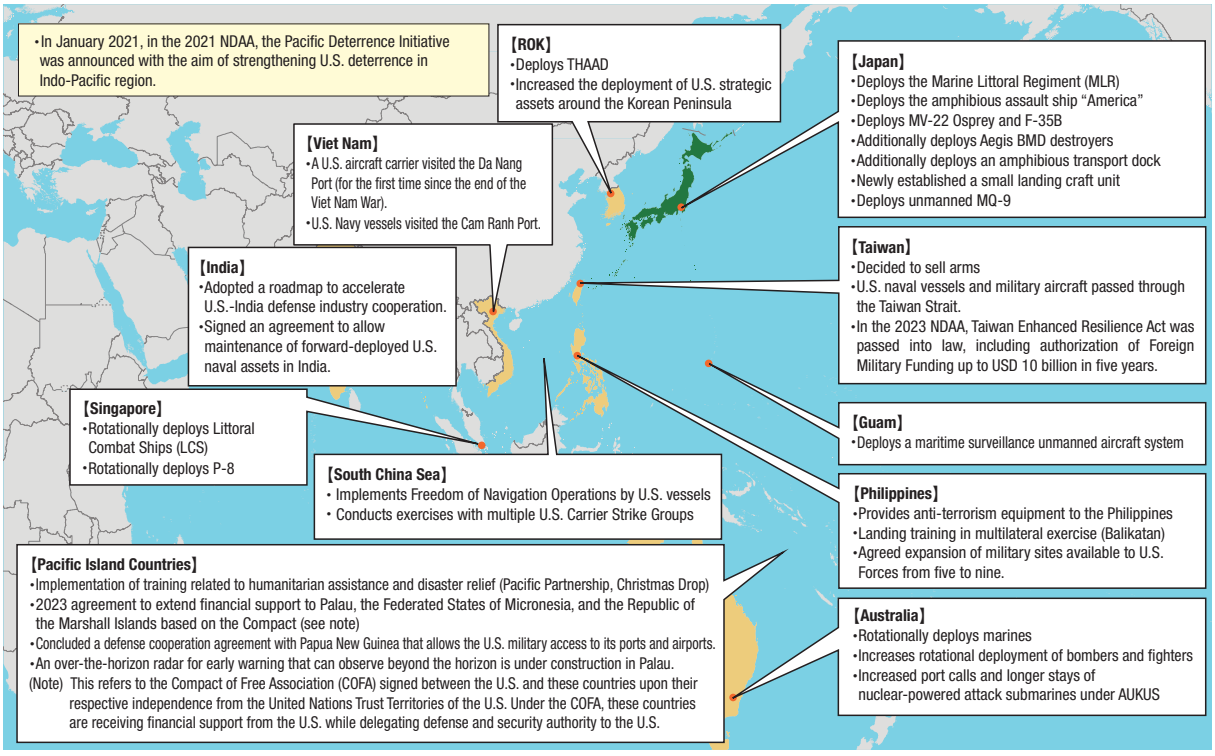
10 The figures of the U.S. Forces mentioned in this paragraph are the numbers of active-duty military personnel recorded in the published sources of the U.S. DoD (as of December 2024) and could change according to unit deployment.
11 Warheads that have been equipped in deployed ICBMs and SLBMs and warheads equipped in deployed strategic bombers (a deployed strategic bomber is counted as one warhead) are covered.
12 The figure as of May 1, 2023.

Fig. I-3-1-3 U.S. Forces Deployment Status



(Notes) 1 Source: Documents published by the DoD (as of December 31, 2024), etc.
2 Active-duty personnel from U.S. military services except for the Coast Guard are recorded. Individual sums do not add up to the total due to rounding.
3 The number of personnel in the Indo-Pacific region includes Hawaii, Guam, and other areas.

Fig. I-3-1-4 U.S. Engagements to the Indo-Pacific Region (image)



Perspective

Prospects for the Security Strategy of the United States after the Trump Administration

ARAKAKI Hiromu, Head, Global Security Division, National Institute for Defense Studies

The Trump administration is facing a more severe strategic environment than in the president's first term. Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which caused a huge shock to the international community, is still continuing even now. Meanwhile, strategic competition with China is intensifying and expanding from the military and diplomatic fields to the economic field of competing to develop AI and other emerging technologies. Moreover, North Korea and Iran are strengthening their comprehensive and strategic cooperative relations with Russia and China, respectively.

It is believed that in this context the largest focus in the security strategy of the Trump administration will be China. In recent years, the perceptions of China within the United States have deteriorated. Against the backdrop of China's coercive behavior around the East China Sea, South China Sea, and Taiwan Strait, the problem of the theft of the advanced technologies developed by U.S. companies, efforts to influence public opinion inside the United States, and other developments, the perception that the behavior of China is greatly threatening the security of the United States has become widely shared across the factions of both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

During its first term, the Trump administration changed the direction of its China policy away from the policy of engagement that had been continued since the Cold War era, and made a major shift toward a hard-line stance toward China. Looking at the personnel lineup in the second Trump administration, which includes Secretary of State Marco Rubio and many other hardliners on China, it is believed that this stance will continue going forward. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has made clear his stance that deterring war with China is a priority for the United States.

The policy approach advocated by the Trump administration of "peace through strength" places importance on firstly strengthening the military forces and economic power of the United States itself in order for it to gain an advantage in the strategic competition with China. At the same time, as the strategic environment becomes increasingly severe, the importance of allies is growing more and more in the security strategy of the United States.

There is a strong expectation within the Trump administration that allies will play a greater role in promoting peace and stability not only in the Indo-Pacific region, but also in Europe and the Middle East region, which are being greatly shaken by the war in Ukraine and the Gaza conflict.

Given this security strategy of the Trump administration, it is essential for Japan and other allies to reinforce their own capabilities. In addition to that, deepening cooperative relations among allies is also an important issue.

In the Indo-Pacific, in addition to bilateral relations with the United States, it is believed that reinforcement of Japan-U.S.-Australia, Japan-U.S.-ROK, and Japan-U.S.-Philippines relations, which are called minilateral relations, and deepening of cooperative relations between the four countries of Japan, the U.S., Australia, and India for realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" going forward are important policies for stopping unilateral changes to the status quo by force or coercion.

(Note) This column is an independent analysis from the researcher's academic perspective, and its contents do not represent an official government position.

Section 2 China

1 General Situation

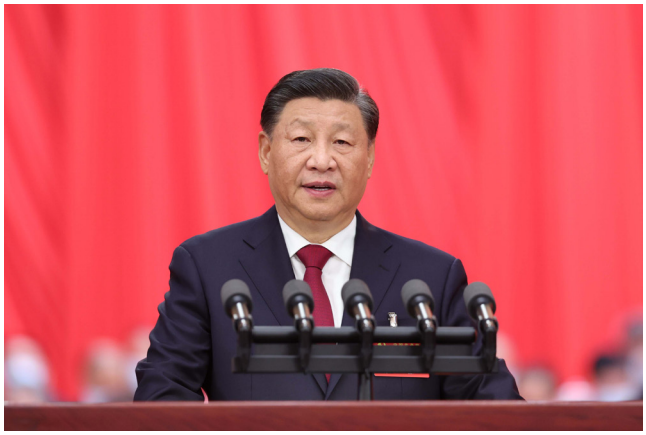
China, the world's most populous country, has a vast landmass surrounded by a long borderline as well as a long coastline. It also has various races, religions, and languages. China's pride in its unique history of having shaped a distinct culture and civilization, and semi-colonial experience in and after the 19th century are driving its desire for a strong nation and fueling its nationalism.

Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Central Committee (General Secretary Xi) in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), has established a power base in the CCP through actions such as purging leaders using an anti-corruption campaign. The concept of "Two Safeguards," meaning safeguarding the core status of General Secretary Xi in the CCP's Central Committee and party, and safeguarding the Committee's authority and centralized, unified leadership," was incorporated into the party's constitution at the 20th National Congress of the CCP (20th CCP Congress) held in October 2022. In addition, in the 1st Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee held immediately after the 20th CCP Congress, General Secretary Xi was reaffirmed for a 3rd term.

In 2014, China presented the concept of a holistic view of national security and established the National Security Commission of the Central Committee of the CCP. This was based on the idea that various areas are related to the country's security as a whole, including political, military, homeland, economic, cultural, societal, science and technology, cyber, ecological, resource, nuclear, overseas interests, outer space, deep sea, polar, and biological security. In addition to drawing up the "National Security Strategy (2021–2025)," China is advancing various legislation to strengthen the domestic counterintelligence system and bolster management of cyberspace.

China is also strongly opposed to any foreign intervention in the unification of China as well as any move towards the independence of Taiwan, and has repeatedly stated that although it will strive with utmost effort to realize a peaceful reunification, it will not promise to renounce the use of force. The Anti-Secession Law, enacted in March 2005, explicitly states non-renunciation of the use of force, specifying that, "In the event that the 'Taiwan independence' secessionist forces should act under any name or by any means to cause the fact of Taiwan's secession from China, or that major incidents entailing Taiwan's secession from China should occur, or that possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted, the state shall employ non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity." In the revised party constitution adopted at the 20th CCP Congress, the phrase "the CCP resolutely opposes and deters separatists seeking 'Taiwan Independence'" was added, and blocking the independence of Taiwan was placed as a party duty.

China is facing various domestic problems. Among the problems emerging are the spread of corruption among the leadership of the CCP and disparities between urban and rural areas, coastal and inland regions, and within cities, as well as environmental pollution. The spread of corruption has also been seen in the military, with at least 15 senior military officials identified as having been dismissed between July and December 2023, including the then Defense Minister Li Shangfu, who was removed in October 2023.[1] More recently, the pace of China's economic growth has slowed and the country is also expected to face issues associated with the rapid aging of the population, including problems related to pensions and other aspects of the social security system. The range of factors potentially destabilizing government administration has thus been expanding and becoming increasingly diverse. Furthermore, the international community continues to be highly interested in human rights issues in China, such as in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and the situation in Hong Kong.



General Secretary Xi Jinping giving a report at the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China [China News Service/Jiji Press Photo]

1 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

2 Military Affairs

1 General Situation

For more than 30 years, China has sustained high-level growth of its defense budget without transparency, engaging in broad, rapid improvement of its military power in qualitative and quantitative terms with focus on nuclear, missile, naval, and air forces. China has also intensified its unilateral changes to the status quo by force or coercion and such attempts in the sea and airspace of waters, such as the East China Sea and South China Sea, including its incursions into Japan's territorial waters and airspace around the Senkaku Islands. China is also expanding and intensifying its military activities in waters such as the Sea of Japan and Pacific Ocean, which impact Japan's national security.

In strengthening its military capabilities, China has so far emphasized improving its ability to carry out practical joint operations by modernizing its military through military reforms and other measures.

China has also been placing emphasis on the "informatization" of its military, with the aim of improving the military's overall operational capability through the acquisition of information superiority and hindering the enemy's ability to demonstrate its military power. For example, it has been rapidly expanding its capabilities in the cyber domain, enabling it to disrupt enemy communications networks, and in the field of electromagnetic spectrum, which offers the potential to render enemy radar ineffective. In the space domain, China is also focusing on securing supremacy in new areas, including continuing to strengthen its capabilities to limit its enemies' use of space. Bolstering these capabilities will reinforce China's **"Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD)" capabilities** and lead to the establishment of operational capabilities further afield.

Additionally, China is building its Integrated National Strategic System and Capabilities,[2] and is actively striving to develop and acquire cutting-edge technologies that can be used for military purposes. Such cutting-edge technologies include the use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and other so-called game-changing technologies that will completely change the nature of future combat.

Along with this strengthening of its military power, China has expanded beyond the so-called the first island chain and into the second island chain, including the East China Sea around the Senkaku Islands, the Sea of Japan, and even the Western Pacific, including around the Izu and Ogasawara Islands, intensifying activities in the entire area surrounding Japan. China is increasing military pressure on Taiwan and also promoting the establishment of military bases in the South China Sea. Moreover, China is further strengthening its cooperation with Russia, including in military activities.

China's current external stance, military activities, and other activities have become a matter of serious concern for Japan and the international community, and present an unprecedented and the greatest strategic challenge in ensuring the peace and security of Japan and the peace and stability of the international community, as well as in strengthening the international order based on the rule of law, to which Japan should respond with its comprehensive national power including its defense capabilities and in cooperation and collaboration with its ally, like-minded countries, and others.

KEY WORD

Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) capabilities

The A2/AD capabilities represent a concept given by the United States. Anti-Access or A2 capabilities refer mainly to long-range capabilities to block adversaries from entering some operating zones. Area-Denial or AD capabilities refer to short-range capabilities to limit adversaries' freedom of action within operating zones.

2 Defense Policies

China is emphasizing the role of its military as a strategic pillar for achieving its goal of creating world-class military forces and the Chinese Dream, which is the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In its defense white paper released in 2019, China stated the objective of its national defense policies to be protecting the sovereignty, security, and development interests of the state. These goals include protecting state interests overseas and supporting ongoing state development. It also stressed the idea of "active defense" as a military strategic policy, outlining a strategy of defense and advancement in operations and tactics.

Additionally, China has spoken of strengthening its military by building up national defense and a powerful military that are proportionate to the state's international standing and conform to state security and development interests. In combat, it emphasizes the ability to fight and win, discussing the acceleration of intelligentization, the enhancement of joint operational abilities, and the improvement of practical training standards. Such military buildup in China apparently indicates that China has given top priority to dealing with a

2 The report presented by General Secretary Xi Jinping at the 20th National Congress held in 2022 refers to strengthening and improving Integrated National Strategic System and Capabilities, bolstering the capacity building in the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (SASTIND), boosting the defense mobilization system and reserve army construction, thoroughly conducting security work and services for retired veterans, and solidifying and developing unity between the military and government, and the military and citizens.

Taiwan contingency by improving its capabilities to deter or deny Taiwan's independence and foreign military support for the Taiwanese independence and has recently considered the improvement of operational capabilities in more distant waters to protect its expanding overseas interests.

Furthermore, China seems to emphasize not only physical means but also non-physical means in military affairs and warfare. It regards the concept of "Three Warfare"—"Media Warfare," "Psychological Warfare," and "Legal Warfare"—as part of the political work of the military. In addition, China has set forth a policy of coordinating military struggle closely with political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and legal endeavors.

As for the timeline for achieving the goals of the development of national defense and military forces, General Secretary Xi's report to the 19th CCP National Congress in October 2017 and the defense white paper released in 2019 noted that China would try to (1) fundamentally achieve mechanization and make great progress in informatization to dramatically improve strategic capabilities by 2020, (2) fundamentally complete the modernization of national defense and military forces by 2035, and (3) generally transform Chinese forces into world-class forces by the mid-21st century.

In the 5th Plenary Session held in October 2020, the goal year for 1st stage mentioned above, China's determination to achieve a struggle goal for the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the PLA in 2027 was announced. The new "three-step development strategy" was stipulated in the so-called "historic resolution" in 6th Plenary Session in 2021, which consists of the achievement of the 100th anniversary struggle goal of the PLA by 2027 as the first step, and achievement of the aforementioned goals by 2035 and the mid-21st century as the second and third steps respectively.

Although China has not defined what it means by "world-class forces," it has been pointed out that China may be trying to develop military forces that equal or in some cases surpass the U.S. military. Furthermore, it has also been pointed out that China aims to build "world-class forces" capable of "intelligentized warfare" by acquiring advanced technology and becoming an "innovation superpower."[3] In light of this, it is suggested that China is planning to offset its military power gap with the U.S. military, and may recognize that the "intelligentization" of its forces is a necessary condition for this. It is thought that China will aim to build an army that can "fight and win a war" against the U.S. military in the "intelligentized warfare" of the future.[4]

Based on that recognition, it is expected that China will further accelerate the military modernization against the backdrop of national power development and General Secretary Xi's enhancement of his power base in the CCP in his third term and expansion of his power as Chairman of the Central Military Commission[5].

3 Transparency Concerning Defense Policies and Military Affairs

China has neither set out a clear and specific future vision of its military strengthening, nor ensured adequate transparency of its decision-making process in relation to military and security affairs. Although China had released a defense white paper roughly every two years since 1998, it has not released a white paper in recent years since "China's National Defense in the New Era" released in July 2019 for the first time in four years. Even the white paper did not sufficiently clarify the specific situation of equipment possession, procurement goals and results, the organization and deployment of major units, the military's major operations and training results, and the breakdown of national defense expenditures.

Incidents in which Chinese authorities provide factually inaccurate explanations or refuse to admit facts regarding Chinese military activities have been confirmed, inciting concerns over China's military decision-making and actions. For example, the submerged transit of a Chinese Navy submarine through Japan's contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands was confirmed in January 2018, but China did not acknowledge this. In the same way, in the cases of submarines in the contiguous zone around Amami Oshima Island presumed to belong to China confirmed in June 2020 and September 2021, China did not acknowledge this fact. On the contrary, there were some Chinese media reports that criticized the Japanese side by claiming they were making exaggerations.

China's influence in the international community has risen politically, economically, and militarily. It has become increasingly important for China to improve its transparency regarding defense policies and military affairs, provide fact-based explanations about its activities, and share and observe international rules as a responsible country in the international community to allay concerns about China. It is strongly hoped that China will increase transparency through such efforts as specific and accurate information disclosure.

4 National Defense Budget

China announced that its national defense budget for FY2025 was approximately RMB 1,784.665 billion (approximately JPY 37,477.9 billion when the value is mechanically converted

3 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2021)

4 There is a view that "intelligentization" of the military provides an excellent opportunity for a latecomer's military to leap ahead in development and thereby rapidly surpass other advanced-level militaries.

5 The Central Military Commission is a leading and commanding organ to China's armed forces. Formally, there are the CCP CMC and the People's Republic of China CMC. However, each consists of the same members, indicating both commissions as an organ for the party to control the armed forces.

at 21 JPY per RMB.).[6] This is around 7.2% growth from the budget of the previous fiscal year according to China's announcement. China's announced defense budget has been increasing at a rapid pace, and the nominal size of China's announced defense budget has increased approximately 28 times in the three decades since fiscal 1995, and approximately two times in the decade since fiscal 2015.

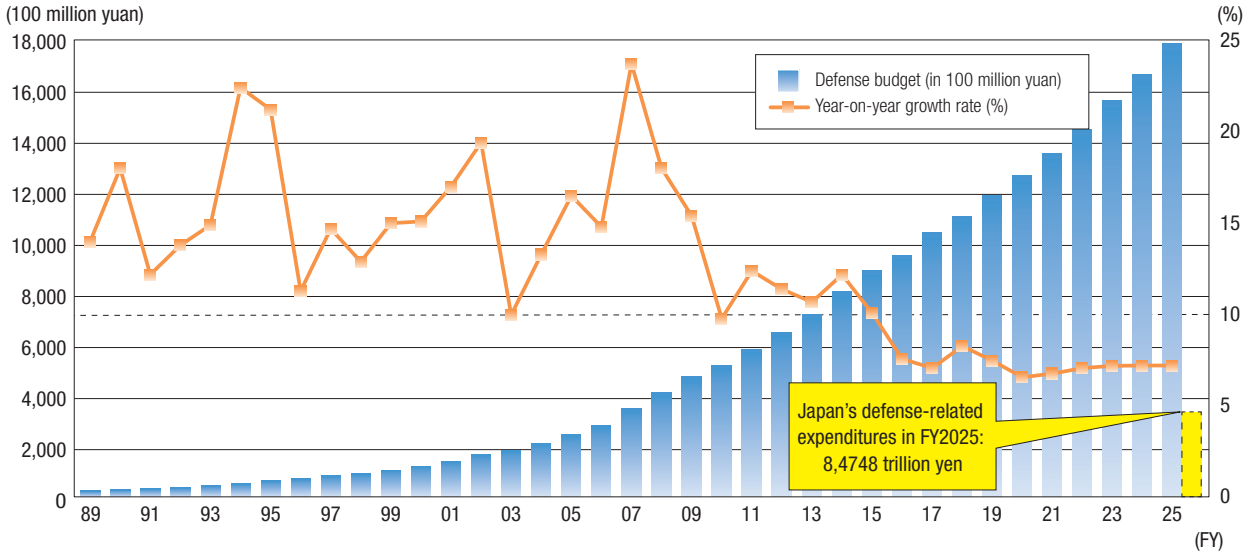
China positions the buildup of defense capabilities as important a task as economic development. It is believed that China has continued to invest resources in the improvement of its defense capabilities in tandem with its economic development. However, there have been many years in which the announced annual national defense budget increase rate exceeded the economic growth (an increase in gross domestic product [GDP]). Attention is to be paid to how the slowdown in China's economic growth would affect its national defense budget.

In addition, the amount of the released defense budget is considered to be only a part of its actual military expenditures. For example, it is believed that the released defense budget does not include foreign research and development (R&D) expenses. According to an analysis of the U.S. DoD, actual defense spending was significantly higher than the announced national defense budget.[7]

As for a breakdown of the national defense budget, past defense white papers specified personnel, training and sustainment, and equipment expenses for the announced national defense budgets for FY2007, FY2009 and FY2010-2017 (and expenses for active, reserve and militia forces for FY2007 and FY2009). However, no more details have been given.

See Fig. I-3-2-1 (Changes in China's Announced Defense Budget)

Fig. I-3-2-1 Changes in China's Announced Defense Budget



(Note) This basically shows the defense budget within "the central government's general public budget," which had been named as "the central fiscal expenditures" prior to FY2014. Year-on-year growth rate compares the budget of a given year against the initial budget of the previous year. Note that the FY2002 defense budget was calculated based on the increased amount from the defense budget in the previous FY because only the amount and rate of growth were released. For FY2016 and FY2018-2025, the amounts of "the central government expenditures," which are part of the central government's general public budget, are used because they were the only announced amounts. Figures for year-on-year growth rate include figures announced by China.

5 Military Posture

China's armed forces are composed of the PLA, the People's Armed Police Force (PAP), and the militia. It is provided that these bodies be instructed and commanded by the Central Military Commission (CMC). The PLA is defined as a people's force created and led by the CCP, and is comprised of forces including the Ground Force, Navy, Air Force, Rocket Force, Aerospace Force, Cyberspace Force, Information Support Force, and Joint Logistics Support Force (integrated logistical support force).

The PAP is designed to engage mainly in patrol, emergency response, counterterrorism, maritime rights protection and law enforcement, emergency rescue, defense operations, etc.

6 The announced defense budget of China is rapidly increasing. The budget of FY2025 is about 4.4 times larger than defense-related expenditures of Japan. Japan's defense-related expenditures increased to approximately 1.8 times the level around 30 years ago.

7 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

The militia is planned to engage in economic construction, etc., in peacetime and undertake logistic support missions in an emergency.

(1) Military Reform

In recent years, China is said to have been engaged in military reforms seen as the largest in its history.

China is also said to have largely completed central military reforms by the end of 2016. Specifically, they abolished the PLA's seven Military Regions and created five new Theaters with primary responsibility for command of operations, namely, the Eastern Theater, Southern Theater, Western Theater, Northern Theater, and Central Theater. They also formed the PLA Army (PLAA) Headquarters, ranked equally with the PLA Navy (PLAN) and PLA Air Force (PLAAF) Headquarters, the Rocket Force (PLARF), the then Strategic Support Force (PLASSF), and the Joint Logistics Support Force (PLAJLSF). Moreover, the headquarters for the entire PLA was replaced by 15 functional sections under the CMC, including the Joint Staff Department, Political Work Department, Logistics Support Department (supply), and Equipment Development Department.

On the other hand, there are also moves to reorganize the central-level organizations. In April 2024, the Information Support Force, a new branch, was created and the previous PLASSF was discontinued. In association with this, it has been noted that the Aerospace Force and Cyberspace Force, both of which had been under PLASSF, were reorganized into military branches.

Chairman Xi regards strengthening joint operational capabilities as important, and these series of reforms are believed to be aimed at building a more combat-ready military. In addition, it has been noted that the reorganization of the headquarters is a means of tackling corruption at the center of the military. Persons close to and deeply trusted by Xi Jinping are actively appointed as members of the CMC; for example, Zhang Youxia remained in his position as Vice Chairman of the CMC in the 1st Plenary Session after the 20th CCP Congress held in October 2022. Given these points, it is thought that Chairman Xi is attempting to further enhance his leadership in the CMC and the military.

(2) Nuclear and Missile Forces

China has continued independent efforts to develop nuclear weapons and missiles for their delivery since the mid-1950s, indicating its apparent attempt to ensure nuclear deterrence, supplement its conventional forces with nuclear capabilities and secure its influence on the international community.

It is regarded that China's nuclear strategy is to deter any nuclear attack on its territory by maintaining a nuclear force structure able to conduct retaliatory nuclear attacks on a limited number of targets such as cities in adversary countries, should China be subject to nuclear attacks. China has explained that it is committed to "no first use" of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, to "unconditional negative security assurance" that it would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones unconditionally, and to keeping its nuclear capabilities at the minimum level required for national security. In recent years, however, doubts have been expressed about the explanation.[8]

China is aiming to modernize, diversify, and expand its nuclear capabilities. It is increasing production of nuclear warheads and investing in the means to deliver nuclear weapons by land, sea, and air to increase their numbers. The number of operational nuclear warheads in its possession exceeds 600 as of 2024, and it has been pointed out that it may exceed 1,000 by 2030 and continue to increase until 2035.[9] It is believed that China plans to strengthen deterrence against the United States and will continue to place importance on nuclear and missile capabilities in the future.

China possesses ballistic missiles of various types and ranges, including ICBMs, SLBMs, intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs), and short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs). The update of China's ballistic missile forces from a liquid propellant system to a solid propellant system is improving their survivability and readiness. Moreover, it is believed that China is working to increase their performance by such means as extending ranges, improving targeting accuracy, and employing maneuverable reentry vehicles (MaRVs) and multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs).

China's main ICBMs, its strategic nuclear asset, had been the fixed-site liquid-propellant DF-5 missiles. Recently, China has been deploying mobile DF-31 with a solid propellant mounted onto a transporter-erector launcher (TEL). In addition, China has reportedly deployed the DF-41, which is a new type of ICBM that first appeared in the October 2019 military parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of the country's founding. It is said to have a range of approximately 11,200 km and be capable of carrying up to three warheads. China is also building ICBM silos and is reported to have constructed three new launch facilities in 2022, including more than 300 new silos.[10] It has also been pointed out that China is pursuing the development of a missile system equipped with a conventional warhead that has intercontinental range to enable it to threaten the U.S. mainland with conventional forces.[11] In September 2024, China announced it had launched an ICBM loaded with a dummy warhead over the Pacific Ocean during a training exercise. That was the

8 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
9 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
10 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
11 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

Image released by China when the ICBM was launched (September 2024) [EPA/Jiji]

first time in 44 years since 1980 that China had launched an ICBM over the Pacific Ocean. With regard to submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), it is considered that Jin-class Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBN) equipped with JL-2 with an estimated range of approximately 7,200 km are operational. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that JL-3s, reportedly with a range of 10,000 km, have already been loaded into the Jing-class SSBNs, making them possible to reach the mainland United States from China's coastal waters.[12]

China's missile forces have been put outside the framework of the U.S.-Russia Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, and China holds numerous amounts of ground-launched missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 km that had been subjected to the INF treaty. It is also deemed that China is ahead of the United States in relation to ground-launched ballistic missiles and cruise missiles.[13] As for the IRBMs/ MRBMs covering the Indo-Pacific region including Japan, China has the mobile solid-propellant DF-21 and DF-26, which can be transported and operated on TELs. These are viewed as capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads. Furthermore, DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM), called "carrier killer," have been deployed, which carry conventional warheads to attack overwater ships including aircraft carriers. The DF-26, which has a range including Guam and is called "Guam killer," is considered a "second-generation ASBM" developed on the basis of the DF-21D. Its deployment was announced in April 2018. China also possesses the CJ-20 (CJ-10) long-range land-attack cruise missile with a range of at least 1,500 km, as well as the H-6 bomber that is capable of carrying this cruise missile. It is deemed that these missiles complement ballistic missile forces, covering the Indo-Pacific region including Japan. In the military parade to celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding in October 2019, CJ-100/DF-100, which is said to be a supersonic cruise missile, also made its first public appearance. The deployment of these ASBMs and cruise missiles is expected to strengthen China's "A2/AD" capabilities.

Concerning SRBMs, China has deployed a large number of solid-propellant DF-16, DF-15, and DF-11 missiles facing Taiwan. It is believed that their ranges cover a part of Japan's

DF-41 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum firing range: 11,200 km

[Description]
New intercontinental-range ballistic missile showcased for the first time at the military parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of China's founding in October 2019. Viewed as capable of carrying up to three multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) and having highly accurate attack capabilities.

DF-41 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
[Imaginechina/Jiji Press Photo]

JL-2 Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM)

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum firing range: 7,200 km

[Description]
Submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) viewed as strategic nuclear forces of Chinese Navy. It is pointed out that China is developing and deploying JL-3 SLBMs (maximum range 10,000 km) with extended ranges for further strengthening strategic nuclear forces.

JL-2 Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles
[Avalon/Jiji Press Photo]

DF-17 Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM)

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum firing range: 2,000 km

[Description]
Medium-range ballistic missiles viewed as having been developed based on DF-16 SRBMs and as being capable of carrying a Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV). Showcased for the first time at the military parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of China's founding in October 2019.

DF-17 Medium Range Ballistic Missile
[Avalon/Jiji Press Photo]

12 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
13 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2020)

Southwestern Islands including the Senkaku Islands.

Furthermore, China is believed to be rapidly developing multiple models of hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs) to acquire striking power capable of penetrating missile defenses. In the military parade to mark the 70th anniversary of China's founding in October 2019, the **DF-17** MRBM viewed as capable of carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle made its first public appearance. The U.S. DoD has pointed out that China began DF-17s operations in 2020 and some older SRBMs may be replaced with DF-17.[14] Furthermore, China conducted its first orbital launch of an ICBM carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle in July 2021. The vehicle reportedly flew approximately 40,000 km in over 100 minutes, and did not strike its target, but came close.[15] These weapons are said to be more difficult for missiles to intercept because they fly low at very high speeds and are highly maneuverable.

China seems to be building a missile defense system and is believed to be focusing on developing related technologies, such as the "HQ-19" ballistic missile defense system.

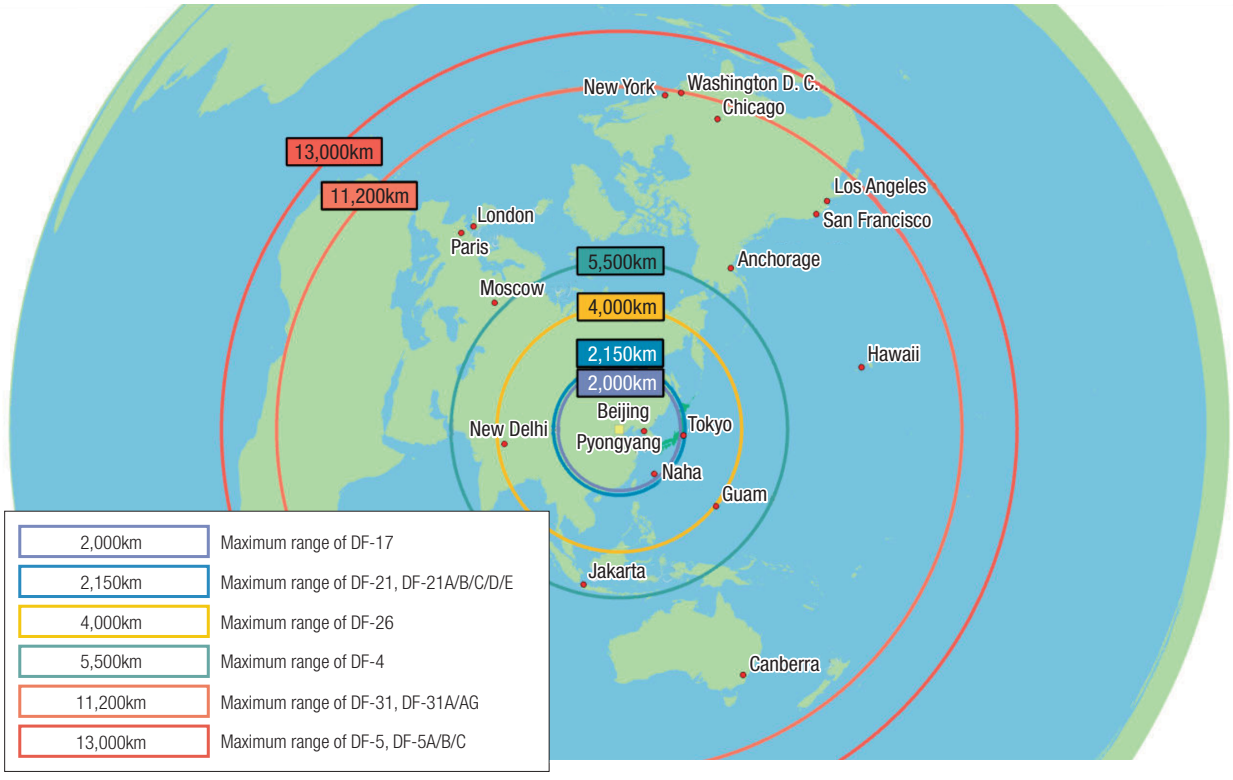
Cooperation with Russia has also been noted, with joint missile defense computer exercises "Aerospace Safety" having been held in 2016 and 2017. In May 2019, two surface-to-air missile systems "S-400s" introduced from Russia were reportedly deployed near Beijing. In October of the same year, Russian President Putin stated that Russia was helping China build a "missile-attack early warning system." Furthermore, the U.S. DoD has pointed out the possibility that China has at least three early warning satellites in orbit as of 2022.[16] Given that ballistic missile defense technology has the potential to be applied to missiles capable of destroying satellites, attention will focus on future Chinese missile defense trends.

See Fig. I-3-2-2 (Range of Ballistic Missiles from China (Beijing) (image)), Fig. I-3-2-3 (Changes in the Number of China's Ground-Launched Ballistic Missile Launchers)

(3) Ground Forces

China has the third largest ground forces in the world, following India and North Korea, with approximately 960,000 personnel. China has sought to improve the operational capabilities of ground forces pursuing the downsizing, multifunctionality, and modularization of military units. Specifically, it is believed

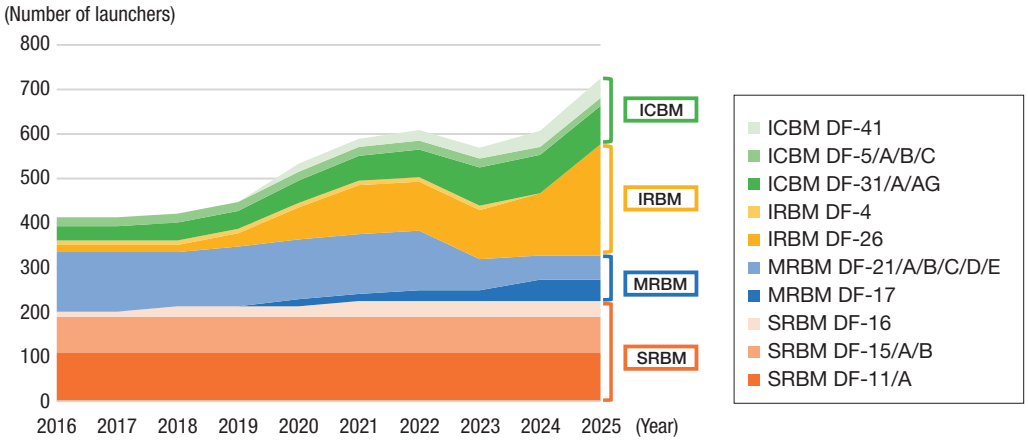
Fig. I-3-2-2 Range of Ballistic Missiles from China (Beijing) (image)



(Note) The figure above is for illustrative purpose, showing the range of each missile from Beijing.

14 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
15 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
16 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

Fig. I-3-2-3 Changes in the Number of China's Ground-Launched Ballistic Missile Launchers



(Notes) 1 The numbers of launchers, missiles, and warheads of ballistic missiles possessed by China are not publicized.
2 This data classifies the number of launchers possessed by China into ICBM, IRBM, MRBM, and SRBM according to the general standard based on "The Military Balance" of each year.

to be shifting from a regional defense type to a region-wide mobility type and is improving mobility by motorizing and mechanizing infantry units, as well as strengthening airborne units of the Air Force, amphibious units of the Army and Navy, special forces, and helicopter units.

It is said that the Navy Marine Corps is still in the process of reinforcement. It is reportedly acquiring equipment and conducting training necessary to become an expeditionary force. On the other hand, it repeatedly conducts training for amphibious warfare including using private Ro-Ro ships.[17] It is also pointed out that these activities suggest that Navy Marine Corps troops are to be flexibly utilized in multiple roles in the scenario of the Taiwan affair.[18]

The Chinese Army is reportedly conducting trainings that focus on combined combat operations and incorporating mock confrontation drills to improve its ability to conduct practical operations. China has conducted on a regular basis Stride, Firepower, and Sharp Sword maneuver-exercises that cut across multiple regions. They are aiming at verifying and improving the capabilities necessary to deploy army troops to remote areas, such as long-distance maneuvering capabilities of the Army, and logistical support capabilities that include mobilizing militias and public transportation. The U.S. DoD has indicated that the Chinese Army conducted multiple large-scale exercises at training areas across the country in 2023.[19] These facts suggest China's attempt to improve its practical operational capabilities.

The above described PAP consists of internal security corps, which are organized and established based on administrative divisions such as provinces and autonomous regions, mobile corps, which do not have fixed areas in charge and perform missions across different areas, and the Coast Guard, described later, which is said to safeguard national sovereignty, security, and maritime interests as well as implement law enforcement. The PAP is said to own various equipment such as armored vehicles, rotary-wing aircraft, and heavy machine guns. Furthermore, it is reported that the PAP focuses on maintaining internal security and joint operations with the PLA, and is developing capabilities for readiness, mobility and counter-terrorism operations.[20]

See Fig. I-3-2-4 (Deployment of the People's Liberation Army (image))

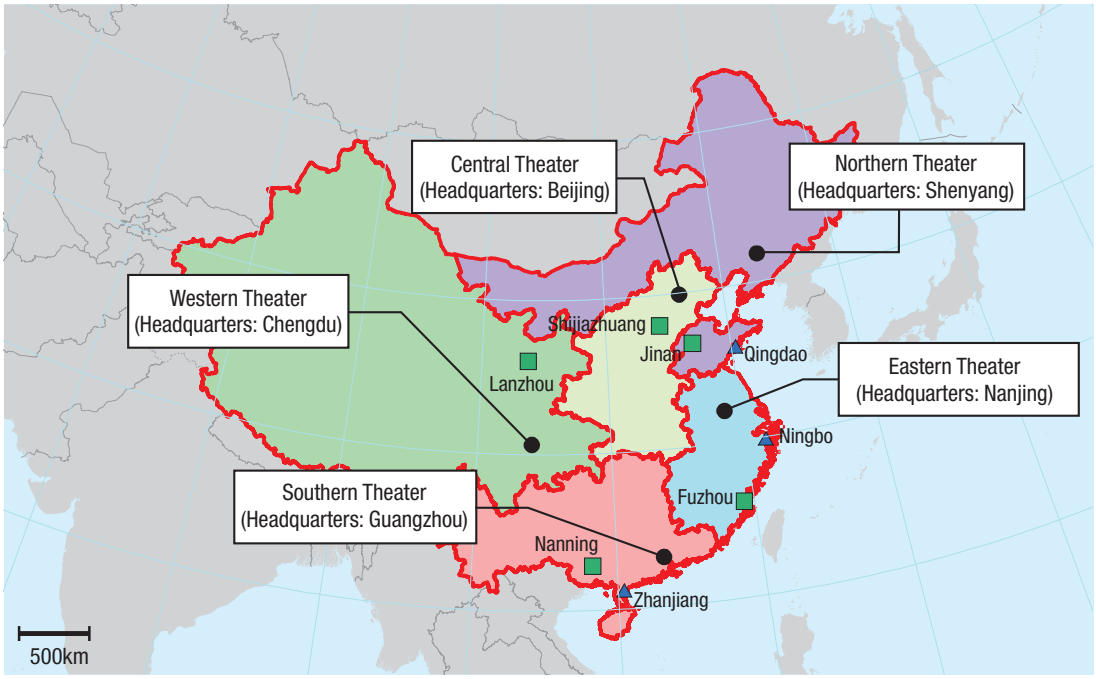
(4) Naval Forces

The naval forces consist of three fleets: North Sea Fleet, East Sea Fleet, and South Sea Fleet. China's naval forces, which own a larger number of ships than the U.S. Navy, are said to be the largest navy in the world.[21] The Chinese Navy is rapidly modernizing, increasing production of surface combatant vessels such as the Jankai II-class frigates, which are highly capable of fleet air defense and anti-ship attack, and the Renhai-class destroyers, which are the largest in the Chinese Navy, and domestically produced Yuan class-submarines, which have their strength on quietness, as well as reinforcing landing ships and aircraft carriers.

The Renhai-class destroyer is said to be equipped with a vertical launch system (VLS) with 112 launch cells, almost twice the number of launch cells as the new Luyang III-class destroyer. This VLS is said to be capable of launching long-range land-attack cruise missiles and YJ-18 anti-ship cruise

17 Roll-on-Roll-off ships Generally, ships to which vehicles loaded with cargo are driven aboard on their own wheels, that can be transported with cargo.
18 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2022)
19 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
20 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
21 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

Fig. I-3-2-4 Deployment of the People's Liberation Army (image)



(Notes) 1 ●Theater headquarters ■Theater Army organization ▲Theater Navy headquarters
2 Theater boundaries have not been officially announced. The above map is prepared based on U.S. DoD reports, media reports, etc.

missiles with a supersonic terminal attack capability, as well as ASBMs. It has also been pointed out that the destroyer is being considered as a launch vehicle to defend against ballistic missiles in the mid-course phase,[22] and that this suggests a plan for carrying anti-ship HGVs. At least eight Renhai-class destroyers have been in service by April 2024, and they may become the key to the Chinese Navy's long-range missile capabilities in the future.

As for landing ships, large Yusheng-class landing ships have been launched one after another. The 1st type of warship, Hainan, was commissioned in the Southern Theater in April 2021; the 2nd type, Guangxi, in the Eastern Theater in December of the same year; and the 3rd type, Anhui, in 2022. The 4th type of warship is already undergoing sea trials and will reportedly be commissioned in early 2025. Furthermore, the amphibious assault ship Sichuan, the first vessel of the new Yulan-class that succeeds the Yushen-class, was launched in December 2024. The Yulan-class amphibious assault ship is reputedly equipped with an electromagnetic catapult, and capable of additional attack and ISR capabilities using fixed-wing, carrier-based aircraft.

In addition, China is currently operating two aircraft carriers and is in the process of building a third. The first aircraft carrier, Liaoning, was commissioned in September 2012, and the first domestically produced aircraft carrier (China's second aircraft carrier), Shandong[23], was commissioned in December 2019, with each operating in the South China Sea, East China Sea, and Pacific Ocean. Moreover, as of the end of March 2025, the second domestically built aircraft carrier (China's third aircraft carrier), **Fujian**, which is undergoing sea trials, is believed to be larger than the Liaoning and Shandong, and equipped with an electromagnetic catapult system capable of operating fixed-wing, early warning aircraft. This has been highlighted as improving the operational capabilities of the

Aircraft carrier "Fujian"

[Specifications, performance]
Full-load displacement:
Over 80,000 tons
Speed: 30 knots
(approximately 56 km/h)
Number of aircraft: 60-70,
including J-15 fighters, KJ-600
early warning aircraft, and others

[Description]
China's second domestically built aircraft carrier. It is thought to be equipped with an electromagnetic catapult. Its first sea trial was conducted in May 2024 (noted by general news outlets, etc.).

China's second domestically built aircraft carrier "Fujian," launched in Shanghai in June 2022
[China News Service/Jiji Press Photo]

22 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
23 The "Shandong" is a ski-jump type aircraft carrier that is said to be an improved version of the "Liaoning," and it has been pointed out that it can accommodate increased number of aircraft on board.

carrier-based aircraft. It has also been pointed out that China has plans to build nuclear-powered aircraft carriers.

China is believed to have been developing and deploying unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) that are available for military purposes. Such equipment is considered an asymmetric force that is relatively inexpensive, yet capable of interfering with the enemy's ability to gain superiority at sea and in the water.

Given these developments concerning the naval forces, China appears to be steadily building up capabilities for conducting operations in more distant waters in addition to near sea defense. It has also been noted that in the near future the Chinese Navy will have the capability to make long-range precision strikes against land targets using land-attack cruise missiles from submarines and surface combatant ships, and that the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities of surface combatants, as well as fixed and rotary wing aircraft, have significantly improved, although robust deep-water ASW capability is lacking.[24] Ongoing monitoring of related developments is needed.

The People's Armed Police Force (PAP), one of China's armed forces other than the military, has the Coast Guard, which is said to be the world's largest maritime law enforcement agency, under its umbrella. In recent years, efforts have been made to increase the size and armament of its vessels. At the end of December 2024, the China Coast Guard possessed 161 ships with full load displacement of 1,000 tons or more,[25] including two 10,000-ton-class patrol ships that are among the world's largest. Operations of vessels equipped with artillery have also been observed. The newer ships are significantly larger and more capable than older ships, and most of them are equipped with helicopter facilities, high-capacity water cannons, guns ranging from 20mm to 76mm, and other equipment, so that it is pointed out that they are able to withstand long-term operations and engage in distant-water activities.[26]

The enhanced cooperation between the PLA and the China Coast Guard has also been confirmed. In July 2018, the China Coast Guard, which had been conducting maritime surveillance operations under the direction of the State Council's Ministry of Public Security, was transferred to the PAP as the PAP Coast Guard and is currently operated under the PAP, which receives unified guidance and command from the Central Military Commission. After the transfer, former naval officers were reportedly given major Coast Guard posts, including its top position, indicating enhanced cooperation between the military and Coast Guard from both organizational and personnel perspectives. It has been noted that retired naval destroyers and frigates were delivered to the Coast Guard, suggesting that the military has been supporting the Coast Guard in terms of equipment as well. It has also been noted that the military forces and Coast Guard are conducting joint navigation and training. The enhanced cooperation between the PLA and PAP, including the Coast Guard, is believed to be intended to strengthen operational capabilities in gray-zone situations.

Amid such a situation, in June 2020, "Law of the People's Republic of China in the People's Armed Police Force (PAP Law) was revised, and "protection of maritime interests and law enforcement" were added to the duties of the PAP. The revised version also stipulates that the PAP shall be centrally and uniformly guided by the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the People's Republic of China. The Coast Guard Law of the People's Republic of China (Coast Guard Law), which stipulates the Coast Guard's responsibilities and authority including the use of weapons, was newly enacted in January 2021 and entered into force in February 2021. In June 2024, procedural regulations also came into effect for the execution of the Coast Guard Headquarters' administrative laws, which prescribe details of law enforcement by the China Coast Guard. The Coast Guard Law includes problematic provisions—such as vague definitions of applicable maritime areas and the authority to use weapons—that are seen as inconsistent with international law. The Coast Guard Law must not be allowed to infringe on the legitimate interests of the relevant countries including Japan. Furthermore, it is completely unacceptable that the law would increase tensions in maritime areas such as the East China Sea.

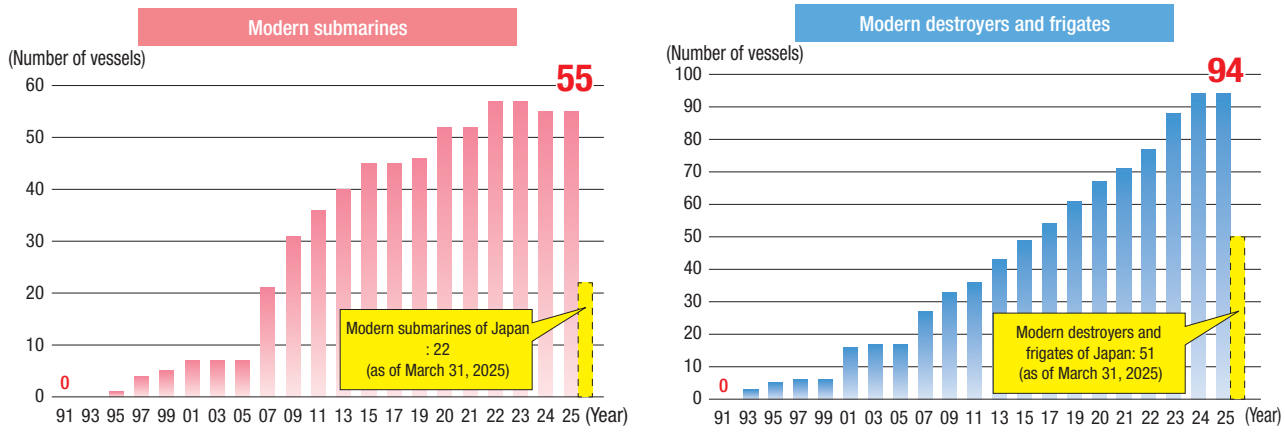
It is pointed out that, among the militia, whose status is China's armed force other than the military, the so-called maritime militia is playing the role of the front guard for supporting China's maritime interests. The maritime militia is said to operate in the South China Sea, etc. and consist of fishermen and residents of isolated islands.[27]

Given the China's emphasis on the necessity of "fully exerting the overall power of the military, police and militia" on the seas, attention should be paid to these asymmetrical forces, too.

See Fig. I-3-2-5 (China's Main Maritime Forces), Fig. I-3-2-6 (The Coast Guard's Transfer to the PAP), Fig. I-3-2-7 (Buildup of China Coast Guard Vessels)

24 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
25 According to "Japan Coast Guard Annual Report 2025," the Japan Coast Guard
26 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
27 In addition, it is pointed out that while the maritime militia often rents fishing vessels from companies or individual fishermen, China has built a state-owned fishing fleet in the South China Sea for the maritime militia. It is also pointed out that the Hainan provincial government, adjacent to the South China Sea, ordered the building of 84 large militia fishing vessels with reinforced hulls and ammunition storage, which the militia received by the end of 2016, along with extensive subsidies to encourage frequent operations in the Spratly Islands. Since this maritime militia unit recruits military veterans as its members to create a unit on par with a career soldier unit, it is reported that salary is paid separately from its commercial fishing activities.

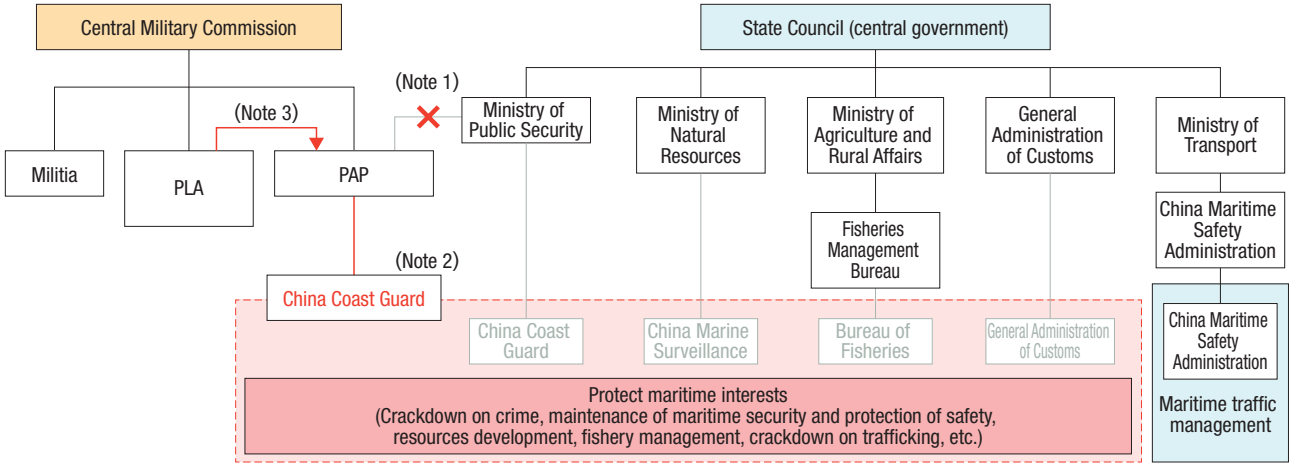
Fig. I-3-2-5 China's Main Maritime Forces



(Note) Total number of Jin-class, Shang-class, Song-class, Yuan-class and Kilo-class submarines

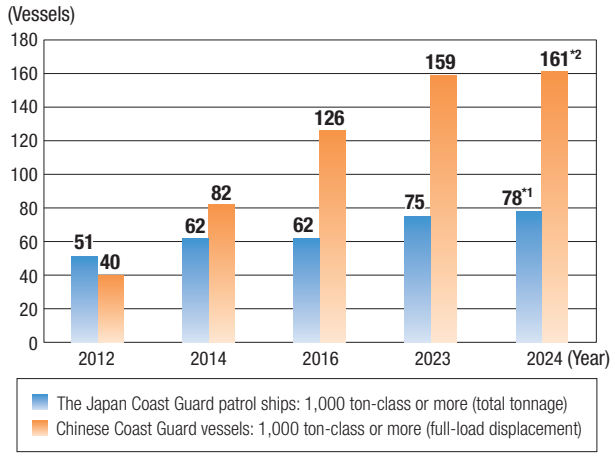
(Notes) 1 Total number of Renhai-class, Luhu-class, Luhai-class, Sovremenny-class, Luyang-class and Luzhou-class destroyers, and Jiangwei-class and Jiangkai-class frigates.
2 Additionally, China has 49 Jiangdao-class corvettes (in 2025).

Fig. I-3-2-6 The Coast Guard's Transfer to the PAP



(Notes) 1 Unification of PAP leadership and command system (January 1, 2018)
2 Transfer of the Coast Guard to the PAP (July 1, 2018)
3 The amendment to the People's Armed Police Law (June 21, 2020)
→ In emergency situations, the Central Military Commission, or else the military of the Theater Commands, can issue orders to the divisions of the People's Armed Police Force (PAP)
4 The scope of the China Coast Guard that is transferred to the PAP and placed under its command is unknown
5 Units enclosed by a red dotted line belonged to the China Coast Guard before the realignment (2013)

Fig. I-3-2-7 Buildup of China Coast Guard Vessels



(Notes) 1 Number of ships as of the end of each fiscal year
2 Number of vessels as of December 31 of each year; Estimation based on publicized information (may be altered in the future)
*1 According to "Japan Coast Guard Annual Report 2025," the Japan Coast Guard

J-20 fighter

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum speed: 3,063 km/h

[Description]
A fifth-generation stealth fighter jet. The Chinese Ministry of National Defense announced in February 2018 that the J-20 has started to be delivered to operational units.

J-20 fighter
[Imaginechina/Jiji Press Photo]

H-6 bomber

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum speed: 1,015 km/h
Main armament (H-6K): Air-to-surface cruise missiles (maximum firing range over 1,500 km)

[Description]
Indigenous bomber. The H-6 can carry cruise missiles (CJ-20) that can be loaded with nuclear warheads.

H-6 bomber

(5) Air Forces

China's air forces consist mainly of the Air Force and Navy's air units. As for modern fourth-generation fighters, China has introduced from Russia the Su-27 and Su-30 and the Su-35 latest fourth-generation fighter. China is also developing its own domestic modern fighters. China has started the mass production of the J-11B fighter, a suspected copy of the Su-27, and the J-16 fighter, a suspected copy of the Su-30, as well as the domestic J-10 fighter. The J-15 carrier-based fighters, which are also carried on the aircraft carriers "Liaoning" and "Shandong," are said to have been copied from the Russian Su-33. The catapult-capable J-15T was exhibited for the first time in 2024 at the 15th Zhuhai Airshow. China is deploying **J-20** fifth-generation **fighters** and developing J-35 fighter. It has been pointed out that J-35 fighter could be the base for developing the replacement for the J-15 carrier-based fighter.

As China is continuing the modernization of its bombers as well, the Air Force has increased the number of **H-6 bombers**, which are capable of carrying long-range land-attack cruise missiles with nuclear capability. In an attempt to improve bombers' long-range operation capabilities, the Air Force has reportedly begun to operate H-6N bombers that can take advantage of aerial refueling to fly longer. It is believed to be developing a new long-range stealth bomber called H-20. It is also pointed out that China is developing an air-launched ballistic missile with nuclear capability to be carried by such bombers. Moreover, it has also been pointed out that China is developing a stealth fighter-bomber.

China is also making continuous efforts to improve capabilities which are essential for operations of modern air power by introducing the H-6U and IL-78M aerial refueling tankers and the KJ-500 and KJ-2000 early warning and control aircraft. Since July 2016, China has promoted the deployment of the indigenously developed Y-20 large transport aircraft. The Y-20U, an aerial refueling tanker based on this transport aircraft, has also been deployed since June 2021.

China is rapidly developing a variety of domestic unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), including high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) UAVs for reconnaissance and other purposes as well as those capable of carrying weapons such as missiles. Some of these are deployed and actively exported. In fact, it is suggested that the Chinese Air Force has created a UAV unit for attack missions and frequently used UAVs for reconnaissance and other purposes in waters and airspace surrounding China. In 2023, the KVD-002 UAV, which is expected to be used in support of army helicopters, was unveiled for the first time. Moreover, it has been noted that China is improving "Swarm" technology to operate a large number of small low-cost UAVs.

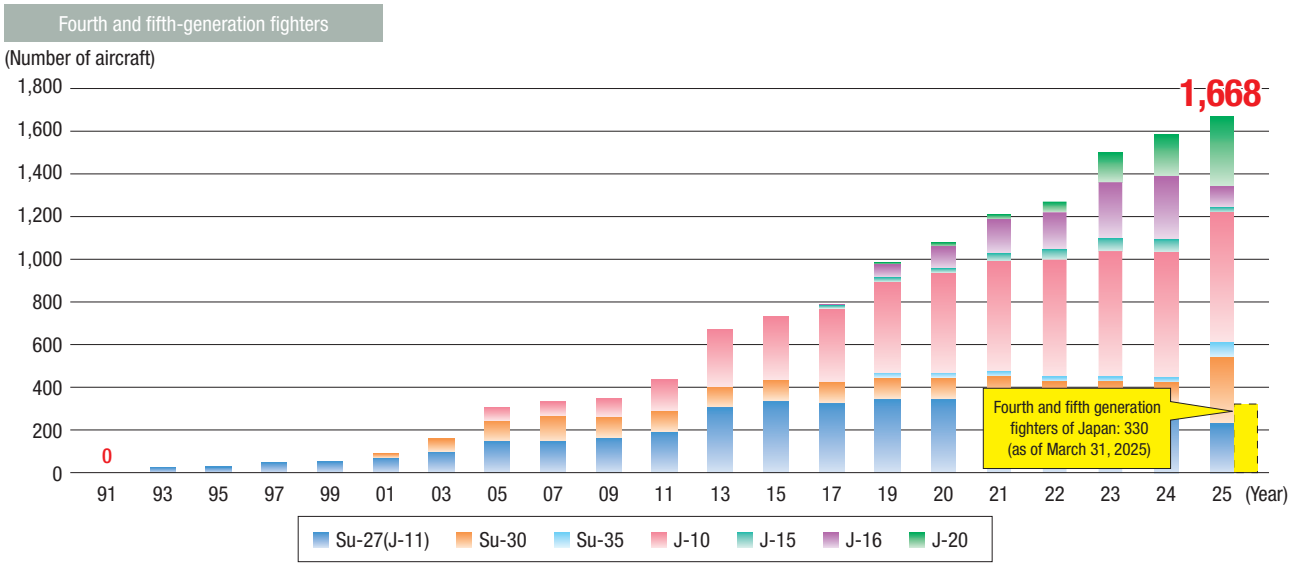
Given such modernization status of the air forces, it is believed that China is steadily improving not only its defense capabilities for its national airspace but also capabilities for conducting combat operations and supporting ground and maritime forces in more distant areas.

See Fig. I-3-2-8 (Major Chinese Air Force Capability)

(6) Space, Cyber, and Electromagnetic Spectrum Capabilities

In recent years, information gathering, and command and communication in the military sector have increasingly relied on satellites and computer networks. As such, China stated that "outer space and cyberspace have become new

Fig. I-3-2-8 Major Chinese Air Force Capability



commanding heights (capture point) in strategic competition among all parties," indicating that it has recognized the importance of taking on information mastery in wartime when it must protect its own information systems and networks while neutralizing those of its adversaries.

Regarding the space domain, it is believed that China is also planning to improve its ability to conduct military operations in space, given the fact that China's administrative organizations and state-owned enterprises involved in space utilization are said to have close cooperative ties with the military.[28] Specifically, China has rapidly increased the number of satellites available for military purposes in recent years. For example, the "BeiDou" global satellite positioning system, which is called a Chinese-version GPS and pointed out as available for ballistic missiles and other guided weapons systems, started its global operation service in late 2018, and it is deemed that the launch of all satellites constituting the BeiDou system was completed in June 2020.

In the cyber domain, China appears to be strengthening its cyber operations capabilities against networks, and the U.S. DoD has pointed out that China has the ability to carry out cyber attacks that cause localized and temporary disruption to critical infrastructure in the United States.[29] These kinds of capabilities are thought to bolster China's A2/AD capabilities. Furthermore, it has been noted that current major military training in China always includes cyber operations covering both attacks on, and defense of, command systems. The militia as a part of China's armed forces reportedly includes "cyber militias" with excellent cyber domain capabilities.

With regard to electromagnetic spectrum domain, the presence of aircraft equipped with electronic warfare pods and having electronic warfare capabilities has been pointed out, including not only the Y-8 electronic warfare aircraft that frequently flies around Japan, but also J-15 carrier-based aircraft, J-16 fighters, and H-6 bombers.

(7) China's "Intelligentization" of its Military Forces

The intelligentized warfare advocated by China is said to be integrated warfare deployed on the land, sea, air, space, electromagnetic spectrum, cyberspace, and cognitive dimension using intelligentized weapons and equipment and corresponding operational methods based on internet of things (IoT) information systems. The cognitive dimension is believed to be recognized as important in the future aspects of warfare.

Also, in respect of "intelligentized warfare," it is pointed out that the PLA

- has recognized the need for utilization of AI in order for new technologies to increase the speed and tempo of future combat, reduce uncertainty on the battlefield, increase the speed and quality of information processing, and provide a decision-making advantage over potential adversaries.
- is exploring next-generation operational concepts for intelligentized warfare, such as attrition warfare using intelligentized swarms.
- considers unmanned systems to be important intelligentized technologies, and is pursuing greater

28 According to "The Worldwide Threat Assessment," the U.S. Director of National Intelligence (2019)
29 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

autonomy for unmanned land, sea, and air assets to enable swarm attacks, optimized logistics support, as well as dispersed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

The above are pointed out among others.[30]

(8) Efforts to Develop Joint Operational Capabilities

In recent years, initiatives have been under way to improve joint operational capabilities in areas from the front line to logistics. The CMC Joint Operations Command Center is believed to have been established under the initiatives for the CCP to carry out decision making at the highest strategic level. The five new theaters established in February 2016 are seen as representing permanent joint operation headquarters. In recent years, China has implemented joint service trainings giving priority to practicality and other drills to improve its joint operational capabilities. These drills are apparently designed to secure the effectiveness of the abovementioned organizational reforms and other initiatives to improve joint operational capabilities and are expected to continue to progress in the future.

6 Maritime and Airspace Activities

(1) General Situation

Recently, China is believed to be aiming to build up capabilities for operations in more distant waters and airspace, including those to project power to waters including the so-called second island chain, beyond the first island chain. In such efforts, China has rapidly expanded and intensified its activities in the maritime and aerial domains using its naval and air powers. In waters and airspace surrounding Japan, particularly, Chinese naval vessels, and naval and air force aircraft suspected as conducting training and information gathering activities have been observed frequently, along with Chinese naval ships heading for the Pacific and Indian Ocean and numerous China Coast Guard vessels operating under the name of protecting maritime interests. These activities include intermittent intrusions by China Coast Guard vessels into Japan's territorial waters and dangerous acts that could cause unintended consequences, such as directing fire-control radar at JSDF ships and aircraft,[31] Chinese military fighters approaching abnormally close to JSDF and U.S. military aircraft, and the establishment of the East China Sea ADIZ,[32] and other activities that could infringe upon the freedom of overflight. These activities have become a grave matter of concern and are extremely regrettable. Furthermore, flying objects that were confirmed within Japanese territorial airspace are strongly presumed to be unmanned reconnaissance balloons flown by China. In the South China Sea, China is moving forward with militarization, and expanding and intensifying its activities in air and sea space. It is attempting to unilaterally change the status quo by force and create a fait accompli for such changes. It is strongly hoped that China will act on the basis of the principle of the rule of law and play active roles in the region and the international community in a more cooperative manner.

(2) Military Activities in Japan's Surrounding Waters and Airspace

The Chinese Navy and Air Force have in recent years expanded and intensified their activities in Japan's surrounding waters and airspace, such as in the area surrounding the Senkaku Islands, including activities viewed to be based on China's claim to the Senkaku Islands. Incidents involving the one-sided escalation of activities have also been seen, creating a situation of great concern to Japan. Amid this, a series of incidents occurred in 2024, including a Chinese military aircraft intruding into Japan's territorial airspace in August and the navigation of a Chinese Navy aircraft carrier through a maritime area close to Japan's territorial waters in September. China's intensified military activities have created a situation that could seriously impact Japan's security, which is a cause of grave concern. China has also continued sailing naval vessels through waters near Japan to navigate to distant waters such as the Indian Ocean, and conducting activities viewed as training for maritime and air forces that makes forays into the Pacific Ocean and Sea of Japan. In 2024, the number of takeoffs and landing of aircraft from Chinese military aircraft carriers in the Pacific Ocean exceeded 1,200 times. In addition, it was observed that aerial refueling of Chinese military fighters that fly long distances to the western Pacific Ocean in joint China-Russia flights in 2024, which indicating China was improving operational capabilities in even further distant areas .

Moreover, Chinese military activities have become more sophisticated in recent years, with signs of improvement in their practical joint operational capabilities, such as military exercises in the vicinity of Taiwan. Chinese military activities in Japan's surrounding waters and airspace should continue to be closely watched with great attention.

30 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2023)

31 In January 2013, a Chinese naval vessel directed a fire-control radar at a Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) destroyer navigating on the high seas of the East China Sea on January 30. Moreover, it is believed that another Chinese naval vessel directed a fire-control radar at a helicopter mounted on an MSDF destroyer on January 19. Projecting fire-control radar is normally conducted prior to firing at a target and thus it is a dangerous act that may cause unintended consequences.

32 On November 23, 2013, China established the "East China Sea ADIZ" including the Senkaku Islands misleadingly indicated as if they were China's territory. China requires aircraft flying in the zone to abide by rules set by its Ministry of National Defense and claims to take military "defensive emergency measures" against aircraft failing to do so, unduly infringing on the principle of freedom of overflight. Over the move to unilaterally change the status quo in the East China Sea, not only Japan but also the United States, the ROK, Australia, and the European Union (EU) expressed concerns.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-1 (Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance Surrounding Japan), 2 (Warnings and Scrambles in Preparation against Airspace Violation)

a. Activities in the East China Sea (including the Areas around the Senkaku Islands)

Chinese naval vessels have been conducting operations in the East China Sea continuously and actively.

Declaring its own position regarding Japan's Senkaku Islands, China claims that patrols by Chinese naval vessels in the sea areas under its jurisdiction are completely justifiable and lawful. Chinese naval vessels have been continuously operating in the areas near Japan's Senkaku Islands. In June 2016, a Jiangkai I-class frigate became the first ever Chinese Navy combatant vessel to enter Japan's contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands. In July 2022, a Jiangwei II-class frigate passed into the contiguous zone southwest of the Uotsurishima Island.

Submarine activities have also been confirmed. In January 2018, a submerged Shang-class submarine and a Jiangkai II-class frigate each entered the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands on the same day. This was the first time a Chinese submarine was identified and announced as conducting submerged transit through the contiguous waters around the Senkaku Islands. In June 2020 and September 2021, submerged transit of a submarine presumed to belong to China was confirmed in the contiguous zone surrounding Amami Oshima Island.

In recent years, activities by Chinese Navy intelligence gathering vessels (AGIs) and survey vessels have also been found. In November 2015, a Dongdiao-class AGI sailed back and forth in waters outside the contiguous zone south of the Senkaku Islands. In June 2016, a Dongdiao-class AGI sailed in Japan's territorial waters near Kuchinoerabujima Island and Yakushima Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, then passed through Japan's contiguous zone north of Kitadaitojima Island (Okinawa Prefecture). Subsequently, the vessel repeatedly conducted east-west passages outside the contiguous zone south of the Senkaku Islands. Furthermore, a Shupang-class survey vessel sailed through Japan's territorial waters near Kuchinoerabujima Island, Kuchinoshima Island, and Yakushima Island in November 2021; April, July, September, November, and December 2022; February, June, and September 2023; and August 2024.

In recent years, Chinese military aircraft have also been active in the airspace closer to the Nansei Islands, including the Senkaku Islands and the main island of Okinawa. Such activities are thought to include warning and surveillance, combat air patrols (CAPs), and training, or may be intended to operate the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone. Further, in August 2024, a Chinese military intelligence-gathering aircraft intruded into Japan's territorial airspace over the waters off the Danjo-gunto Islands in Nagasaki Prefecture. That was the first confirmed and publicized intrusion into Japan's territorial airspace by a Chinese military aircraft since Japan began measures against intrusions into its territorial airspace. The intrusion into Japan's territorial airspace by a PLA aircraft is not only a grave violation of Japan's sovereignty but also a threat to its safety, and it is absolutely unacceptable. Given that China has acknowledged the facts of the incident and indicated it will strive to prevent the recurrence of such an incident, Japan will keep a close eye on China's actions going forward.

Moreover, activities of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have been intensifying in recent years; For example, in November 2022, a presumed Chinese UAV flew over from the East China Sea, and after heading south at one point in the northern area of the Senkaku Islands, flew toward the mainland. Also, in 2024, for the first time it was confirmed and publicized that a UAV passed between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island, then flew to the waters off Amami Oshima Island. Furthermore, the types of UAV confirmed to have been in the vicinity of Japan are increasing. In FY2024, a WL-10 reconnaissance/attack UAV and GJ-2 reconnaissance/attack UAV were confirmed for the first time under measures against intrusion into Japan's territorial airspace.

b. Advancements into the Pacific Ocean

Chinese Navy combatant vessels continue to transit the waters near Japan to advance into the Pacific Ocean with high frequency. In 2024, the number of publicized incidences of Chinese naval vessels sailed between the Pacific Ocean and East China Sea through the waters around Japan's southwest, such as between Yonagunijima Island and Taiwan, and between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island, more than tripled compared to 2021. Regarding entry routes, Chinese naval vessels have been confirmed as transiting the sea area between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island, the Osumi Strait, the sea area between Yonagunijima Island and Iriomotejima Island in Okinawa Prefecture, the sea area between Amami Oshima Island and Yokoatejima Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, the Tsugaru Strait and the Soya Strait via the Tsushima Strait,.

Aircraft carriers operating in the Pacific Ocean have also been confirmed. Since the aircraft carrier, Liaoning, along with several other vessels, passed through the sea area between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island in December 2016, it has entered the Pacific Ocean a total of 11 times by the end of May 2025. In addition, since the aircraft carrier, Shandong was first confirmed operating in the Pacific Ocean in April 2023, it has entered the Pacific a total of 8 times. Concerning these forays into the Pacific Ocean, in addition to cases of passing from the South China Sea through the Bashi Channel and passing through the sea area between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island from the East China Sea, in September 2024 for the first time a Chinese aircraft carrier was confirmed passing through sea areas near Japan's territorial waters between Yonagunijima

Island and Iriomotejima Island from the East China Sea. In addition, the landing and takeoff of carrier-based fighter aircraft from the carriers in the Pacific Ocean has also been frequently confirmed.

Through this expansion into the Pacific, China seems to be aiming to improve the operational capabilities of its maritime forces, including aircraft carriers, and its ability to carry out operations in distant waters. Regarding air force advances into the Pacific Ocean, a naval aircraft was first confirmed in 2013, followed by an air force aircraft in 2015. Since 2017, advances into the Pacific Ocean involving passage through the airspace between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island have further intensified. Furthermore, the types of military aircraft that pass through this airspace are becoming more diverse year by year. Bomber flights have also been confirmed, and the U.S. DoD has indicated that the Chinese military is believed to be conducting training exercises and other activities targeting the United States and its allies.[33]

Flight patterns of Chinese military aircraft have also been changing. Flights from the East China Sea to the Pacific Ocean, passing between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island, and from the direction of the Bashi Channel to the Pacific Ocean, both with the return trips on the same shuttle routes, have been repeatedly made. In 2016, H-6K bombers and other aircraft were confirmed as flying around Taiwan. In August 2017, H-6K bombers were confirmed as flying to waters off the Kii Peninsula after advancing to the Pacific Ocean via waters between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island for the first time.

Through frequent long-distance flights of bombers and other aircraft, including advancements to the Pacific, and their advanced flight paths and composition, China's air forces are thought to be demonstrating their presence around areas including those surrounding Japan, and planning further enhancements to more practical operational capabilities.

Additionally, activities considered planned to improve sea and air joint operational capabilities in more distant areas, such as what seemed to be air-to-ship attack drills including advancements to the Pacific Ocean, have been seen in recent years. China is expected to further expand and intensify naval and air activities in the Pacific Ocean.

c. Activities in the Sea of Japan

In the Sea of Japan, China has been intensifying the military activities of its maritime and air forces.

As for naval forces, they have been sailing into the Sea of Japan occasionally, such as navigating toward distant waters for trainings. Intelligence-gathering ships have also been frequently confirmed passing through the Tsushima Strait.

Regarding aircraft, activities in the Sea of Japan have increased since it was confirmed in January 2016 that Chinese military aircraft passed through the Tsushima Strait for the first time. The types of military aircraft flying in this airspace are also becoming more diverse, and in March 2024, a WZ-7 reconnaissance-type unmanned aerial vehicle was confirmed flying for the first time.

China is anticipated to continue to expand and intensify its activities in the Sea of Japan also in the future.

See Fig. I-3-2-9 (PLA's Recent Activities in the Surrounding Sea Area and Airspace of Japan (image)), Fig. I-3-2-10 (Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Chinese Aircraft), Fig. I-3-2-11 (Number of Announcements of Chinese Combatant Ships' and Aircraft Carriers' Activities around the Southwestern Islands and the Soya and Tsugaru Straits), Fig. I-3-2-12 (Number of Announcements of Chinese Military Aircraft's Passage between the Main Island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island), Fig. I-3-2-13 (Number of Announcements of Chinese Combatant Ships' Passage through the Tsushima Strait), Fig. I-3-2-14 (Number of Announcements of Chinese Military Aircraft's Passage through the Tsushima Strait)

33 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2018)

Fig. I-3-2-9 (PLA's Recent Activities in the Surrounding Sea Area and Airspace of Japan (image)

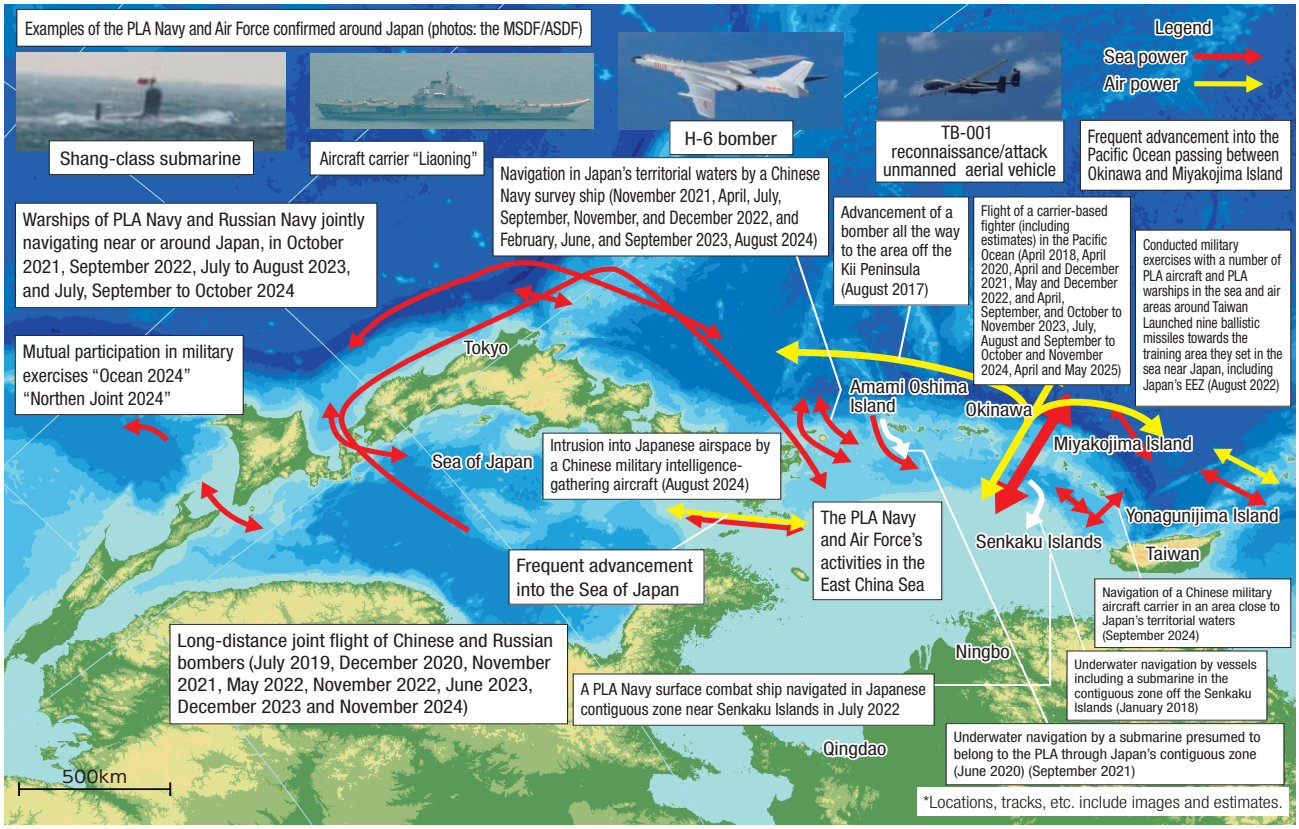


Fig. I-3-2-10 Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Chinese Aircraft

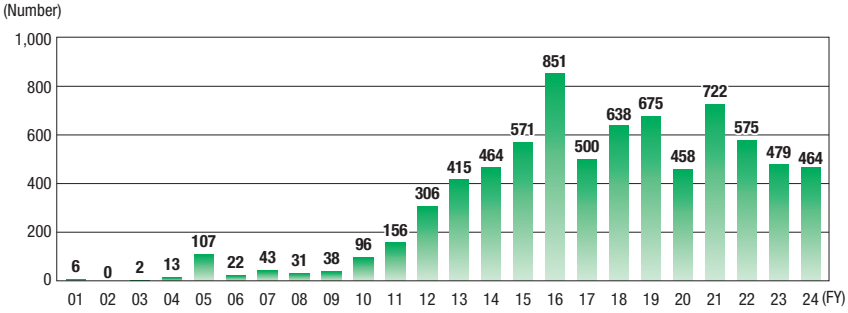


Fig. I-3-2-11 Number of Announcements of Chinese Combatant Ships' and Aircraft Carriers' Activities around the Southwestern Islands and the Soya and Tsugaru Straits

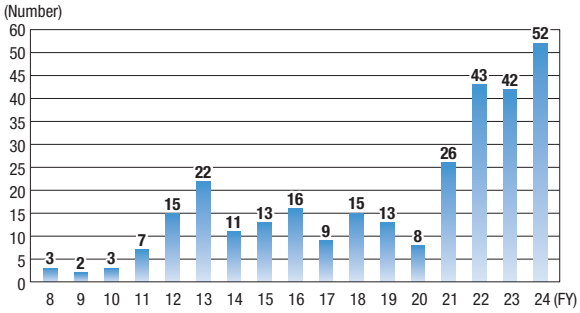


Fig. I-3-2-12 Number of Announcements of Chinese Military Aircraft's Passage between the Main Island of Okinawa and Miyakojima Island

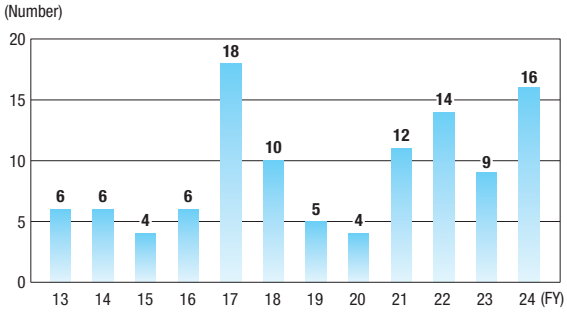


Fig. I-3-2-13 Number of Announcements of Chinese Combatant Ships' Passage through the Tsushima Strait

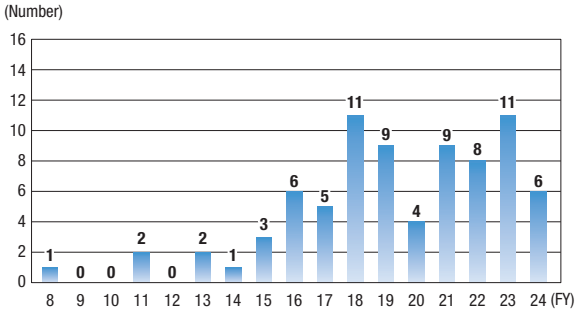
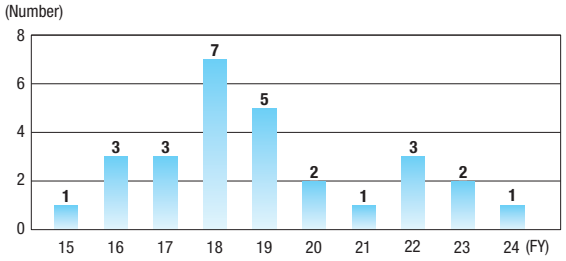


Fig. I-3-2-14 Number of Announcements of Chinese Military Aircraft's Passage through the Tsushima Strait



(3) Activities of Chinese Ships Including Coast Guard Vessels in the East China Sea (including Areas around the Senkaku Islands)

China Coast Guard vessels have been seen almost every day in the contiguous zone of the Senkaku Islands, Japan's inherent territory, and repeatedly intruded into Japan's territorial waters. Since the activities of China Coast Guard vessels based on China's own assertion conducted in Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands are violating international law, Japan has been strongly protesting against these activities and requested them to leave many times. However, despite Japan's strong protests, China Coast Guard vessels continued to repeatedly intruded into Japan's territorial waters in FY2024, with violations occurring every month. Additionally, incidents occurred in which China Coast Guard ships attempted to approach Japanese fishing boats navigating in Japanese territorial waters near the Senkaku Islands.

China Marine Surveillance vessels previously intruded into Japan's territorial waters for the first time in December 2008. Since then, vessels belonging to the Chinese government have gradually amplified their activities in Japanese territorial waters. Such activities have intensified greatly since September 2012, when the Japanese Government acquired three of the Senkaku Islands (Uotsurishima Island, Kitakojima Island, and Minamikojima Island).

China is seen to be steadily strengthening an operational posture intended to use Coast Guard vessels to intrude into Japan's territorial waters. For example, the number of vessels involved in each territorial sea intrusion was about two to three until around 2016, whereas in recent years, the number of four-vessel intrusions has increased. In addition, since December 2015 vessels equipped with guns have repeatedly intruded Japan's territorial waters. In June 2024, four vessels equipped with guns intruded the territorial waters. Thereafter, China Coast Guard vessels active within the contiguous zone have all carried guns (as of the end of March 2025). In 2024, the number of days on which China Coast Guard vessel activities were confirmed in the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands reached 355, the highest on record.

Cases indicating the improvement of China Coast Guard vessels' operational capabilities have been also confirmed. From December 2023 to July 2024, China Coast Guard vessels were seen in the contiguous zone of the Senkaku Islands for a record 215 consecutive days.

In December 2012, a fixed-wing aircraft of the State Oceanic Administration was identified as the first Chinese aircraft to intrude into Japan's airspace around the Senkaku Islands. In May 2017, it was confirmed that an object that appeared to be a small drone was flying above a China Coast Guard vessel intruding into the Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands. This flight also constitutes an invasion of Japan's territorial airspace. In May 2025, a China Coast Guard helicopter, which took off from a China Coast Guard vessel intruded into Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, intruded into Japanese territorial airspace.

China has thus relentlessly continued attempts at unilateral changes to the status quo by force in the sea area around the Senkaku Islands, leading to a grave matter of concern. Japan cannot accept China's actions to escalate the situation.

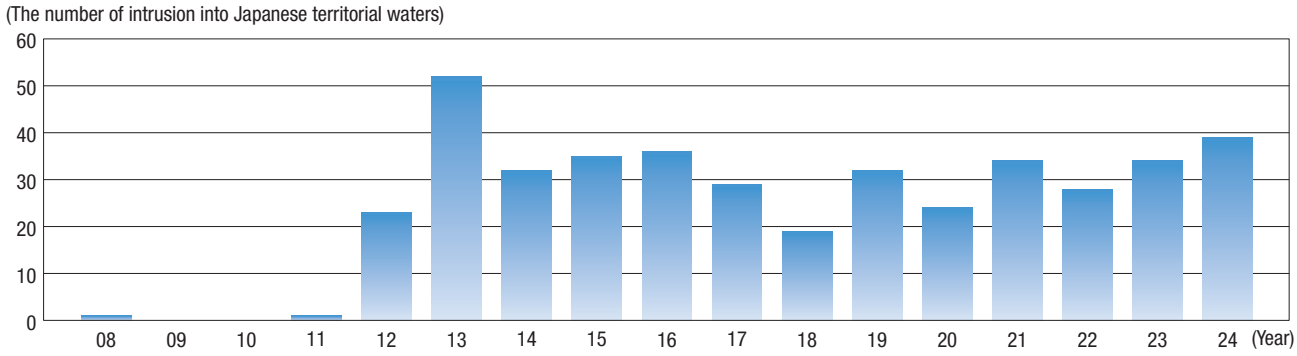
In addition, in the East China Sea, China continues to engage in unilateral resource development activities even though the boundaries between Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf and those of China have not yet been demarcated. Since June 2013, it has been confirmed that construction work is progressing on a new offshore platform. This is in addition to the four offshore platforms installed on the Chinese side of the Japan-China median line in the East China Sea prior to the 2008 agreement on resource development in the East China Sea. Japan has repeatedly protested against this ongoing unilateral development by China, while simultaneously requesting that the work be halted.

In July 2023, a buoy was found within the Japan's EEZ on the east side of the geographical median line in the East China Sea. The buoy was believed to be installed by China. Japan has lodged a protest with China regarding this matter and strongly requested its immediate removal. In February 2025, the buoy was confirmed to no longer be in Japan's EEZ. Another buoy, which was confirmed to have been in

Japan's EEZ south of Yonagunijima Island in December 2024, was also confirmed to no longer be in Japan's EEZ in May 2025.

See Fig. I-3-2-15 (Activities by China Coast Guard Vessels, etc., around the Senkaku Islands), Reference 13 (Number of Days and Total Incursions into the Territorial Waters Around the Senkaku Islands by Ships Belonging to the China Coast Guard Bureau, etc.)

Fig. I-3-2-15 Activities by China Coast Guard Vessels, etc., around the Senkaku Islands



(4) Trends of Activities around Taiwan

China has intensified military activities around Taiwan. According to announcements from the Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan, entry into airspace around Taiwan by Chinese military aircraft has been on the rise since September 2020. The total number of aircraft that entered its airspace was over 970 in 2021, over 1,700 in 2022 and 2023, and over 3,000 in 2024. Furthermore, according to an announcement by Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense, Chinese military aircraft has repeatedly entered the airspace east of the "median line" of the Taiwan Strait[34] since the U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August 2022. In addition to conventional fighters and bombers, other aircraft such as attack helicopters, air refueling tankers, and UAVs have reportedly been observed entering the airspace since 2021. The number of Chinese naval vessels confirmed in the waters around Taiwan has also been increasing. There were approximately 1,900 in 2023 and approximately 2,500 in 2024. Furthermore, since August 2022, China has frequently conducted military exercises in the sea and airspace surrounding Taiwan.

On August 2, 2022, China announced the setting of six training areas surrounding Taiwan, and conducting "a series of integrated military operations" around Taiwan, in conjunction with the visit of Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (then) to Taiwan. China launched nine ballistic missiles on August 4, 2022, five of which landed within the Japan's EEZ, and another landed at the closest point to Japanese territory, which was about 80 km from Yonagunijima Island. This is a serious issue relating to Japan's security and the safety of its people and was perceived as a threat to local residents. In addition, some of the missiles passed over Taiwan. After that, the PLA continued the large-scale military exercise covering subjects such as integrated blockage, surface/ground attack, air superiority combat, aerial reconnaissance, and anti-submarine warfare in air space and sea space around Taiwan for about one week.

Since that exercise, China has also conducted military exercises in the sea and airspace around Taiwan in April and August 2023, May and October 2024, and April 2025.

Although China has not announced its activities, on December 9, 2024 Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense stated that China's military fleets of the Eastern, Northern, and Southern Theater Commands as well as China Coast Guard vessels are entering the waters around the Taiwan Strait and western Pacific Ocean waters, and conducting activities such as long-distance navigation on the far seas. Taiwan's President Lai took a week-long tour from November 30 to the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, and Palau, which diplomatically recognize Taiwan, by way of Hawaii and Guam.

The exercises conducted in the vicinity of Taiwan by the Chinese military may have rehearsed some parts of military operations directed at unification with Taiwan, including invading Taiwan. During the exercise held in May 2024, activities by the China Coast Guard conducted in areas including the waters to the east of Taiwan were announced

34 The line that was supposed to have been set over the Taiwan Strait by the United States in the 1950s. Taiwan insists on the existence of the median line, and published the coordinates of it, while China claims, "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, hence the so-called the 'median line' does not exist." Chinese military aircraft hardly crossed over the line until now.

for the first time. During the exercise held in October the same year, the China Coast Guard expanded its activities, including navigating its vessels around the entirety of Taiwan. It has been noted that China may be placing more emphasis on the role of its Coast Guard in causing a gray-zone situation. Moreover, compared to past exercises, the exercise conducted in April 2025 stepped up specific blockade related actions, such as warning, expulsion, interception and detention by the military.

It is believed that through the series of activities around Taiwan, China seeks to create a fait accompli that the Chinese military is continuously operating there and improve its actual combat capabilities.

These intensified military activities indicates a situation, where a possibility could not be excluded that tension between China and Taiwan rises in the military sense. Stabilizing the situation surrounding Taiwan is important not only for Japan's security but also for the stability of the international community. Therefore, it is necessary that we pay close attention to the situation with a sense of crisis more than ever before.

See Fig. I-3-2-16 (The Main Military Exercises Around Taiwan Announced by the Chinese Military)

Fig. I-3-2-16 The Main Military Exercises Around Taiwan Announced by the Chinese Military

	August 2022	April 2023	August 2023	May 2024	October 2024	April 2025
Event related to the exercise	Visit to Taiwan by Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (She stayed from the evening of August 2 to the evening of August 3)	Visit to the United States by President Tsai Ing-wen (transit) (Meeting with meeting with Kevin McCarthy, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives) (Meeting on April 6/Arrival in Taiwan on April 7)	Visit to the United States by Vice President Lai Ching-te (transit) (Did not meet publicly with senior U.S. officials) (Arrival in Taiwan on August 18)	Presidential inauguration ceremony of President Lai Ching-te Address at the inauguration ceremony (May 20)	Address by President Lai Ching-te at the "Double Tenth National Day Celebration" ceremony (October 10)	Announcement of the threats from China and countermeasures (March 13)
Name of exercise	"A series of integrated military operations"	"Joint Sword"	(Name not announced)	"Joint Sword-2024A"	"Joint Sword-2024B"	1st day: no name announced 2nd day: "Strait Thunder 2025A"
Theater in which the exercise was conducted	Eastern Theater	Eastern Theater	Eastern Theater	Eastern Theater	Eastern Theater	Eastern Theater
Period during which the exercise was conducted (announced by China)	7 days (August 4 to August 10)	3 days (April 8 to April 10)	1 day (August 19 only)	2 days (May 23 to May 24)	1 day (October 14 only)	2 days (April 1 to April 2)
Announcement that the exercise would be conducted	Evening of August 2 * The day of the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * Two days before the day on which the exercise commenced	April 8 * The day after the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * The day on which the exercise commenced	August 19 * The day after the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * The day on which the exercise commenced	May 23 * Three days after the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * The day on which the exercise commenced	October 14 * Four days after the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * The day on which the exercise commenced	April 1 * 19 days after the event which is thought to have prompted the exercise * The day on which the exercise commenced
Establishment of the exercise zone	The training areas and navigation warnings announced on August 2 (Some of the training areas overlapped with Japan's EEZ)	None	None	Chart published on May 23	Chart published on October 14	None
Participation of aircraft carriers	None	Yes (Aircraft carrier"Shandong")	None	None	Yes (Aircraft carrier "Liaoning")	Yes (Aircraft carrier "Shandong")
Others	• Nine ballistic missiles launched (of which five landed inside Japan's EEZ)	• Entry into the Pacific Ocean by aircraft carrier "Shandong" was confirmed for the first time.	• Approximately six months before the Taiwan presidential election • It has been pointed out that the Chinese aircraft flew a longer distance east of the "Median Line" than previously.	• Participation of Chinese Coast Guard vessels in the exercise announced for the first time • Conducting of an exercise around the outer islands of Taiwan (Kinmen, Matsu, etc.) announced for the first time	• The "blockade and control of important ports and regions" and the conducting of encircling patrols by the Chinese Coast Guard around Taiwan Island announced for the first time.	• Long-range live ammunition firing by army units, and warning isolation, stopping, seizure, etc. by the military announced for the first time

(5) Trends of Activities in the South China Sea

China has also been intensifying its activities based on assertions of unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, such as in waters around the Spratly Islands and Paracel Islands, over which territorial disputes exist with neighbors, including some member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Since 2014, China has pressed ahead with large-scale and rapid land reclamation at seven features[35] of the Spratly Islands. The Philippines-China arbitration award issued in July 2016 denied the "historic rights" as the basis of the "nine-dash line" claimed by China, and determined the illegality of China's activities such as land reclamation. However, China has made clear it would not comply with this decision and is currently continuing military activities while militarizing these features by promoting the development of various kinds of

35 Since 2014, on seven features of the Spratly Islands (Fiery Cross Reef, Subi Reef, Mischief Reef, Cuarteron Reef, Gaven Reefs, Hughes Reef, and Johnson South Reef), China has pressed ahead with large-scale and rapid land reclamation.

infrastructure that can be used for military purposes. It has been pointed out that if China were to consider bastion operations (fortification) to enhance the survivability of new types of long-range SLBMs capable of hitting the continental United States, the South China Sea would be the suitable choice.[36] If these features in the South China Sea are used for full-scale military purposes, it could significantly change the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. Attention must continue to be paid to the situation in the South China Sea going forward.

On Fiery Cross Reef, Subi Reef, and Mischief Reefs, called the Big Three of the seven features of the Spratly Islands, China has developed batteries for anti-aircraft guns, missile shelters, underground storage facilities pointed out to be munition storage, large ports capable of accommodating combatant ships, and runways available for takeoff and landing of fighters and bombers.

In April 2018, it was reported that anti-ship cruise missiles and surface-to-air missiles were deployed on Fiery Cross Reef, Subi Reef and Mischief Reef and that radar jamming systems were deployed on Mischief Reef. Additionally, in May 2020, it was reported that the Y-8 patrol aircraft and Y-9 early warning aircraft may have been deployed on a rotational basis to Fiery Cross Reef.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that construction of facilities such as harbors, helipads, and radar on Cuarteron Reef, Gaven Reefs, Hughes Reef, and Johnson Reef has made progress and what appears to be large anti-aircraft guns and close-in weapon system (CIWS) may have already been deployed. In December 2022, it was reported that new construction activities were being carried out on the other four features in the Spratly Islands.

China carried out the militarization of the Paracel Islands before that of the Spratly Islands. China has reportedly extended the runway to nearly 3,000 m on Woody Island since 2013. Since 2015, fighter jets such as the J-11 and J-10 have been deployed, and since 2016, the presence of equipment that appears to be surface-to-air missiles has been confirmed. In August 2023, new construction activities were reported to be underway on Triton Island.

In recent years, Chinese naval vessels have allegedly been conducting what are likely to be survey activities in Scarborough Shoal, where a standoff took place between Chinese and Philippine government ships in April 2012. It is pointed out that new land reclamations on the shoal might be seen in the future. It is also pointed out that if China conducts land reclamations and installs radar facilities, runways, and other infrastructure on Scarborough Shoal, it could possibly increase its ability for situation awareness and power projection capabilities in the surrounding sea area and ultimately enhance its operational capabilities throughout all the areas of the South China Sea.

China is also expanding and intensifying its activities in the sea and airspace in the South China Sea.

For example, in 2016, after the Philippines-China arbitral award, Chinese Air Force H-6K bombers conducted "combat patrol flights" in the airspace near Scarborough Shoal, and the Chinese Ministry of National Defense announced that these patrols would be "regularized" in the future. In the same year, a joint Chinese-Russian naval exercise called "Maritime Cooperation 2016" that was held in the South China Sea for the first time.

In 2020, when the establishment of new administrative regions called "Xisha (Paracel) District" and "Nansha (Spratly) District" under Sansha City, Hainan Province was unilaterally announced, in July, China conducted simultaneous military exercises in three sea areas (South China Sea, East China Sea, and Yellow Sea) and is believed to have launched middle-range ballistic missiles in August.

Since May 2021, there have been frequent reports of training exercises involving carrier-based aircraft takeoff from and landing on the aircraft carrier Shandong. Recently, the Southern Theater has announced multiple times that it conducted joint sea-air combat readiness patrols, and the joint Chinese-Russian naval exercise, "Maritime Cooperation 2024," was held in the South China Sea in July 2024. Also, in October of the same year, it was reported that the aircraft carriers, Shandong and Liaoning, conducted dual aircraft carrier formation exercise for the first time.

In addition, there have been incidents in which Chinese vessels and aircraft approached and obstructed the vessels and aircraft of other countries, such as the United States, that are operating in the sea and airspace of this region.[37]

Notably, in recent years, there have been frequent reports of obstructive activities such as by Chinese Coast Guards toward coastal countries including the Philippines. Especially between China and the Philippine, the Philippine government has announced that dangerous maneuvers including collisions and the firing of water cannons by Chinese ships such as its Coast Guard vessels against Philippine ships have resulted in injuries to the Philippine personnel onboard and damage to the Philippine vessel.

In this way, it appears that China seeks to expand its presence and enhance war-sustaining and other joint operational capabilities including military and other means in the South China Sea.

Such activities conducted by China based on its own assertions of unlawful maritime claims further advance its attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force and create a fait accompli. Japan is deeply concerned about these activities, and the concern is shared with the international community including the United States and

36 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2023)

37 In March 2009, December 2013 and September 2018, Chinese naval and other vessels approached and intercepted U.S. Navy vessels navigating in the South China Sea. In May 2016, February 2017 and May 2017, PLA fighters allegedly flew close to U.S. Forces aircraft.

other G7 member States.

The issues surrounding the South China Sea are directly related to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and are a legitimate concern not only for Japan, which has major sea lanes in the South China Sea, but also for the entire international community. Countries concerned, including China, are urged to refrain from unilateral actions that increases tension and act on the basis of the principle of the rule of law.

See Fig. I-3-2-17 (Example of China's Advancement and Militarization Utilizing the Power Vacuum in the South China Sea (image))

Fig. I-3-2-17 Example of China's Advancement and Militarization Utilizing the Power Vacuum in the South China Sea (image)

(Photo sources) CSIS/AMTI/Maxar

(6) Trends in the Indian Ocean and Other More Distant Waters

The Chinese Navy is considered to be shifting towards "protection missions on the far seas" and has been steadily increasing its capabilities to conduct operations in more distant waters, such as the Indian Ocean, in recent years. Progress has been seen in the Navy's development of such equipment as large combatant ships and replenishment ships and in its operational initiatives, such as deployment to distant sea areas and securing bases for this purpose.

Since December 2008, Chinese naval vessels have been deployed off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden to take part in international counter-piracy efforts. Dispatched naval vessels have also conducted joint training[38] with the militaries of other countries in places such as the Indian Ocean. In 2024, they conducted joint training with Russia and Iran in the northern Indian Ocean in March; with Brazil, Cameroon, and Nigeria in Nigerian waters in June; and with Morocco in Moroccan waters in July.

China has also deployed a space observation support ship in the southern Pacific Ocean and dispatched a military hospital ship under the operation, Mission Harmony, to offer medical services. In 2024, it was dispatched to 13 countries in Asia and Africa.

In September 2015, five Chinese naval vessels reportedly sailed in the high seas of the Bering Sea and in U.S. territorial waters near the Aleutian Islands. In September 2022 and August 2023, Russia announced that Chinese vessels

38 In addition to military exercises, port calls to countries along the Indian Ocean coast are also frequent.

participating in joint navigation with Russia sailed through the Bering Sea. China has deployed vessels such as the polar research vessel, Xue Long 2, to the Arctic Ocean a total of 13 times since 1999.[39] In January 2018, China published a white paper entitled, "China's Arctic Policy," which mapped out a policy of active involvement in Arctic initiatives, including efforts to build a Polar Silk Road through the development of Arctic sea routes. It is pointed out that China could take advantage of scientific survey and commercial activities to increase its presence including military activities in the Arctic Ocean.[40]

Additionally, China has been remarkably trying to secure overseas outposts such as harbors. For example, in August 2017, China began to operate a "support base" for logistics support of the PLA in Djibouti facing the Gulf of Aden. The Chinese military is said to be considering and planning to establish military logistics facilities in multiple countries, including Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Equatorial Guinea, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, Nigeria, Namibia, Mozambique, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Tajikistan.[41] China has been promoting its **"Belt and Road" Initiative (BRI)** whose main purpose is advertised as establishing an economic zone in regions including the Eurasian continent, with the Chinese military possibly taking on the role of the shield behind the initiative by such means as the stabilization of areas via counter-piracy activities and the improvement of counter-terrorism capabilities in coastal states through bilateral and multilateral exercises. While it is thought that the initiative includes a strategic intention to expand its influence in the region, it is possible that the initiative will further improve the PLA's operational capabilities in the Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean and elsewhere. For example, China's support for the construction of port infrastructure in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and other Indian Ocean countries as well as Pacific island countries including Vanuatu could lead China to secure outposts available for its military purposes.

See Chapter 4, Section 5-3 (Trends in the Arctic Ocean)

KEY WORD

"Belt and Road" Initiative

An economic zone concept advanced by General Secretary Xi. The "Silk Road Economic Belt" ("One Belt") and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" ("One Road") were announced in September and October 2013, respectively. Since then, the two concepts have been collectively referred to as the "Belt and Road" Initiative.

(7) Objectives of Activities in Waters and Airspace

The development and activities of Chinese naval and air forces, descriptions in defense white papers, China's geographical conditions and globalizing economy, and other factors indicate that the recent water and airspace activities of the Navy, Air Force and other Chinese organizations have the following objectives:

The first is to intercept operations by adversaries in waters and airspace as far as possible from China in order to defend its territorial land, waters and airspace. Behind this objective is an increase in the effectiveness of long-range attacks due to recent progress in science and technology.

The second is to develop capabilities to deter and prevent Taiwan's independence. China maintains that it will not allow any foreign intervention in solving the Taiwan issue and realizing the unification of China. To ensure the prevention of foreign intervention in the Taiwan issue, China needs to enhance its operational capabilities at sea and airspace as Taiwan is surrounded by the sea in all directions.

The third is to weaken the control of other countries over islands and the surrounding waters and airspace on which China's one-sided claims to sovereignty and marine interests exist, by means of various surveillance activities and the use of force, thereby strengthening such one-sided claims. Such activities of China are considered to also have the purpose of creating a fait accompli as part of the reasons for unilaterally changing the status quo and justifying China's claims based on its own concept of "legal warfare."

The fourth is to acquire, maintain, and protect its maritime rights and interests. China is engaged in oil and gas drilling as well as fishing and navigating in the East and South China Seas. In order for these activities to continue safely and stably, the Chinese military is believed to be playing a role as a backstop, deterring the activities of maritime law enforcement organizations of other countries through its military presence.

The fifth is to defend its sea lanes of communications. In the background is the fact that its sea lanes, including its oil transportation routes from the Middle East, are essential for the Chinese economy. Given the recent strengthening of the Chinese Navy and Air Force, it is believed that they have been expanding military capabilities to cover distant waters beyond China's near seas.

Given these objectives of China's recent sea and airspace activities and trends, it is believed that China plans to further expand the sphere of its activities and further intensify its operations in waters surrounding Japan, including the East China Sea, South China Sea, and the Pacific Ocean, as well as the Indian Ocean.

39 In 2012, Xue Long became the first polar research vessel to sail across the Arctic Ocean. In 2013, the cargo freighter Yong Sheng became the first Chinese commercial ship to cross the Arctic Ocean. Canadian scientists took part in Xue Long's voyage to the Arctic Ocean in 2017, and they succeeded for the first time in trial navigation of the Arctic Northwest Passage (along the north coast of Canada). Furthermore, its second polar research vessel Xue Long 2 completed its first Arctic Sea cruising in September 2020, and China is promoting research and construction of a heavy icebreaker.

40 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2019)

41 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

7 International Military Activities

In recent years, the PLA has been indicating its positive attitude on nontraditional security missions such as peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and counterpiracy, dispatching numerous units for such overseas missions.

China has vowed to consistently support and actively participate in UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs), increasing its presence in UN PKOs.

According to the UN, as of the end of October 2024, China had a total of 1,797 personnel including troops and police members—the largest number of peacekeepers among the permanent members of the UN Security Council—engaged in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and other UN PKOs. China's share has remained the second largest in the UN PKO budget, after that of the U.S., since 2016.

Moreover, China has been actively participating in counter-piracy activities off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities.

It is pointed out that factors behind such Chinese attitude include the growing need for protecting and promoting China's national interests overseas following the expansion of national interests beyond its national borders, China's attempt to verify military capabilities including units' long-distance deployment through operations, its intent to raise its status by demonstrating its will to fulfill its responsibilities to the international community, its hope to diffuse the military's peaceful and humanitarian images, and its attempt to enhance relations with PKO regions including African countries.

8 Education and Training

In recent years, the PLA under the policy of building a military that "can fight and win a war" has promoted practical exercises including large-scale ones such as joint exercises led by theater commands, force-on-force exercises, landing exercises, inter-theater exercises, and large exercises including distant ones, as well as night-time exercises and joint exercises with other countries, in order to strengthen its operational capabilities.

In the education spectrum as well, the PLA aims to train soldiers who have the ability to execute joint operations. It was reported in 2017 that the PLA National Defense University began training to develop human resources capable of directing joint operations.

China has been developing defense mobilization systems and others in order to effectively utilize private resources in case of emergencies, including wars. The military use of civilian resources includes civilian ships' transportation of military equipment. Also, in his speech at the 20th CCP Congress, General Secretary Xi raised the issue of deepening national defense education as a part of improving "Integrated National Strategic System and Capabilities." In September 2024, China revised the National Defense Education Law and newly instituted the implementation of national defense education that is tied to patriotism.

Such an initiative mobilizes society's overall resources to the military and generally augments China's forces available for military missions. As it is expected to proactively be promoted in the future, the initiative's implications for the Chinese military forces' operational capabilities must be watched closely.

9 National Defense Industry Sector

Under the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (SASTIND) of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, a department of the State Council, China's main national defense industry consists of 10 corporations to develop and produce nuclear weapons, missiles and rockets, aircraft, vessels, information systems and other military equipment. It is pointed out that China was the third largest weapon supplier in the world as of 2023.[42]

While China imports highly sophisticated military equipment and parts that it cannot produce domestically from other countries such as Russia, it is believed that China places emphasis on the enhancement of its military industrial sector, including the domestic production of equipment, to modernize its military. It has been pointed out that China is acquiring technologies ambitiously not only through domestic technology research and development and foreign direct investment, but also via illegal means in the form of secret information theft.[43]

China's civil-military fusion policy has been evident in the technology area. China promotes two-way technological exchanges where military technologies are utilized for developing the national economy while civilian technologies are absorbed for national defense development. It also seems interested in absorbing foreign technologies available both for military and civilian purposes. It is pointed out that China's civil-military fusion policy in the technology area gives priority to initiatives in seas, outer space, cyber, artificial intelligence (AI), and other emerging areas for China. The U.S. DoD has pointed out that civil-military fusion includes six mutually related efforts: (1) fusion of China's defense industrial base with its civilian technology and industrial base, (2) integration and use of scientific and technological innovation across military and civilian sectors, (3) human resources development and mixing of military and civilian expertise and

42 According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Arms Transfers Database
43 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

knowledge, (4) incorporation of military requirements into civilian infrastructure and use of civilian structures for military purposes, (5) use of civilian services and logistics capabilities for military purposes, and (6) expansion and deepening of China's defense mobilization system in a manner that includes all relevant aspects of society and economy for use in competition and war.[44, 45]

In addition, China is believed to be promoting the standardization of civilian products from the production stage for their military adoption under the CMF policy. This initiative is expected to allow the military to more effectively utilize civilian resources. Lately, China has tended to use the phrase of "building Integrated National Strategic System and Capabilities" to aid the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, rather than emphasizing the wording, Civil-Military Fusion (CMF).

As the growth rate of the defense budget is slowing, the CMF policy is expected to become increasingly important for China, which seeks for greater balance between building up its defense and its economy. In addition, in order to realize the aforementioned "intelligentized warfare" advocated by China, it is key to acquire advanced civilian technologies, including so-called "game-changing technologies," that would dramatically change future warfare. Therefore, because China's civil-military fusion policy is seen as an indispensable means to achieve this, this policy, including its relationship to "intelligentized warfare," must continue to be monitored with serious concern.

3 Relations with Countries and Regions

1 General Situation

China, particularly regarding maritime issues over which its interests conflict with others', continues to demonstrate its attitude of realizing its unilateral assertions without compromise, while promoting assertive actions including those to unilateral changes to the status quo by force and create a fait accompli for such changes, based on its own assertions incompatible with the existing international order. China has been promoting its BRI as a national strategy, but some BRI-participating countries have recently begun reconsidering BRI projects due mainly to their fiscal deterioration. It has been further highlighted that China has made moves toward creating its own international order, including the establishment of China-led multilateral mechanisms in fields such as security, growth, and development,[46] as well as moves toward influencing political decisions in other countries through efforts such as winning over foreign politicians.[47]

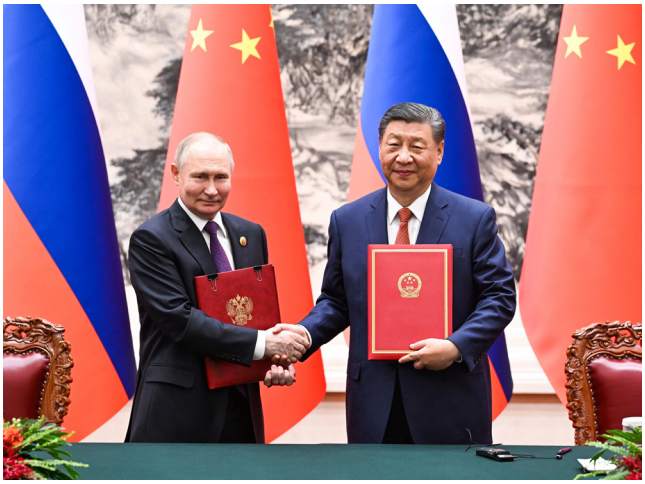
At the same time, China recognizes that a peaceful and stable international environment is necessary for maintaining sustainable economic development and enhancing China's overall national power. Based on such recognition, China has advocated building a "community of shared future for mankind" and referred to promoting the building of "a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, equity and justice, and win-win cooperation." China proactively carries out military exchanges with other countries. In recent years, China has been engaged in active military exchanges not only with major powers such as the United States and Russia and with its neighboring countries including Southeast Asian countries, but also with countries in Africa and Latin America. Furthermore, movement to strengthen relationships with Pacific countries is observed. The objectives of China's promotion of military exchanges are thought to include alleviating other countries' concerns regarding China by strengthening its relations with these countries, creating a favorable security environment for China, enhancing China's influence in the international community, exploring overseas arms markets, securing stable supplies of natural resources, and ensuring foreign bases.

2 Relations with Russia

Ever since the so-called China-Soviet confrontation ended in 1989, China and Russia have placed importance on their bilateral relationship. They have emphasized the deepening of their relationship since establishing a "strategic partnership" in the mid-1990s. In 2001, the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation was concluded. In 2004, the long-standing issue of border demarcation between the two countries came to a settlement. The two countries have a common view on promoting the multipolarization of the world and the establishment of a new international order, and have further deepened their relations. At the China-Russia summit meeting in May 2024, the two countries assessed current China-Russia relations as being "at the highest level ever." Furthermore, for example, amid growing

44 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
45 The existence of the plan to invite to China highly specialized human resources from overseas, including people of Chinese descent, is pointed out. As part of this, for example, it is noted that there are researchers with research experience in Japan who are engaged in the development of wind tunnel test facilities necessary for the development of hypersonic weapons.
46 For example, in April 2022 General Secretary Xi put forward the Global Security Initiative consisting of advocacy of the United Nation's authority and status, as well as opposition to security build-up of one's own country at the expense of the security of other countries.
47 According to the statement by then Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull in December 2017

tensions in U.S.-China and U.S.-Russia relations, China and Russia have consistently deepened their cooperation. Each country is believed to be planning to create an international environment favorable to itself by taking a united stance on security issues, such as Taiwan and issues surrounding NATO's eastern expansion, which are in conflict with the United States and others.



President Xi Jinping and President Putin holding a China-Russia summit meeting in May 2024 [China News Service/Jiji]

On the military front, since the 1990s, China has purchased modern weapons from Russia, including fighters, destroyers, and submarines. Russia is currently the largest supplier of weapons to China.[48] Although China-Russia arms transactions in value in recent years have been lower than in some past period, China has apparently continued to indicate its strong interests in importing advanced Russian defense equipment and in joint equipment development with Russia. For example, China has introduced what are believed to be the latest fourth generation Su-35 fighters and the S-400 surface-to-air missile system from Russia. China has been reported as the first country to import the Russian S-400. Meanwhile, it is also suggested that Russia has concerns about competing with China in arms exports taking into consideration China's improvement of technological power.

Military exchanges between China and Russia take place in such forms as routine mutual visits by senior military officers, as well as joint exercises, joint flights, and joint navigation. Both China and Russia have held the large-scale, joint naval exercise, Maritime Cooperation, since 2012, which includes joint minesweeping drills, blockade operations, raids, and seizure.

Additionally, both China and Russia have continued mutual participation in military exercises since 2018. The frequency of military cooperation has been increasing, including military from both China and Russia mutually participating in exercises organized by each country in September 2024. China likely regards these exchanges as an opportunity to learn about how to operate Russian-made weapons and the operational doctrine of the Russian Armed Forces, which have combat experiences.

Since 2019, China and Russia have held joint flights over long distances using bombers a total of nine times. The joint flight in May 2022 was with stronger provocation than ever because it was intended to demonstrate of force against Japan, which was holding a Japan-U.S.-Australia-India summit meeting at that time. Their activities are seen as diversifying. During joint flights in November of the same year, Chinese aircraft landed at a Russian airfield for the first time, and Russian aircraft landed at a Chinese airfield for the first time. During joint flights in November 2024, an H-6N bomber's participation was confirmed for the first time. It is believed to be capable of being equipped with Chinese military aerial refueling tankers and air-launched ballistic missiles that can carry nuclear weapons. Since 2021, China and Russia have held joint navigations a total of five times. The joint statement issued after the China-Russia summit meeting in March 2023 specified that the two countries would regularly conduct "joint patrols" and "joint exercises" at sea and in the air. During the joint navigation conducted in 2023, it is said that more than 50 combat training exercises were conducted. Before and after the joint navigation, ships participating in it made port calls to each other's countries for the first time, which indicated a diversification of their activities. In 2024, Chinese and Russian naval vessels held joint navigations twice for the first time, once in July and again in September to October.

The repeated joint flights of bombers and joint navigations of vessels between China and Russia are obviously intended as demonstration activities against Japan and are a grave concern for Japan's security.

In this way, China and Russia is demonstrating actions to enhance cooperation further even while aggression against Ukraine is ongoing. There is a possibility for the two countries to enhance military cooperation further, and these developments, including the strengthening of military cooperation between China and Russia, not only have a direct impact on the security environment surrounding Japan, but may also have strategic effects on the United States and Europe, and should be watched with concern.

See Fig. I-3-2-18 (The Main Trends concerning China-Russia Military Cooperation)

48 According to SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Fig. I-3-2-18 The Main Trends concerning China-Russia Military Cooperation

Joint Naval Exercise "Joint Sea"

Time	Exercise area
Apr. 2012	Yellow Sea
Jul. 2013	Sea of Japan
May 2014	East China Sea
May 2015	The Mediterranean Sea
Aug. 2015	Sea of Japan
Sep. 2016	South China Sea
Jul. 2017	Baltic Sea
Sep. 2017	Sea of Japan Sea of Sea of Okhotsk
Apr.–May 2019	Yellow Sea
Oct. 2021	Sea of Japan
Dec. 2022	East China Sea
Jul. 2024	South China Sea

Mutual Participation in Strategic Military Exercises

Time	Name of exercise
2018	Vostok 2018
2019	Tsentr 2019
2020	Kavkaz 2020
2021	Western Joint-2021
2022	Vostok 2022
2023	Northern Joint-2023
2024	Ocean 2024
	Northern Joint-2024

Joint Flights of Bombers

Time	Flight areas
Jul. 2019	Sea of Japan, East China Sea
Dec. 2020	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean
Nov. 2021	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean
May 2022	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean
Nov. 2022	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean
Jun. 2023	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean
Dec. 2023	Sea of Japan, East China Sea
Jul. 2024	Chukchi Sea, Bering Sea, northern Pacific Ocean
Nov. 2024	Sea of Japan, East China Sea, Pacific Ocean

Joint Navigation of Ships

Time	Navigated areas
Oct. 2021	Sea of Japan–(Tsugaru Strait)–western Pacific Ocean–East China Sea
Sep.–Oct. 2022	Sea of Japan–(Soya Strait)–Sea of Okhotsk–Bering Sea–Philippine Sea–East China Sea
Jul.–Aug. 2023	Sea of Japan–(Soya Strait)–Sea of Okhotsk–Bering Sea (bypassing the Aleutian Islands)–Pacific Ocean–East China Sea
Jul. 2024	East China Sea (Jeju Island)–(Osumi Strait)–Philippine Sea–South China Sea
Sep.–Oct. 2024	Sea of Okhotsk–Pacific Ocean–East China Sea

3 Relations with North Korea

China has kept close relations with North Korea under the 1961 Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty. In June 2019, General Secretary Xi became the first Chinese president to visit North Korea in 14 years and held his fifth summit meeting with Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong-un. In October 2022, Chairman Kim sent a congratulatory telegram to President Xi Jinping on his election as President for his third term. In September 2023, Xi sent a congratulatory telegram to North Korea on what it claims is the 75th anniversary of its "founding."

China has reportedly adopted three principles on the Korean Peninsula—(1) the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, (2) the maintenance of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and (3) the resolution of problems through dialogue and consultations—indicating that China gives priority to the maintenance of stability and dialogue as well as the denuclearization. Under these principles, China, while agreeing to UN Security Council resolutions until 2017 to enhance sanctions on North Korea, cooperated with Russia in proposing a draft resolution including lifting some of the sanctions based on UNSC resolutions recently. In May 2022, China exercised its power of veto with Russia to a draft resolution for sanctions proposed by the United States in response to North Korea's launching of ICBM-class ballistic missiles.

Although China has vowed to have seriously observed its international obligations, it has been pointed out that Chinese ships have been involved in illicit ship-to-ship transfer prohibited by the UN Security Council resolutions.

4 Relations with Other Countries

(1) Relations with Southeast Asian Countries

See Section 7-2 (Security and Defense Policies of Each Country)

(2) Relations with Central Asian Countries

See Section 8-1-3 (2) (Relations with China)

(3) Relations with South Asian Countries

See Section 8-1-3 (2) (Relations with China), Section 8-2-3 (2) (Relations with China)

(4) Relations with European Countries

See Section 9-2-3 (Relations with China)

(5) Relations with African Countries

See Section 10-2-2 (1) (China and Russia)

(6) Relations with Australia and Pacific Island Countries

See Section 6-1-3 (2) (Relations with China), Section 6-3 (Pacific Island Countries)

5 International Transfer of Weapons

China has been expanding exports of weapons such as missiles, tanks, aircraft including drones, and ships. Specifically, China's major arms export destinations are believed to include Pakistan and Serbia, but it is also said to export weapons to Algeria, Nigeria, and other African countries, countries in Southeast Asia such as Thailand and Myanmar, and Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia.[49]

Some claim that China has transferred weapons to foreign countries in order to strengthen its strategic relationships with friendly nations, enhance its influence in the international community, and secure natural resources. China has not participated in some of the frameworks for international arms export control, and some point out that missile-related and other technologies have been transferred from China to other countries.

REFERENCE: The International Military Environment (China)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/surround/index.html

49 According to SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Perspective

Chinese Military Trends Concerning Taiwan

SUGIURA Yasuyuki, Senior Fellow, China Division, National Institute for Defense Studies

In recent years, the Chinese military has been intensifying its military activities in the area around Taiwan using combat aircraft and warships. There was no change to this trend in 2024 either; on the contrary those moves were reinforced. For example, the Chinese military conducted large-scale military exercises: Joint Sword-2024A immediately after the inauguration ceremony for President Lai Ching-te of Taiwan in May and Joint Sword-2024B immediately after Double Tenth day in October.

It can be pointed out that the characteristics of these military activities by the Chinese military in the area around Taiwan consist of the following three points: "combat readiness," which means it conducts practical training with a Taiwan contingency in mind, "propaganda," which means it actively implements PR activities about the details of the training in a form which mixes together truths and falsehoods, and "normalization" which means that in addition to conducting large-scale exercises it is also continuously developing a variety of other military activities in the area around Taiwan.

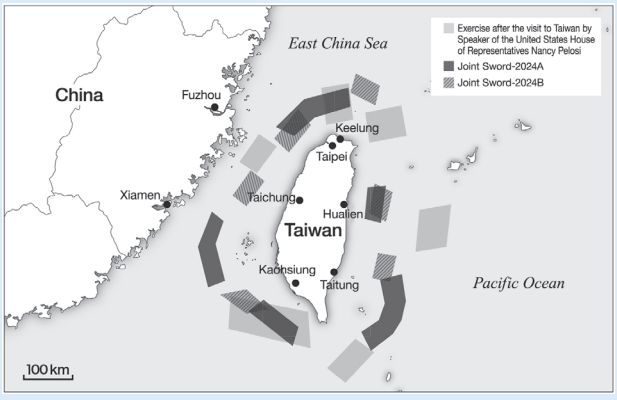
From the perspective of combat readiness, the fact that (i) joint operational training in anticipation of precision guided attacks on the major cities and ports of Taiwan, (ii) joint blockade operations training against Taiwan in the seas and airspace, (iii) law enforcement training by the China Coast Guard coordinated with the training of the Chinese military, and other such training was conducted in Joint Sword-2024 has gained attention. In particular the Chinese military is gradually increasing the exercise sites in (ii) and aiming to reinforce its blockade systems (Figure-1). China is reinforcing a variety of capabilities with a Taiwan contingency in mind.

From the perspective of propaganda, the points which we should pay attention to in Joint Sword-2024 include (i) the distribution of videos by Chinese media publicizing the details of the exercises, (ii) explanations about the details and purposes of the exercises and assertions about the legality of conducting the exercises by researchers affiliated with Chinese military research institutes, (iii) criticism of the Lai Ching-te administration and references to "peaceful reunification" by the spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry of National Defense. Concerning (i), even though no live-fire exercises have actually been conducted, videos have been created that mix together truths and falsehoods, including the creation of 3D animations that make it look as if they had been conducted. It is believed that by actively carrying out these PR activities about the exercises, China is intending to put pressure on Taiwan and the international community, and to assert the legitimacy of conducting the training while appealing to the fact that the exercises do not target the general citizens of Taiwan.

As for the point regarding normalization, (i) the suggestion of continuity due to the assignment of fiscal years and numbers to the exercises, (ii) military activities in the area around Taiwan by combat aircraft and warships of the Chinese military repeated before and after Joint Sword-2024 was conducted, (iii) the deployment of units of the navy and air force to the area around Taiwan in December 2024 which was implemented to oppose the visit of President Lai Ching-te to the United States as a stopover, and other matters have gained attention. Concerning (iii), the Taiwanese Ministry of National Defense has announced that the number of combat aircraft and warships which participated was comparable to Joint Sword-2024. These moves mean that China can adjust the intensity of its military activities, which have been normalized, and conduct large-scale exercises at any time in line with Taiwan's statements toward China and developments in U.S.-Taiwan relations. Actually, in April 2025 the Chinese military conducted a large-scale military exercise on the pretext that President Lai Ching-te stated that China was a "foreign hostile force."

It is believed that the objectives of the military activities by the Chinese military in the area around Taiwan are the following. The first objective is to strongly criticize the Lai Ching-te administration which is considered to be more in favor of Taiwanese independence than the Tsai Ing-wen administration. The second objective is to restrain the United States, which is reinforcing its security relationship with Taiwan. The third objective is to further divide Taiwanese society and isolate the Lai Ching-te administration by combining a hard-line stance of military action with a moderate stance centered on promoting economic relations between China and Taiwan.

This strengthening of military pressure on Taiwan by the Chinese military amounts to an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force, and there are concerns that it could lead to destabilization of the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. For that reason, it is necessary for Japan to continue to closely monitor these moves by the Chinese military.



Comparison of the Military Exercise Locations of the Chinese Military in the Area Around Taiwan

(Note) This column is an independent analysis from the researcher's academic perspective, and its contents do not represent an official government position.

Section 3 Relations between the United States and China, etc.

1 Relations between the United States and China (General Situation)

With regard to the relationship between the United States, the world's largest economic power, and China, the second largest, competitions between the two countries across the political, economic, and military realms have become increasingly apparent in recent years. This is due to various concerns such as changes in the balance of power caused by China's growing national power, trade issues, issues concerning the South China Sea, the Taiwan issue, the Hong Kong issue, and human rights issues in China regarding Uighur and Tibet. In particular, since the first Trump administration, the moves of the United States and China that had kept each other in check have come to the surface. Subsequently, there has been strong interest in the irreversible developments in the strategic competition between the two countries.

In October 2022, the Biden administration (then) published the National Security Strategy (NSS), identifying China as the United States' most consequential geopolitical challenge and positioning it as the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to achieve this. It stated that China has an ambition to become the world's leading power, invests in its rapidly modernizing military power, enhances its capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region, and attempts to erode U.S. alliances. The NSS also expressed the idea that the world is at a turning point, and the next ten years will be decisive in determining the competitive power of the United States against China. Based on this perception, the administration raised three points as the axis for its policy towards China, that is, (1) investment in competitiveness, innovation, resiliency, and democracy, (2) cooperation with allies and partners, and (3) responsible competition with China to defend the interests of the United States and build a vision for the future. The government stated it would pursue wider strategic stability through the plan to responsively manage competition, lower risks of unintended military escalation, and ultimately engage with China through measures on arms control initiatives. On the other hand, the administration expresses that it is willing to cooperate with China when both countries have common interests because China, being central to the global economy, has a strong influence on shared challenges. Climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, and the global food crisis are indicated as some of the challenges requiring cooperation. In this way, the then Biden administration took over from the first Trump administration the deterrence stance against China while considering dealing with cross-border challenges important, and thus it announced managed competition with China and cooperation in specific fields.

The administration, in the National Defense Strategy (NDS) published in October 2022, placed China's coercive and increasingly aggressive endeavor, to refashion the Indo-Pacific region and international system to suit its interests and authoritarian preferences, as the most comprehensive and serious challenge to the security of the United States. It further stated that China was a "pacing challenge" that needs to be dealt with, and that the Department of Defense should take actions rapidly to maintain and enhance deterrence against China, because China has expanded and modernized nearly every aspect of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), with a focus on offsetting U.S. military advantages.

Taking a strict attitude towards China is becoming common nonpartisan policy. For example, a nonpartisan "Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party" was established in January 2023 and a resolution to extend the committee's term, which was originally scheduled to be until the end of 2024, until the end of 2026 was passed in the U.S. House of Representatives in January 2025.

The second Trump administration continues to present a stance placing importance on deterrence of China, and in February 2025, in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting held in Brussels, Secretary of Defense Hegseth indicated that the United States was facing a peer competitor in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with the capability and intent to threaten the homeland and core national interests in the Indo-Pacific of the United States, and stated that the United States was prioritizing deterring war with China in the Pacific.

On the other hand, China opposes this, stating that this type of attitude is an old-fashioned representation of a Cold War mentality and zero-sum game, and is stirring up competition between superpowers. China shows a non-compromising attitude over its own "core interests and material concerns," and uses special caution regarding involvement with the United States especially in regard to Taiwan issues that China values as "the core of core interests." When Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives (then), visited Taiwan in August 2022, China conducted large scale military exercises in various areas around Taiwan, and showed an uncompromising attitude against the United States. For example, China announced countermeasures that it withholds various discussion between the two countries.

United States Armed Forces shot down a Chinese reconnaissance balloon that was detected over the U.S. homeland in February 2023. The U.S. Government communicated to China that the flight was a clear violation of its sovereignty and of international law, and postponed the visit of Secretary of State Blinken (then) to China scheduled in the same month. China insisted that it was a privately owned

weather observation airship that strayed into U.S. territory due to force majeure and expressed strong discontent with the shooting down of the balloon by the United States and protested against it.

Against this backdrop, exchanges between the U.S. and China, including between their military authorities, slowed down, but efforts have been made to resume exchanges since then. In November 2023, then-President Biden held a summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping for the first time in about a year. They agreed to resume high-level dialogue between military authorities, which the Chinese side appears to have suspended in response to the shooting down of its spy balloon. Additionally, they agreed to resume consultations between their military authorities, which had been suspended by China as a countermeasure when then-House Speaker Pelosi visited Taiwan. Subsequently, from the end of 2023 to 2025 after the inauguration of the second Trump administration, exchanges between the military authorities of the U.S. and China gradually resumed, including the holding of a defense ministerial meeting, a meeting between the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Chief of the Joint Staff Department of the PLA, the Defense Policy Coordination Talks (DPCT), a video teleconference between the Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and the Commander of the PLA Southern Theater Command, and a Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) meeting, among others. Regarding exchanges between the military authorities of the U.S. and China, the U.S. Department of Defense has stated that it remains committed to maintaining open lines of communication with China to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict.[1]

Meanwhile, in the field of sensitive technologies and critical technologies, where U.S.-China competition is particularly conspicuous, the United States has become increasingly wary of China. China promotes the "intelligentization" of the PLA through the use of cutting-edge technologies; for example, General Secretary Xi of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), stated in his report in the 20th CCP Congress in October 2022 that China "holds fast to merge and develop mechanization, informatization, and intelligentization." Based on these movements, the Biden administration (then) put effort into protecting and fostering sensitive and key technologies, recognizing that U.S. security will be threatened as a result of the strengthening of Chinese military power due to leakage of such technologies from the United States and its allies. Aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of the United States in the semiconductor field, the "Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act" was passed in August 2022 to financially support companies manufacturing semiconductors in the United States, while making it compulsory that the supported companies agree with the Secretary of Commerce not to enhance advanced semiconductor manufacturing facilities in countries of particular concern including China for ten years. In addition, the administration announced the enhancement of Export Administration Regulations related to semiconductors in October 2022 to limit the ability of China to obtain and manufacture technologies and products used in advanced military systems to increase the accuracy and speed of military decision making. In August 2023, the administration issued an executive order restricting investment in China in three areas of national security concern: semiconductors and microelectronics, quantum technology information, and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, the Biden administration continued to add companies that support the modernization of China's military to the Entity List,[2] which regulates exports from the U.S. In addition, based on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the U.S. Department of Defense releases the "Chinese military companies" list of companies which have a relationship with the Chinese military, and 134 companies, including Chinese telecommunications equipment company Huawei and IT company Tencent, have been placed on the list as of January 2025.[3]

On the other hand, China criticizes these measures taken by the United States as malicious blockage of Chinese companies. Moreover, in response to the tightening of regulations by the United States and other foreign countries, China has been enforcing a series of countermeasures, such as laws and regulations, since 2020. In September 2020, China implemented its Unreliable Entity List in response to the U.S. Entity List. In December of the same year, China's Export Control Law entered into force to control the export of technology and the like related to China's national security and interests. As further pushing back against the United States measures, in January 2021, China passed new rules to protect its firms from "unjustified extra-territorial application of foreign legislation and other measures." In addition to this, in June 2021, China announced the entry into force of the Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law and implemented sanctions against U.S. individuals and organizations, including the former U.S. Secretary of Commerce. China's Ministry of Commerce then criticized the U.S. Export Administration Regulations related to semiconductors as disruptive to the order of the international economy and trading and presented a case to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in December 2022. Furthermore, China continues to add U.S. companies to its Entity List as untrustworthy trading partners, citing reasons such as arms sales to Taiwan, and continues to

1 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
2 The Entity List is a list of companies and others designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) as having national security or foreign policy-related concerns under the Export Administration Regulations. Exports, etc. of goods, software, or technologies necessary for production or development to companies and other entities on the list require authorization from the BIS.
3 The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021 stipulated that the U.S. Department of Defense would release a list of companies which have a relationship with the Chinese military every year. There are no specific sanctions or other measures that result from being placed on the list.

impose sanctions on U.S. companies and individuals under the Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law.

Competition in the technology field between the United States and China is likely to intensify further in the future as both sides continue to reciprocate each other's efforts to set forth new regulations. For example, the United States made a move to enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation, the effects of which can be seen to be spreading internationally.

2 Military Trends of the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific Region

1 General Situation

The Biden administration (then), which placed utmost importance on the Indo-Pacific region, announced in NSS that it was going to deepen its tightest partnerships with five allies, namely Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea (ROK), the Philippines, and Thailand, based on the recognition that a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) is achievable only with the collective capacity of alliances and partnerships. Furthermore, the administration stated that Japan, the United States, Australia, and India, as well as AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), are also important for addressing regional challenges, and that it will work to strengthen overall capabilities through cooperation between Indo-Pacific and European countries. The administration also stated that it places emphasis on Southeast Asia and Pacific Islands regions to enhance regional diplomacy, development, and economic involvement. Moreover, it disclosed in the NDS the direction of the United States to reinforce and build out resilient security architecture in the Indo-Pacific region in order to sustain a free and open regional order and deter attempts to resolve disputes by force. With this view, it is stated that it is necessary to modernize the alliance with Japan and strengthen combined capabilities by aligning strategic planning and priorities in a more integrated manner.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2025 passed through Congress in December 2024 places importance on deterring China, etc. It includes initiatives aimed at strengthening the posture and capabilities of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific, such as approval of the budget for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative to enhance the deterrence and defense posture of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific region and increased investment in the innovative technologies necessary to deter China, such as hypersonic technologies, AI, autonomous systems, cyber technologies, and others.

The second Trump administration is also presenting a stance of placing importance on its commitment to the Indo-Pacific region with deterrence of China in mind. For example, in March 2025, while on his visit to Hawaii, Secretary of Defense Hegseth stated that he would cooperate with the allies and partners of the United States to deter aggression by the CCP in the Indo-Pacific, while the United States was committed to reestablishing deterrence and realizing peace through strength in the Indo-Pacific region.

See Section 1-1 (Security and Defense Policies)

As for the relationship with Japan, the United States expressed its intention to reconstitute U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) as a joint force headquarters (JFHQ) in the joint statement of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. "2+2") held in July 2024. Furthermore, the United States repeatedly states that Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty applies to the Senkaku Islands. The second Trump administration has also reaffirmed its unwavering commitment of the United States to the defense of Japan, confirming that Article V applies to the Senkaku Islands, on various occasions, including Japan-U.S. summit meetings.

On the other hand, China resists this U.S. posture, saying these are acts of repressing the growth of China and protecting U.S. hegemony. It is seen that China is wary of the growth of initiatives, such as those by Japan, the United States, Australia, and India, into strong alliances, as well as with the growing involvement of the United States in the Indo-Pacific region. Furthermore, the military power balance between the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific region is changing because China is rapidly strengthening its military power against a background of economic growth and other factors. China is out of the framework of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) and the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and has been enhancing ground-launched missile power unilaterally. Although the United States has insisted that China should be included in arms control negotiations and expressed its intention to apply certain brakes to China's missile power build-up, China consistently refuses[4], asserting that the United States should take the initiative in conducting disarmament.

The changes in the military power balance between the United States and China can affect peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. Thus, the U.S.-China military trends in the region including the South China Sea and Taiwan will require further attention.

2 South China Sea

With regard to the issues over the South China Sea, the United States is concerned about such dimensions as obstruction to the freedom of navigation in sea lanes, restrictions on the activities of U.S. Forces, and the worsening security situation in the entire region. The United States has requested China

4 According to the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China on December 11, 2019

comply with international norms, and has repeatedly criticized China's unilateral and assertive actions. On the other hand, China expresses opposition saying the United States is the largest threat to peace and stability in the South China Sea, and confrontation between these two countries is deepening.

China has been advancing into the South China Sea taking advantage of the power vacuum there since the 1950s, and promoting the establishment of the Paracel Islands military base. It has also been conducting rapid reclamation of the Spratly Islands on a large scale since 2014. Even after the illegality of the Chinese activities such as land reclamation was determined at the Philippines-China arbitration in 2016, China has made it clear that it would not comply with the decision and has been promoting its plan to militarize the area.

See Section 2-2-6 (5) (Trends of Activities in the South China Sea)

The United States has been condemning China's action about issues concerning the South China Sea hitherto and has conducted Freedom of Navigation Operations and other activities.

The Biden administration (then) continued to show its consistent and strict deterrence stance against China. For example, it stated that the United States will reject China's claims about maritime interests in the South China Sea and stand up together with Southeast Asian countries facing China's pressure. In response to the clashes between the Philippines and China which occurred even after the ruling of the arbitral tribunal to Philippines v. China, the United States again issued a statement demanding that China comply with the obligations of international law. In addition, in January 2022, the U.S. Department of State released a study examining China's maritime claims in the South China Sea in light of international law. The study concluded that China's claims over most of the South China Sea are inconsistent with international law and gravely undermine the rule of law in the ocean. In February 2023, during a defense ministerial meeting between the United States and the Philippines, the two countries agreed to add four new cooperation bases within the Philippines, in addition to the existing five, under the "Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA)" to facilitate the rotational deployment of U.S. forces. In addition, since April 2024, the United States has been deploying its ground-launched, mid-range missile system Typhon in the Philippines. In this way, the administration is showing its stance to further enhance cooperation with countries bordering the South China Sea.

Additionally, the United States has sought to enhance military efforts in the South China Sea. It has continuously conducted the Freedom of Navigation Operations, carried out joint exercises in July 2020 by deploying two Carrier Strike Groups for the first time since 2014, and subsequently conducted similar exercises several times in order to confront excessive claims by China and other countries over maritime interests. The United States has also conducted joint training with partner countries including Japan, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Canada, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Responding to these American efforts, China has criticized the United States for hindering the peace and stability of the region.

Going forward, while forming free and open order based on the rule of law is important in the South China Sea, the military tensions may rise. Japan, which promotes the vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) with the United States, will have to pay great attention to the situation.

3 Taiwan

China upholds the principle that Taiwan is a part of China and that the Taiwan issue is its internal affair. China maintains that the "One China" principle is the underlying premise and foundation for dialogue between China and Taiwan. China is also strongly opposed to any foreign intervention in the unification of China as well as any move towards the independence of Taiwan and has repeatedly stated that it has not renounced the use of force in respect of the Taiwan issue. "The Anti-Secession Law," enacted in March 2005, clearly lays out China's policy of not renouncing the use of force, providing that in the event that possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted, the state shall employ nonpeaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. General Secretary Xi stated in the report to the 20th Party Congress held in October 2022, in respect of cross-strait issues, China's position to "continue to strive for peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and the utmost effort" while he stated again "resolving the Taiwan issue and realizing China's complete reunification is a natural requirement for realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" and "we will never promise to renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all measures necessary."

On the other hand, the United States stated in the NSS that it has an abiding interest in maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, opposes any unilateral changes to the status quo from either side, does not support Taiwan independence, and remains committed to the "One China" policy which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the Three Joint Communiqués between the United States and China, and the Six Assurances. Based on this, the United States also makes it clear that it intends to uphold its commitments under the TRA to support Taiwan's self-defense, and to maintain the United States' capacity to resist any resort to force or coercion against Taiwan.

Furthermore, the United States has positioned China as America's most consequential geopolitical challenge as well as the only competitor with the intent and power to reshape the international order and has made clear its diplomatic stance to contain China through cooperation with allies and partner countries on issues concerning Taiwan and other matters. Even after the second Trump administration began, the importance of "peace and stability across the Taiwan

Strait" has been mentioned on various occasions including Japan-U.S. summit meetings. In addition, the administration has been promoting efforts to enhance Taiwan's international standing, including exhibiting the stance of supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations.

In addition, the United States has decided to sell weapons to Taiwan based on the TRA. The United States has continued to sell weapons such as aircraft-launched missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and provide maintenance and repair packages for air defense missile systems. In addition, it has U.S. warships and aircraft pass through the Taiwan Strait periodically. Moreover, then President Tsai Ing-wen acknowledged that the U.S. military was visiting Taiwan for training purposes in an interview with U.S. media in October 2021. In March 2023, then U.S. Secretary of Defense Austin testified at a congressional hearing that the U.S. National Guard was training Taiwan's military.

Moreover, not only the U.S. government but also the U.S. Congress has indicated its intention to further enhance support for Taiwan. It is said that congressional delegations of the United States including then Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Pelosi, visited Taiwan repeatedly and met with then-President Tsai and others, and exchanged views on strengthening U.S.-Taiwan relations and other matters during 2022. The FY2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) included approvals for the Taiwan Enhanced Resilience Act to enhance security cooperation with Taiwan, and for military financing of up to USD 10 billion over five years from 2023 to 2027, among other items. Moreover, the FY2024 NDAA included provisions for providing comprehensive training and advice to Taiwan's military and establishing an institutional capacity-building program. The FY2025 NDAA reaffirmed support for the defense of Taiwan and included the formulation of a Taiwan security cooperation initiative for maintaining the self-defense capabilities of Taiwan, including support on the scale of a maximum of USD 300 million for the provision of equipment, etc.

In response to this proximity between the United States and Taiwan, China has further stepped up its military activities around Taiwan, including conducting military exercises around it when VIPs from the United States and Taiwan visited each other.

See Section 2-2-6 (4) (Trends of Activities around Taiwan), Section 2 [Commentary] (Chinese Military Trends Concerning Taiwan)

While the United States is clarifying its stance of supporting Taiwan in the military-related area, it is deemed unlikely that China, which positions Taiwan issues as "the core of the core interests," will show a compromising attitude towards the U.S. stance. It is viewed that the U.S.-China conflict over Taiwan may become more apparent. Stabilizing the situation surrounding Taiwan is important not only for Japan's security but also for the stability of the international community. Therefore, it is necessary that we pay close attention to the situation with a sense of crisis more than ever before.

3 Military Capabilities of Taiwan and Military Balance between China and Taiwan

1 Relations with China

In May 2024, Mr. Lai Ching-te of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was inaugurated as the president. In his inaugural address, President Lai Ching-te stated that "the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China are not subordinate to each other" while adhering to the policy with respect to China of former president Tsai Ing-wen and in addition he has mentioned maintaining the status quo, and exhibited a stance of calling for exchanges and dialogue on an equal footing. In September the same year, President Lai declared that he would not accept the 1992 Consensus,[5] which upholds the "One China" principle, saying it was "tantamount to selling out our sovereignty." In his speech for the Double Tenth National Day Celebration in October of the same year, President Lai asserted that "the People's Republic of China has no right to represent Taiwan" and called for cooperation in areas such as climate change dialogue. China opposed this, calling it a challenge to the "One China" principle, and conducted military exercises in the water and air around Taiwan after President Lai's inaugural address and after his speech for the Double Tenth National Day Celebration. Furthermore, in March 2025, on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of The Anti-Secession Law by China, President Lai mentioned for the first time that "China already satisfies the definition of a 'foreign hostile force' as provided in Taiwan's Anti-Infiltration Act," indicated five threats from China that Taiwan faces, and announced 17 countermeasures. Subsequently, in April the same year, China conducted military exercises around Taiwan, stated that these exercises were a "stern warning and strong deterrence" against Taiwan independence forces, and criticized President Lai for positioning China as a "foreign hostile force" in March, among other criticisms.

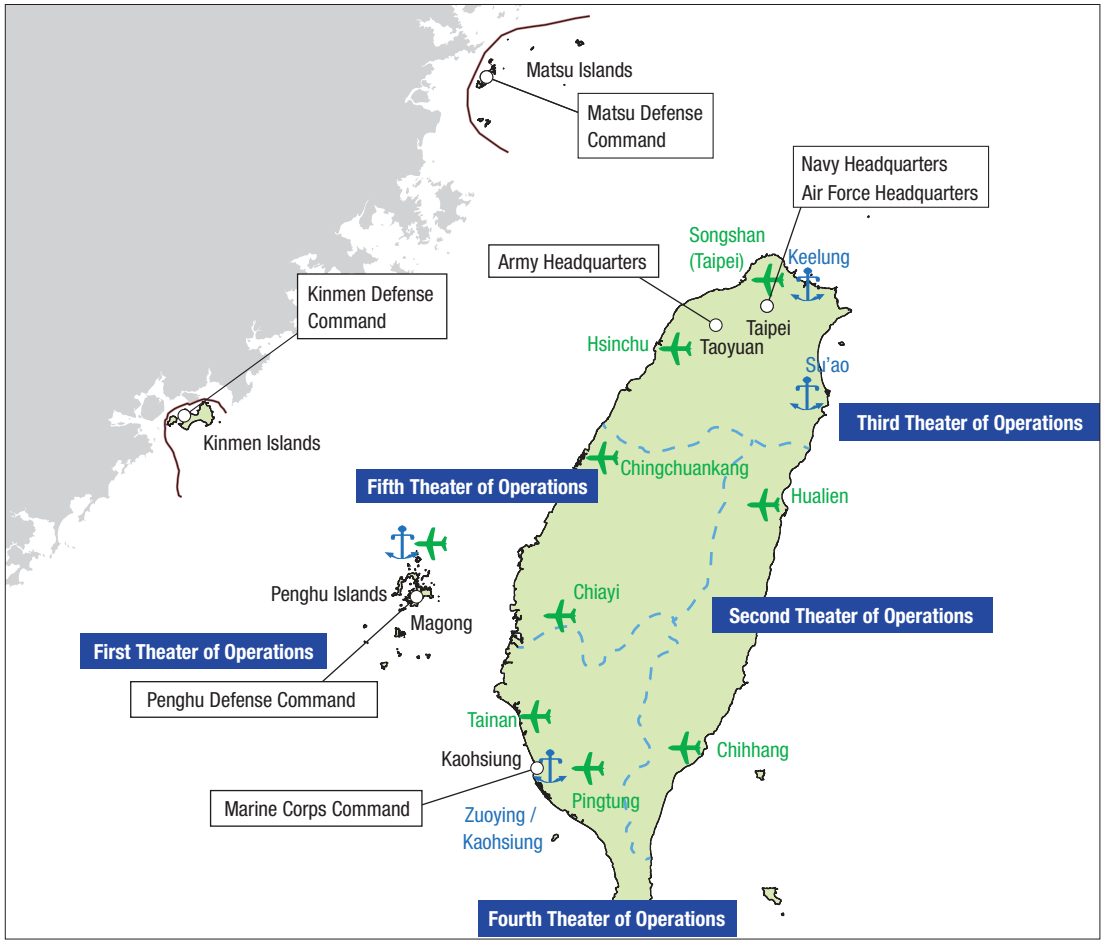
In a January 2019 speech at an event commemorating the 40th anniversary of China's "Message to Compatriots in Taiwan," regarding the application of the "one country, two systems" model to Taiwan, General Secretary Xi stated that "the specific form of the 'one country, two systems' model in

5 The "1992 Consensus" refers to what represents a common understanding reached between Chinese and Taiwanese authorities in 1992 on the "One-China" principle. The CCP and Taiwan's Kuomintang Nationalist Party (Taiwan's ruling party at the time), viewed as parties to the consensus, have reportedly differed over the interpretation of the principle. In addition, Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party has clarified that it has not accepted the "1992 Consensus."

Taiwan will give full consideration to the situation in Taiwan." In response to this, the Taiwan side exhibited the stance of rejecting "one country, two systems." For example, then President Tsai released a statement the same day stating that Taiwan absolutely will not accept "one country, two systems." Moreover, in October 2021, at the ceremony commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Xinhai Revolution, President Xi stated "Those who… seek to split the country will come to no good end; they will be disdained by the people and condemned by history." In June 2024 after the inauguration of the Lai administration, the Chinese government announced punishment guidelines that would impose the death penalty as the maximum penalty for acts of secession by "Taiwan independence" elements. In response to this, President Lai stated that "democracy is not a crime" and called on China to "face up to the existence of the Republic of China and conduct exchanges and dialogues with Taiwan's democratically elected and legitimate government." In September the same year, at a ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, President Xi once again declared that China "would resolutely oppose any form of 'Taiwan Independence' separatist activities" and in addition he emphasized that China would continue to firmly adhere to the "One China" principle and the 1992 Consensus.

In regard to relations between the international community and Taiwan, since around the inauguration of former President Tsai, Taiwanese delegates have been repeatedly refused attendance at, or had their invitations deferred from, meetings held by international organizations, including ones in which they had participated up to that point.[6] Furthermore, Nauru severed diplomatic ties with Taiwan in January 2024 and established diplomatic relations with China, reducing the number of countries with which Taiwan has diplomatic relations from 22 when the Tsai administration first took office in May 2016 to 12. The Taiwanese authorities have strongly protested against these moves, describing them as "China's attempt to compress Taiwan's international space."

Fig. I-3-3-1 Placement of Taiwan Military



6 According to the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan on September 24, 2019

2 Taiwan's Military Power and Defense Strategy

With regard to Taiwan's military power, at present, ground forces, including the Marine Corps, have a total of approximately 104,000 personnel. The Taiwan Military divides the main island of Taiwan and the Penghu Islands into five theaters of operation, with Army Corps and other units in charge of command and management of each theater of operation. In addition, it is assessed that approximately 1.66 million reserve personnel of the air, naval, and ground forces would be available in case of war. In January 2022, the All-out Defense Mobilization Agency was established to integrate the reserve forces and public and private organizations involved in wartime mobilization to optimize the efficiency of the mobilization system in the event of an emergency. Regarding naval capabilities, in addition to Kidd-class destroyers which were imported from the United States, Taiwan possesses the indigenously built "Tuo Chiang" stealth corvette, among other vessels. Taiwan is currently promoting indigenous shipbuilding programs to independently build its own military vessels, which includes plans to build 11 mass-produced Tuo Chiang-class corvettes by 2026 and ultimately about eight submarines, including the first submarine, which was launched in September 2023. Regarding air capabilities, Taiwan possesses F-16 fighters (F-16V upgraded from F-16A/B), Mirage 2000 fighters, Ching-kuo fighters, and other assets. In November 2021, Taiwan's first unit composed of F-16V fighters upgraded from F-16A/B fighters was established at Chiayi Air Base, and the deployment of fighters capable of carrying longer-range missiles is being strengthened, including the new F-16V fighters introduced from the United States.

Taiwan had conscription from 1951, but later transitioned to a volunteer system, with conscription ending by the end of 2018. Since then, while the four-month mandatory military training for males aged 18 to 36 had been maintained, the Tsai administration revived one-year obligatory military service for males of conscription age starting in January 2024. The Army formed seven new infantry brigades, primarily consisting of compulsorily conscripted soldiers, for a total of 12 brigades by 2023, and began accepting soldiers with one-year mandatory conscription from January 2024. Reportedly, the new conscription system has strengthened the training content beyond what was required under the previous military training obligations, specifically requiring enhanced training in operating new equipment and participation in practical training.

On the other hand, since China has consistently expressed its intention of not renouncing the use of force to Taiwan, the country may make a decision on military options such as air and maritime blockade, limited use of force, air and missile operations, and invasion of Taiwan. If that happens, it is deemed that China will deter or delay any potential interventions by the United States. It was reported in December 2021 that an unpublished report submitted from the Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan to the Legislative Yuan described a postulated Chinese process for invading Taiwan as follows: In the initial stage, China will assemble its military forces on the Chinese coast under the guise of exercises and use "cognitive warfare" to cause panic among the Taiwanese people. Then, naval vessels will be gathered in the Western Pacific to prevent foreign military intervention. Next, under the strategy of transformation from exercises to war, the Rocket and Air Forces will launch ballistic and cruise missiles to attack Taiwan's key military facilities, while the Strategic Support Forces carry out cyber-attacks on Taiwan's key military systems. Finally, after gaining sea and air superiority, landing operations by amphibious assault ships, transport helicopters, and more will be carried out, thus achieving total control of Taiwan before foreign forces intervene.

Furthermore, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) published by the Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan in March 2025 indicated combat patterns are changing in the Taiwan Strait; specifically, that it is becoming more difficult to clearly identify signs of invasion by the Chinese military, that the transition from peacetime to wartime has become relatively rapid and ambiguous, that China's development of long-range precision strike capabilities is blurring the boundary between the front and the rear, and that after the outbreak of the conflict, China will employ traditional, hybrid, and irregular warfare forces to inflict multi-domain attacks on Taiwan.

In response to such moves of China, Taiwan has put forth a defense strategy called "Resolute Defense and Multi-domain Deterrence" which seeks to prevent or foil an invasion by the Chinese military through establishing a multi-layered defense posture, which combines major equipment such as fighters and vessels with asymmetric force, in order to restrict the Chinese military at the farthest points possible, while reinforcing homeland defense and collaborating with international partners, including the United States. Regarding this strategy, the ROC National Defense Report 2023 added the new item of "Defense in Depth" and described it mainly as follows.

- Firstly, it states that it will monitor obvious indicators of enemy invasion and preemptively strike its mobilizing invasion forces. This is seen to be an attempt to delay the enemy invasion and secure lead time for building a defense posture by using long-range fire strikes on enemy assembly locations.
- Furthermore, the report states that at the stage when enemy units are moving at sea, Taiwan will reduce the enemy by naval vessels, missiles, and unmanned vehicles taking advantage of the enemy's vulnerability when crossing the sea, and in addition it states that Taiwan will stop the enemy at the coast by using border obstacles.
- Concerning homeland defense, the report states that

Taiwan will conduct defense operations utilizing the terrain, urban environment, etc., and in addition that it will strengthen the fighting capability of compulsory conscripts and reserve forces and the whole-of-society defense capacity at wartime.

- In addition, it stipulates extension of the defense space in coordination with deployment of the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy. If this is based on the fact that the report indicates that Taiwan, located at a key position on the first island chain, occupies an important strategic position for the Indo-Pacific defense postures of the United States and others while stating for the first time that Taiwan will improve interoperability to respond to the threat of China, there is a possibility that Taiwan intends to collaborate with the U.S. military deployed near the first island chain to attempt to stop and restrict the Chinese military crossing the first island chain, thereby securing access to the outside world and a route for the U.S. military to come into the region.

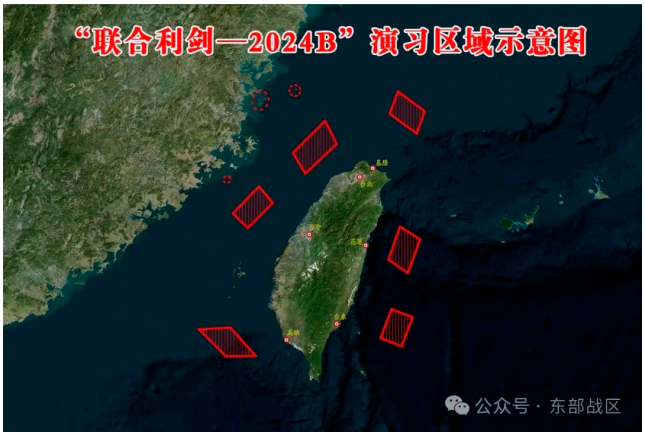
In order to accomplish "Resolute Defense and Multi-domain Deterrence," Taiwan is expanding the development and production of domestically-produced asymmetric force and long-range weapons and is also advancing the introduction of weapons from the United States. Taiwan is currently strengthening its domestic development of sea and air capabilities, long-range missiles, and the like. In November 2021, a special budget bill for the expansion of sea and air capabilities was passed, and it was decided to invest 240 billion Taiwan dollars (approximately 950 billion yen) over five years for the acquisition of self-developed equipment. In addition to these, Taiwan has decided to acquire equipment such as the "M1A2T Abrams" main battle tank, the "M142" high mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS), the "RGM-84L-4" (Harpoon) surface-to-ship missile system, the "AGM-84H" (Standoff Land Attack Missile Expanded Response (SLAM-ER)) long-range air-to-surface missile, the "Switchblade" and "Altius" unmanned aerial vehicles, and the "NASAMS" (National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System) from the United States.

In addition to this, Taiwan annually conducts the "Han Kuang" large-scale military exercise that simulates an invasion by Chinese forces. It is believed that the Taiwan military's defense strategy has been tested through this series of drills. In recent Han Kuang exercises, training exercises, such as anti-landing and interception drills, as well as training focused on gray zone strategies, such as cyber warfare and joint training between the Navy and the Coast Guard, have been conducted. In the 2024 "Han Kuang 40," exercises on anti-landing and air defense, decentralized command and control seen to have the establishment of a mission command in mind, gray zone responses, transport of supplies from outside the region with international collaboration in mind, and others were rehearsed. In addition, concerning homeland defense, urban warfare by reservists and the construction of fortifications by compulsory conscripts were rehearsed, and it was seen that the defense strategy was tested through the content of these exercises.

Taiwan is also becoming increasingly wary of China's pursuit of reunification through military activities in the gray zone. For example, the ROC National Defense Report 2023 pointed out that since 2022, China's military actions against Taiwan have become more frequent and diverse, including the crossing of the "median line" of the Taiwan Strait by Chinese military assets, the establishment of a no-sail/no-fly zone around Taiwan, and practical military exercises, and it pointed out that China is stepping up its threats against Taiwan to disrupt public sentiment there, with the intention of promoting reunification and forcing Taiwan to take part in negotiations toward reunification.

In addition, it was reported that an unpublished report submitted from the Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan to the Legislative Yuan in August 2024 indicated that China does not have sufficient capabilities for a full-scale invasion at the present time, so military intimidation and blockades are its major options against Taiwan for the time being. Regarding the option of blockades, the report concerning blockades of Taiwan by China using "gray zone tactics" submitted from the Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan to the Legislative Yuan in October the same year emphasized the importance of "increasing whole-of-society defense and resilience" as a countermeasure. It has been pointed out that blockades are one means China uses to try to force reunification on Taiwan,[7] and China is rehearsing blockades in the military exercises it conducts in the sea and airspace around Taiwan. In the exercises conducted around Taiwan in May 2024, the Chinese military established exercise areas in a form which surrounded Taiwan, and in addition it was announced for the first time that the Chinese Coast Guard had been active in the waters east of Taiwan. Furthermore, in military exercises conducted by China around Taiwan in October the same year, exercise areas were set up in a form which surrounded Taiwan, in the same way as in the May exercises, "blockade and control of key ports and areas" of Taiwan were rehearsed, and the Chinese Coast Guard conducted patrols in a form which surrounded Taiwan. Taking into account these facts, there is a possibility that in a Taiwan blockading operation China may deploy the Chinese Coast Guard, a law enforcement agency, to the front to carry out a blockade in the gray zone, with the aim of avoiding military intervention by the United States or other third countries. There is also a possibility that China may be intending to promptly transition to an invasion of Taiwan and to prevent intervention by the U.S. military in response to the invasion.

7 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)

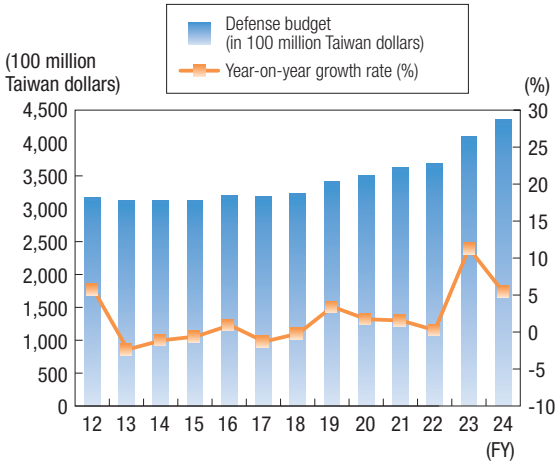


Exercise area in the vicinity of Taiwan announced by the Chinese military (October 2024) [Jiji]

3 Military Balance between China and Taiwan

As of April 2025, Taiwan has not disclosed its defense budget for FY2025;[8] however, Taiwan's defense budget, at approximately 434.5 billion Taiwan dollars for FY2024, has remained almost unchanged for nearly 20 years, while China has continued to increase its defense budget by a significant margin. China's announced military budget in FY2024 totals approximately 1,665.540 billion yuan, roughly 17 times the amount of Taiwan's in terms of U.S. dollars based on exchange rates announced by the Taiwanese Central Bank. It is pointed out that China's actual defense expenditure has been larger than the published defense budget, indicating that the China-Taiwan defense expenditure gap could be greater.

Fig. I-3-3-2 Changes in the Taiwan's Defense Authority Budget



(Note) the website of the Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan.

According to the 2024 Report on “Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China” released by the U.S. Department of Defense in December 2024, the PLA's capabilities to invade Taiwan have been assessed as follows:

- The PLA ground forces have organized six combined arms brigades capable of carrying out amphibious operations, four of which are deployed in the Eastern Theater, which includes Taiwan in its operational range, and two of which are in the Southern Theater.
- In order to achieve maritime superiority within the First Island Chain and prevent intervention by third countries, the PLA Navy is deploying new attack submarines and surface combatants with an anti-aircraft capability. While it has not invested in landing ships and craft considered to be enough in number for large-scale assault on Taiwan, it may intend to make up for the shortage with civilian transport ships and other vessels.
- The PLA Air Force has acquired advanced aircraft to conduct air and ground-attack operations. It also has a high Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capability to support military operations in the event of a Taiwan invasion. Furthermore, it is improving operation capabilities in remote areas through enhanced refueling capabilities.
- The PLA Rocket Force intends to lower defense capabilities of Taiwan and break the will to fight through missile attacks to high-value targets including Taiwan's military facilities.

In addition to this, it is pointed out in the report that the Information Support Force, the Cyberspace Force, and others would conduct cyber and electronic warfare, etc. in the event of a Taiwan invasion, and the Joint Logistics Support Force would be responsible for integrated logistical support missions.

The military capabilities of China and Taiwan are generally characterized as follows:

(1) Regarding ground forces, while China possesses an overwhelming number of troops, its capability of landing and invading the island of Taiwan is limited at present. In recent years, however, China has been steadily improving seaborne invasion capabilities through building and commissioning large landing ships, and it is also improving transportation capabilities by mobilizing civil transport ships and the like. Confronting this, in recent years, Taiwan also has been taking actions to improve anti-landing capabilities such as by conducting enhanced training using asymmetric weapons including Javelin anti-tank missiles, and expanded combat drills with reservists and would-be draftees from conscription.

8 According to a January 2025 announcement by the Executive Yuan, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan cut roughly 8.4 billion Taiwan dollars and froze approximately 90 billion Taiwan dollars from the Ministry of National Defense's proposed FY2025 budget of approximately 476 billion Taiwan dollars. Since April of the same year, the Ministry of National Defense has petitioned the Legislative Yuan to lift this budgetary freeze. Meanwhile, China has announced its FY2025 defense budget at approximately 1,784.665 billion yuan.

(2) In regard to China's naval and air forces, the PLA Navy and PLA Air Force are being rapidly reinforced both in terms of quality and quantity. This includes the sea trial of the second domestic-built aircraft carrier which reportedly could be equipped with an electromagnetic catapult system, and operational deployment of J-20 fifth-generation fighters. While Taiwan strives to enhance sea and air forces by passing special budgets for them, the difference in strength is expanding in an advantageous direction for China.

(3) China has strong offensive power of missiles including short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) and multiple launch rockets with enough range to attack Taiwan. In response, Taiwan has strengthened its missile defense capabilities by introducing PAC-3 missiles from the United States and increasing the number of Taiwan's own Tien Kung III missile sites. However, limitations to this response have been pointed out when it comes to dealing with a saturation attack. In addition, Taiwan attempts to enhance standoff attack capabilities, including by developing and producing long-range guided missiles such as the "Hsiung Sheng" surface-to-surface missile, which is said to have a range of 1,200 km, and it is considered to be aiming to introduce the AGM-158 long-range air-to-surface missile from the United States.

Comparison of military capabilities should be made based not only on the troop strength and the performance and quantity of equipment but also on various other factors such as the purpose and aspects of assumed military operations, operational arrangements, the skill level of personnel, and logistics. Nevertheless, the overall military balance between China and Taiwan is rapidly tilting to China's favor.

Concern over peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait which is vital for international security and prosperity is rapidly heightening not only in the Indo-Pacific region including Japan, but also among the whole international community, because China is activating threatening military actions around Taiwan.

Recognizing that China's attempts to make unilateral changes to the status quo by force are a challenge not only for the Indo-Pacific region but one common to the entire world, Japan, in cooperation with its ally, the United States, like-minded nations, and the international community, will closely monitor related developments with a greater sense of crisis.

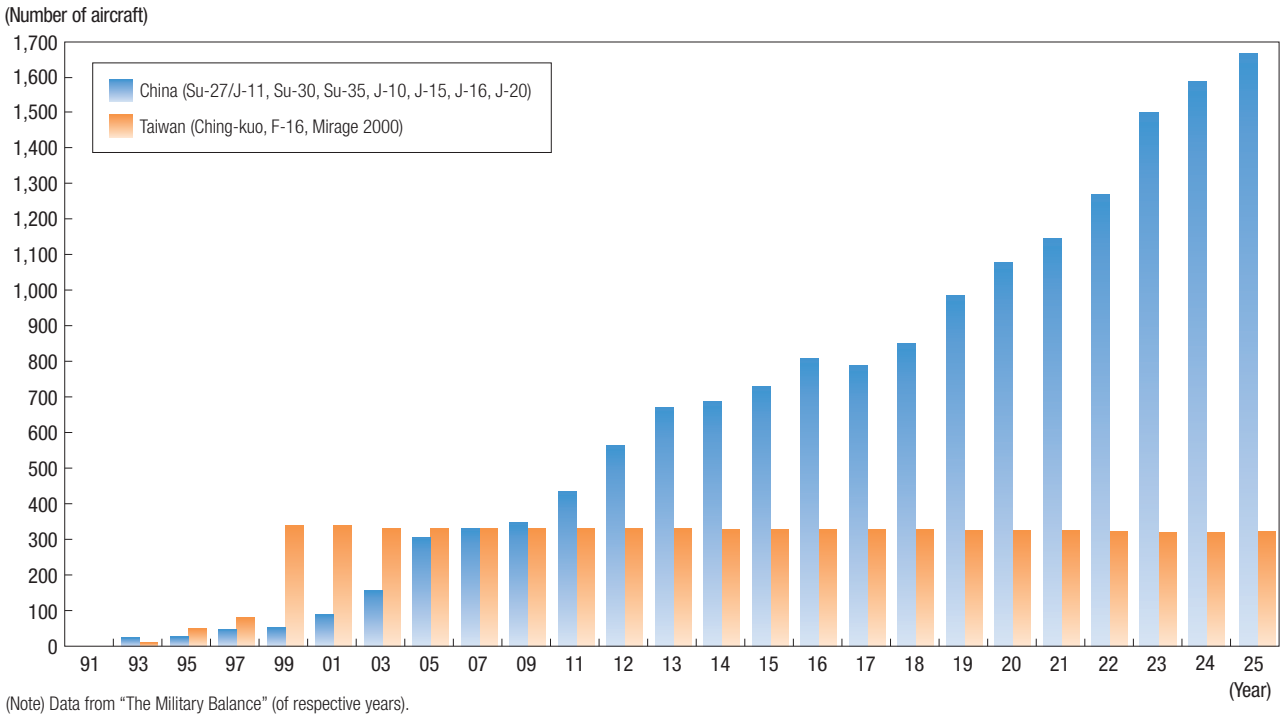
See Fig. I-3-3-1 (Placement of Taiwan Military), Fig. I-3-3-2 (Changes in the Taiwan's Defense Authority Budget), Fig. I-3-3-3 (Comparison of China and Taiwan Military Forces), Fig. I-3-3-4 (Changes in the Number of Modern Fighter Aircraft of China and Taiwan)

Fig. I-3-3-3 Comparison of China and Taiwan Military Forces

		China	Taiwan
Total military forces		Approx. 2.04 million personnel	Approx. 0.17 million personnel
Ground forces	Ground troops	Approx. 0.96 million personnel	Approx. 94,000 personnel
	Tanks, etc.	Type-99/A, Type-96/A, Type-88A/B and others Approx. 5,950 vehicles	M-60A3, CM-11 and others Approx. 750 vehicles
Maritime forces	Warships	Approx. 690 vessels Approx. 2,370,000 tons	Approx. 150 vessels Approx. 210,000 tons
	Aircraft carriers, destroyers, and frigates	Approx. 100 vessels	Approx. 30 vessels
	Submarines	Approx. 70 vessels	4 vessels
	Marines	Approx. 40,000 personnel	Approx. 10,000 personnel
Air forces	Combat aircraft	Approx. 3,400 aircraft	Approx. 420 aircraft
	Modern fighter aircraft	J-10 × 608 Su-27/J-11 × 327 Su-30 × 97 Su-35 × 24 J-15 × 70 J-16 × 312 J-20 × 230 (Fourth and fifth generation fighters (total): 1,668)	Mirage2000 x 53 F-16 (modified V) x140 Ching-kuo x 129 (Fourth generation fighter aircraft (total): 322)
Reference	Population	Approx. 1.424 billion	Approx. 23.6 million
	Term of service	2 years	1 year

(Note) Data from "The Military Balance 2025," etc.

Fig. I-3-3-4 Changes in the Number of Modern Fighter Aircraft of China and Taiwan



(Note) Data from "The Military Balance" (of respective years).

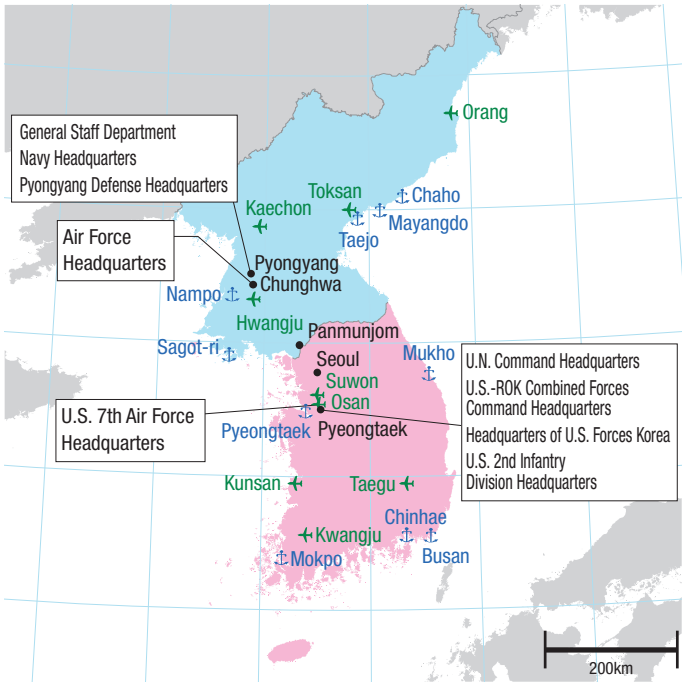
Section 4 Korean Peninsula

The Korean Peninsula has been split for more than half a century, with people of the same ethnicity divided between the north and south. Even today, the Republic of Korea (ROK) and North Korea pit their ground forces of about 1.5 million against each other across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

Peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula under such security environment is an extremely important challenge not only to Japan but also to the entire region of East Asia.

See Fig. I-3-4-1 (Military Confrontation on the Korean Peninsula)

Fig. I-3-4-1 Military Confrontation on the Korean Peninsula



		North Korea	ROK	U.S. Forces stationed in Korea
Total military forces		Approx. 1.28 million personnel	Approx. 500,000 personnel	Approx. 30,000 personnel
Army	Ground troops	Approx. 1.1 million personnel	Approx. 370,000 personnel	Approx. 20,000 personnel
	Tanks	T-62, T-54, T-55, etc. Approx. 3,500	M-48, K-1, K-2, etc. Approx. 2,110	M1A2
Navy	Warships	Approx. 785 vessels 100,000 tons	Approx. 230 vessels 280,000 tons	Supporting corps only
	Destroyers Frigates Submarines	6 21	12 16 21	
	Marines		Approx. 29,000 personnel	
Air Force	Combat aircraft	Approx. 550	Approx. 570	Approx. 80
	Third, fourth and fifth generation fighters	MiG-23 × 56 MiG-29 × 18	F-16 × 165 F-15 × 59 F-35 × 39	F-16 × 60
Reference	Population	26.30 million	52.08 million	
	Term of service	Men: 10 years Women: 7 years	Army: 18 months Navy: 20 months Air Force: 21 months	

(Note) Data from "The Military Balance 2025," etc.

1 North Korea

1 General Situation

Kim Jong-un, Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of North Korea[1] (hereinafter referred to as "Chairman Kim") made it clear that he adhered to the so-called "Byungjin line" policy of simultaneous economic and nuclear development as well as "Songun politics"[2] in May 2016. In fact, North Korea pushed ahead and conducted three nuclear tests and launched numerous ballistic missiles from 2016 to 2017, and stated that it had completed development of the state nuclear force. This intensified sanctions based on resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and other independent sanctions by several countries including Japan and the United States.

On the other hand, in early 2018, Chairman Kim declared that the "Byungjin line" had been successfully carried out and announced the "new strategic line" in which it would "fully concentrate efforts on the construction of a socialist economy." Chairman Kim decided to discontinue "nuclear tests and intercontinental ballistic rocket test-fire" and announced the nuclear test ground had been blown up, while momentum towards dialogue between the United States or the ROK and North Korea grew. He also expressed during the summit meeting with the U.S. in June 2018 the intention to work towards denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

However, the February 2019 U.S.-North Korea summit meeting ended without the two sides reaching an agreement. In December of the same year, Chairman Kim announced the intention to continue developing strategic weapons until the United States rolled back its hostile policy towards North Korea. Furthermore, Chairman Kim showed his hostile stance towards the United States in January 2021, and stated to "further strengthen the nuclear war deterrent" showing the intention to continue developing nuclear and missile capabilities.

After that, North Korea criticized the U.S. attitude towards it and continuously states its intention to strengthen military power including nuclear weapons, as a "self-defense" right. In recent years, North Korea repeatedly launched ballistic missiles and other missiles with an unprecedentedly frequency. North Korea resumed launching intercontinental-range ballistic missile (ICBM)-class ballistic missiles from February 2022. In September 2023, North Korea added a provision to its constitution stating that it would "developing nuclear weapons to a higher level."

North Korea has continued to promote the development of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and ballistic missiles and enhancement of their operational capabilities by conducting six nuclear tests and repeatedly launching ballistic missiles as a nuclear delivery system so far. North Korea, concerning its ballistic missiles with their range covering the Japanese Archipelago, is considered to possess the technological capability to mount a miniaturized nuclear warhead and, thereby, to attack Japan . Still, it will continue to make greater efforts to maintain and enhance military capabilities and combat readiness, including its nuclear and missile capabilities. North Korea retains large-scale special operations forces and has been strengthening its cyber force.

While the defense budget of North Korea was said to make up 15.7% of its annual budget according to North Korea's announcement regarding the Supreme People's Assembly in January 2025, this seems to be only a part of the actual defense budget. While facing serious economic difficulties without any improvement in its human rights situation to date, North Korea continues to heavily allocate its resources to military affairs. In addition, North Korea has repeatedly used provocative rhetoric and behavior against relevant countries, including Japan.

Such military trends in North Korea pose even graver and more imminent threats than past times to Japan's security and significantly undermine the peace and security of the region and the international community. Additionally, such development poses a serious challenge to the entire international community with regard to the non-proliferation of weapons, including WMDs.

Needless to say, North Korea's development and possession of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated. At the same time, sufficient attention needs to be paid to the development and deployment of its ballistic missiles and the like, military confrontation on the Korean Peninsula and proliferation of WMDs and missiles by North Korea. As for North Korea's abduction of Japanese nationals, utmost efforts continue to be made to realize the return of all abductees to Japan as quickly as possible by close cooperation with related countries, including the United States.

1 As of May 2016, Kim Jong-un held the position of the First Chairman of the National Defense Commission. At the Supreme People's Assembly in June 2016, the National Defense Commission was renamed the State Affairs Commission, and Kim Jong-un assumed the position of Chairman of the State Affairs Commission. Reflecting this change, "Chairman of the State Affairs Commission" is used for the title of Kim Jong-un throughout this white paper.

2 In a written decision of the 7th Congress of the KWP, "Report on the Work of the KWP Central Committee" (May 8, 2016), it has been defined as a basic form of socialist politics that leads the great undertaking of socialism to victory by giving priority to the military forces in all activities under the principle of military first, and strengthening and relying on the actors in the revolution with the Korean People's Army (KPA) acting as the central and main force.

2 Military Posture

(1) General Situation

North Korea has continued to consistently enhance its military forces given the situation of south-north division.[3] However, as a result of the reduction in military assistance from the former Soviet bloc due to the end of the Cold War, North Korea's sluggish economy, and the modernization of the ROK Forces, much of its equipment is outdated, and there is a significant qualitative disparity between North Korea's conventional forces and those of the ROK's military and U.S. Forces Korea. Nevertheless, while North Korea is concentrating on strengthening its nuclear and missile capabilities, it also seems to be focusing on maintaining a certain military foundation for its conventional forces by continuously conducting research, development, and training.

North Korea's military forces are comprised mainly of ground forces, with a total troop strength reaching roughly 1.28 million personnel. It still maintains a large-scale military force, including artillery units deployed near the DMZ. North Korea also retains special operations forces and the like on a large scale for information gathering and sabotage. In addition, many military underground facilities seem to exist all over the land, which is a peculiarity of North Korea.

Furthermore, North Korea is believed to be intensively building up its WMD and ballistic missiles. In recent years, North Korea has repeatedly launched short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) and other missiles capable of flying at low altitudes with irregular trajectories in a simultaneous process of promoting the development of ICBM-class ballistic missiles covering a range of the whole U.S. territory, rapidly improving related technologies and operational capabilities and diversifying their launch platforms to include rail-launched and submarine-launched types. At the same time, North Korea has been striving to expand more practical SRBM capabilities. Furthermore, since Chairman Kim mentioned the development of "ultra-modern tactical nuclear weapons including intermediate-range cruise missiles" in January 2021, North Korea announced that it had succeeded in conducting test launches of long-range cruise missiles and launched ballistic missiles in what it called training for "tactical nuclear weapons operation units."

The background for North Korea's series of development and launches appears to be that in addition to acquiring nuclear deterrent capabilities through the possession of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles for the maintenance and survival of the regime, North Korea aims to acquire the means to be able to respond in an armed conflict that could occur between itself and the United States as well as ROK forces in which conventional forces or tactical nuclear weapons are used.[4] North Korea repeatedly stated it would enhance its military power, including nuclear weapons and missiles, according to the "five-year plan for the development of the defense science and the weapon system" (hereinafter "five-year plan"), which was apparently presented at the 8th Congress of the Korean Workers Party (KWP) in January 2021,[5] and it is likely that it is focusing efforts on research and development (R&D) and enhancement of operational capabilities for various weapons under this five-year plan.

(2) Military Capabilities

The North Korean Army comprises about 1.10 million personnel, and roughly two-thirds of them seem to be deployed along the DMZ. The main body of the army is infantry, but the army also maintains armored forces including at least 3,500 tanks and artillery. North Korea is believed to deploy long-range artillery along the DMZ, such as 240 mm multiple rocket launchers and 170 mm self-propelled artillery guns, which can reach cities and bases in the northern part of the ROK including Seoul. It has also been pointed out that, in recent years, North Korea has been developing and operating various multiple rocket launchers with extended ranges.

The Navy retains about 785 ships and boats with a total displacement of approximately 100,000 tons and is chiefly comprised of small naval vessels such as high-speed missile craft. Meanwhile, in April 2025, North Korea launched a surface vessel referred to as a "new-type multi-mission destroyer,"[6] which significantly exceeds the size of any warship previously possessed by North Korea. Chairman Kim stated that "we will execute this plan of building multi-mission destroyer year by year." Also, it has about 20 of the former model Romeo-class submarines, about 30 midget submarines and about 140 air cushioned landing crafts, the

3 North Korea has been building up its military capabilities in accordance with the Four Military Guidelines, consisting of extensive training for all soldiers, modernizing all military forces, arming the entire population, and fortifying the entire country, adopted at the 5th plenary meeting of the 4th KWP Central Committee in 1962.

4 For example, at the 8th Congress of the KWP in January 2021, Chairman Kim stated that North Korea would "develop tactical nuclear weapons which can be used for various missions according to the purpose of operational duty and target of strike in a modern war" and "thoroughly contain, control and handle various military threats on the Korean peninsula which inevitably accompany the nuclear threat on our own initiative." He also stated in September 2022 that North Korea "will be enhancing tactical nuclear operation measures relentlessly, realize higher level of diversity of applying means, and strengthen nuclear combat posture from multiple directions."

5 There was no direct reference to the name "five-year plan for defense scientific development and weapons system development" in North Korea's announcement at the same Congress of the KWP in January 2021. However, when there was an announcement of the launch of a long-range cruise missile on September 13 of the same year, the North Korean media mentioned it publicly for the first time by stating that this missile development project was significant for "achieving the key objectives of the five-year plan for the development of defense science and weapon system presented at the 8th Congress of the KWP."

6 Chairman Kim claims that the newly launched "new-type multi-mission destroyer" is "equipped not only with anti-air, anti-ship, anti-submarine, and anti-ballistic missile capabilities, but also with weapon systems for the most effective ground striking operations, like supersonic strategic cruise missile, tactical ballistic missile and other means of strike." North Korea announced that, a few days after the launch ceremony, it conducted test launches of "supersonic cruise missile" and "strategic cruise missile" from the vessel.

latter two of which are believed to be used for infiltration and other actions of the special operations forces. In September 2023, the Navy launched a new submarine that appears to be a modified Romeo-class submarine and dubbed it a "tactical nuclear attack submarine."

The Air Force has approximately 550 combat aircraft, most of which are out-of-date models made in China or the former Soviet Union. However, some fourth-generation aircraft such as MiG-29 fighters and Su-25 attack aircraft are also included. North Korea has a large number of outdated An-2 transport aircraft as well, which are believed to be used for transportation of special operations forces.

North Korea also possesses a large special forces[7] contingent as a so-called asymmetric capability. In recent years, it has been strengthening its cyber units as an asymmetric force. These units are believed to steal cryptocurrency to fund nuclear and missile development, while also engaging in the theft of military secrets from other countries and developing capabilities to attack critical infrastructure abroad.

3 WMD and Missiles

The launches of ballistic missiles and other missiles by North Korea have continued; moreover, from early 2022, in particular, it has forced through launches with an unprecedented frequency. North Korea resumed launches of intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM)-class and longer-range ballistic missiles which it had not launched since 2018. At the same time, North Korea likely intends to enhance further surprise attack capabilities, making identification of signs of launch, detection, and interception difficult by launching ballistic missiles that can fly at low altitudes with irregular trajectories as well as by launching these missiles from a variety of platforms such as Transporter-Erector-Launchers[8] (TELs), submarines, and trains.

Since 2023, North Korea has conducted launches of solid-fuel propelled ICBM-class and IRBM-class ballistic missiles 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.

Furthermore, given its technological maturity obtained through a series of nuclear tests, North Korea is assessed to possess the technological capabilities to mount a miniaturized nuclear warhead, at least, on such ballistic missiles as Nodong and Scud ER (Extended Range), with their range covering the Japanese Archipelago and, thereby, to strike Japan. In addition, North Korea has repeatedly expressed its intention to further strengthen its nuclear capability.

(1) Nuclear Weapons

a. The Current Status of the Nuclear Weapons Program

Considering that North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests so far, it is conceivable that North Korea has made considerable progress in its nuclear weapons program.

North Korea possesses nuclear reactors, including a 5MWe graphite-moderated reactor and an experimental light water reactor[9] as well as a reprocessing plant and uranium enrichment facilities in Yongbyon. The 5MWe graphite-moderated reactor was thought to have been out of operation since 2018, but some have pointed out that it resumed operation in July 2021.[10] If it had actually resumed operation, it has been noted that it would be able to produce about 6 kg of plutonium per year (enough to produce one to 1.5 nuclear warheads). It has also been pointed out that the experimental light water reactor has been undergoing test operations since October 2023.[11]

With regard to plutonium, a fissile material that can be used for nuclear weapons,[12] North Korea has suggested several times that it has produced and extracted plutonium.[13]

7 James Thurman, then Commander of the U.S. Forces Korea, stated, "North Korea possesses the world's largest special operations force of over 60,000" in his speech at the Association of U.S. Army in October 2012. Additionally, the 2022 Defense White Paper of the ROK notes about North Korea's Special operations force, "The forces are estimated at approximately 200,000 strong."

8 The signs of a launch from a fixed launcher are easy for the adversary to detect and are vulnerable to attack by the adversary. TEL was developed mainly by the former Soviet Union, among others, in order to make the detection of launch signs more difficult and increase survivability. According to the U.S. DIA's "North Korea Military Power" of October 2021, North Korea possesses a maximum of 100 TELs for Scud B and C, and 100 TELs for Nodongs. As for a TEL-mounted missile launch, it is deemed difficult to detect individual specific signs in advance concerning the detailed location and timing of the launch. This is because it is operated by being mounted and transported on a TEL, and furthermore, military-related underground facilities are thought to exist all over North Korea.

9 Nuclear reactors are classified into graphite-moderated reactors, heavy water reactors, and light water reactors, depending on the moderator used. Graphite-moderated reactors and heavy water reactors use natural uranium as their fuel, while light water reactors use as their fuel low-enriched uranium with the uranium 235 concentration increased to 3–5%.

10 According to the IAEA's "Application of Safeguards in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" published in August 2021 and others. Indicated by a Member State in the interim report of the Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Sanctions Committee released in October 2022.

11 "IAEA Director General Statement on Recent Developments in the DPRK's Nuclear Programme," released in December 2023

12 Plutonium is synthetically produced in a nuclear reactor by irradiating uranium with neutrons, and then extracting it from used nuclear fuel at a reprocessing facility. Meanwhile, in order to use uranium for nuclear weapons, it is necessary to extract uranium 235 (U235), a highly fissile material, from natural uranium. This process is called enrichment. Generally, a large-scale enrichment facility that combines thousands of centrifuges is used to boost the U235 concentration to nuclear weapon levels (over 90%).

13 North Korea announced in October 2003 that it had completed the reprocessing of 8,000 used fuel rods that contain plutonium from a 5MWe graphite-moderated reactor, and in May 2005 that it had completed extraction of an additional 8,000 used fuel rods. The 2022 Defense White Paper of the ROK estimates that North Korea possesses around 70 kg of plutonium.

Because the restarting or startup of the reactors could lead to the production and extraction of plutonium by North Korea, those activities are causes of great concern.[14]

As for highly enriched uranium that can also be used for nuclear weapons, in June 2009, North Korea declared the commencement of uranium enrichment. In November 2010, North Korea disclosed its uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon to American nuclear specialists and later announced that it was operating a uranium enrichment plant equipped with thousands of centrifuges. The expansion of this uranium enrichment plant has been suggested in recent years; in this regard, North Korea could have increased its enrichment capabilities. In addition, in September 2024 and January 2025, it was reported that Chairman Kim visited "nuclear material production bases" in North Korea, both of which were revealed to be uranium enrichment facilities.[15] Chairman Kim has apparently suggested that North Korea plans to further increase its production of enriched uranium to develop nuclear weapons by increasing the number of centrifuges, improving the capacity, and introducing new types of centrifuges as well as underlined the need to "achieve epochal successes in overfulfilling the plan for producing weapons-grade nuclear materials and in strengthening the nuclear shield of the country." Based on North Korea's actions related to uranium enrichment, it apparently plans to develop nuclear weapons using highly enriched uranium in addition to plutonium.

In general, facilities used for uranium enrichment are more secretive in appearance than reactors used for plutonium production, and it is difficult to ascertain their activities from the outside. On the other hand, plutonium has a smaller critical mass than uranium, and it is pointed out that it is easier to make nuclear weapons smaller and lighter. In light of both these advantages, North Korea may continue to promote the development of both plutonium and uranium types of nuclear weapons.

North Korea conducted nuclear tests on October 9, 2006, May 25, 2009, February 12, 2013, January 6, 2016, September 9, 2016, and September 3, 2017. It is highly likely that North Korea has made strides in its nuclear weapons program, while miniaturizing nuclear weapons to be loaded on ballistic missiles, collecting the necessary data through these nuclear tests. In September, 2017, it was announced that Chairman Kim had visited North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Institute and had seen a hydrogen bomb capable of being loaded into an ICBM, in addition to which, following

Image released upon the announcement of Chairman Kim Jong-un's on-site guidance at "nuclear material production bases" [Korea News Service/Jiji]

North Korea's sixth nuclear test that was forced through on the same day, North Korea announced that it "successfully carried out a test of H-bomb for ICBM."[16]

In regard to miniaturization of nuclear weapons small enough to be mounted on a ballistic missile, considering the fact that the United States, the former Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, and China succeeded in acquiring such technology by as early as the 1960s as well as the North Korean technological maturity that is estimated to have been reached through its previous six nuclear tests, it is assessed that North Korea, concerning its ballistic missiles with their range covering the Japanese Archipelago, has already miniaturized its nuclear warheads to mount. There have also been reports that North Korea possesses approximately 50 nuclear warheads—enough fissile material overall to produce up to 90 nuclear warheads.[17]

Furthermore, it is likely that North Korea has been preparing for other nuclear tests, as has been suggested that North Korea has been working on restoring its northern nuclear test site since March 2022, which it officially announced it had blown up in 2018.

b. Background of the Nuclear Program and Future Outlook

North Korea's ultimate goal appears to be maintaining its existing regime. It has been developing nuclear weapons to accomplish this goal through constructing its own nuclear deterrence to counter U.S. threats, including threats with nuclear weapons. These perceptions are obvious as can be seen in Chairman Kim's speech that North Korea can

14 In November 2024, Rafael Grossi, Director General of the IAEA, pointed out that the 5 MWe graphite-moderated reactor was not operating between mid-August and mid-October and that the reactor could have been refueled during that time.

15 It has been noted that the uranium enrichment facility disclosed in September 2024 is the one in Kangson, while the one disclosed in January 2025 is the one in Yongbyon.

16 The yield of the sixth nuclear weapons test in 2017 was estimated to be the largest ever, with a maximum yield of approximately 160 kt. Given the size of the estimated yield, the possibility cannot be discounted that the test was of a hydrogen bomb. North Korea also insisted that its fourth nuclear test, conducted in January 2016, was a hydrogen bomb test. However, given that the yield of that test is estimated at 6 to 7 kts, it is difficult to conceive that this was a hydrogen bomb test as generally defined.

17 According to SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) Yearbook 2024.

never abandon its nuclear weapons because the objective of the United States is to disrupt "my regime."[18] It is likely that North Korea will continue to focus on advancing the development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles capable of attacking the whole U.S. territory in order to acquire deterrence against the United States.

On the other hand, North Korea has repeatedly stated that the ROK, which adopted a stern policy confronting North Korea under the previous Yoon Suk-yeol administration, is its "principal enemy" and will not be excluded from the potential targets of nuclear attacks. Furthermore, North Korea has shown that its stance is to pursue development not only of nuclear weapons as deterrence against the United States but also tactical weapons to cope with probable armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

In September 2022, at the Supreme People's Assembly, North Korea passed a law on a policy of the nuclear forces laying down the mission, command and control, and terms of use for nuclear weapons, stating its "basic mission is deterrence against war" and when failing to deter a war, to "repel enemies' aggression and attacks, and accomplish decisive victory of the war." Chairman Kim justified his nuclear development, saying that by promulgating this law, "our status as a nuclear power irreversible." Furthermore, it is stipulated in the law that nuclear weapons can be used when an attack deemed imminent, regardless if it is a nuclear or conventional, on "leadership" or "important strategic objects" and, in particular, that a "nuclear strike" will be conducted automatically and immediately in the case that "command and control system over the state nuclear forces" are exposed to any danger. From these factors, it is possible that North Korea assumes a possible use of nuclear weapons in an actual combat.

In fact, North Korea has repeatedly launched missiles, allegedly, for practical training; for example, it launched missiles in "tactical nuclear operation units" training several times from late September to October 2022 and exploded test warheads simulating nuclear warheads above the targets in what was called "comprehensive tactical training for simulated nuclear counterstrike" among others in March 2023. North Korea also announced in March 2023 that Chairman Kim received explanation about tactical nuclear weapons from the department in charge and "instructed about weaponizing of nuclear weapons," giving direction to expand the production of weapon-grade nuclear materials and nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, it is likely that North Korea will conduct nuclear tests further in the near future to implement ICBM-class ballistic missiles with multiple warhead and tactical nuclear weapons pursuing much smaller nuclear weapons.[19]

(2) Biological and Chemical Weapons

North Korea is an extremely closed regime. In addition, most materials and technology used for manufacturing biological and chemical weapons are for both military and civilian uses, which in turn facilitates camouflage. For these reasons, details of the status of North Korea's biological and chemical weapons development and arsenals are unclear. However, with regard to chemical weapons, North Korea is suspected to have several facilities capable of producing chemical agents and already a substantial stockpile of such agents. North Korea is also thought to have some infrastructure for the production of biological weapons.[20] Possession of sarin, VX, mustard and other chemical weapons, and of anthrax, smallpox, pest and other biological agents that could be used as biological weapons have been pointed out.

The possibility cannot be denied that North Korea is able to load biological and/or chemical weapons on warheads.

18 Chairman Kim stated in his speech at the Supreme People's Assembly held in September 2022 that "while the United States aims to have us remove our nuclear weapon, its final goal is even forcing us to abandon our executive ability for the right to self-defense or to weaken it, and to disrupt my regime anytime" and "we can never abandon nuclear weapons, ... no matter what difficulty we may face." Furthermore, at the Supreme People's Assembly held in September 2023, Chairman Kim stated in his speech that Article 58 of Chapter 4 of the Socialist Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea clearly states that "the country will advance the development of nuclear weapons to guarantee the country's right to survival and development, deter war, and safeguard peace and stability in the region and the world," and that "the Republic's nuclear forces construction policy has been made permanent as the basic law of the Republic so that no one can interfere with it no matter what."

19 Chairman Kim mentioned "progressing R&D project to complete multiple independently-targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) technology" and "further development of downsizing and weight saving of nuclear weapons and tactical weaponization" at the 8th Congress of the KWP in January 2021.

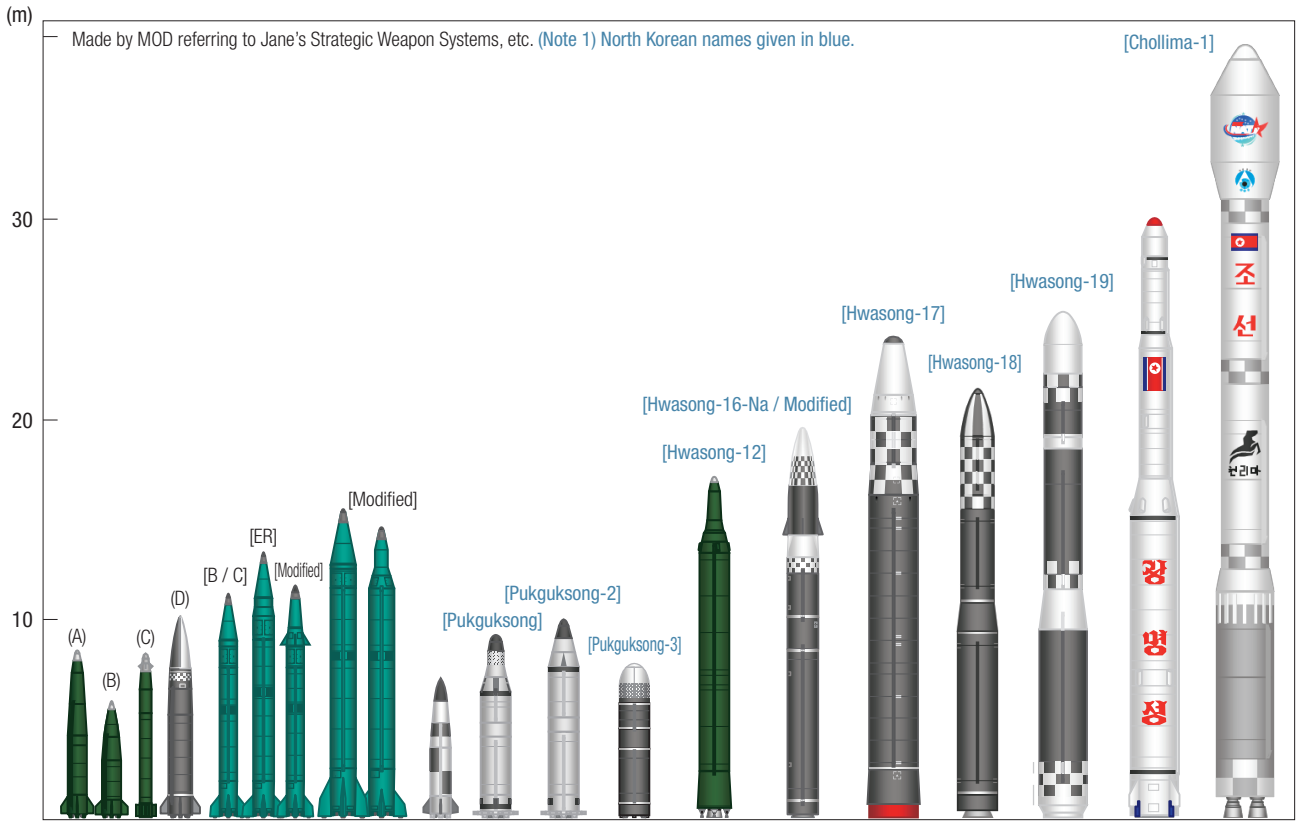
20 The 2022 Defense White Paper of the ROK pointed out that North Korea began the production of chemical weapons in 1980s and has stored around 2,500-5,000 tons of them. Furthermore, it is estimated that North Korea has capabilities to cultivate and produce various kind of biological weapons such as anthrax, smallpox, and the plague on its own. North Korea acceded to the Biological Weapons Convention in 1987 but has not acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

(3) Missile Forces

The missiles deemed to be possessed and developed by North Korea are the following.

See Fig. I-3-4-2 (Ballistic Missiles and others Developed/Possessed by North Korea), Fig. I-3-4-3 (Range of North Korea's Ballistic Missiles), Fig. I-3-4-4 (Major Trends in North Korea's Ballistic Missile and Other Launches), Fig. I-3-4-5 (Cases of North Korean Ballistic Missiles Overflying Japan)

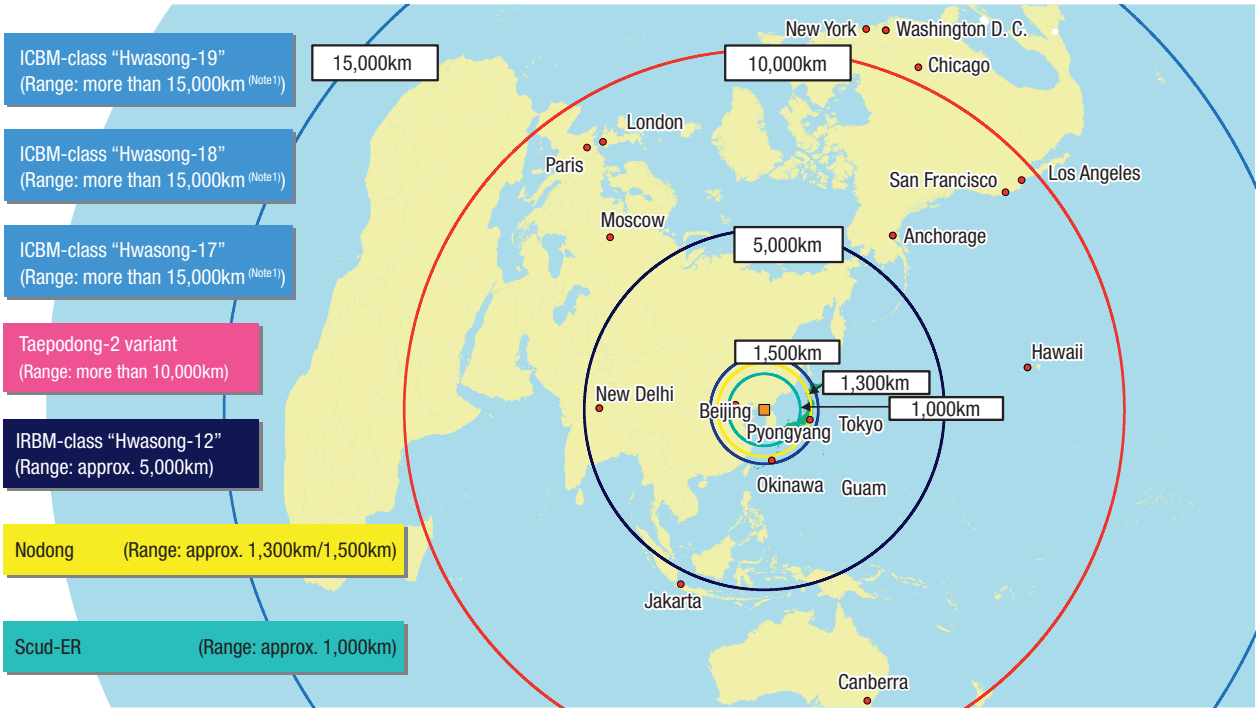
Fig. I-3-4-2 Ballistic Missiles and others Developed/Possessed by North Korea



	SRBM (A) / (B) / (C) / (D)	Scud B, C, ER, Modified	Nodong Modified	New type SLBM	SLBM	Ground-launched type of Pukguksong series	SLBM	IRBM-class	IRBM-class	ICBM-class	ICBM-class	ICBM-class	Taepodong-2 variant	Chollima-1
Range	Approx. 800 km / Approx. 400 km / Approx. 400 km / Approx. 750km (Note 2)	Approx. 300 km / Approx. 500 km / Approx. 1,000km / Under analysis	Approx. 1,300 km / Approx. 1,500 km	Approx. 650km (Note 2)	1,000 km or more	1,000 km or more	Approx. 2,000km	Approx. 5,000km	Approx. 1,100km (Note 2)	15,000km or more (Note 3)	15,000km or more (Note 3)	15,000km or more (Note 3)	10,000km or more	–
Fuel/ stage	Solid / 1	Liquid / 1	Liquid / 1	Solid / 1	Solid / 2	Solid / 2	Solid / 2	Liquid / 1	Solid / 2	Liquid / 2	Solid / 3	Solid / 3	Liquid / 3	Liquid / 3
Operation platform	TEL	TEL	TEL	Submarines	Submarines	TEL	Submarines	TEL	TEL	TEL	TEL	TEL	Launch site	Launch site

(Notes) 2 Ranges of SRBM (A) / (B) / (C), new type SLBMs and "Hwasong-16-Na" are the largest ones achieved. SRBM (D) may have a range of 750 km.
3 Depends on weight of the warhead, etc.

Fig. I-3-4-3 Range of North Korea's Ballistic Missiles



(Notes) 1 Depends on weight of the warhead, etc.
2 For simplicity, the distance from Pyongyang is displayed in concentric circles as an image.
3 Quotation marks indicate the names used by North Korea.

a. Types of Ballistic Missiles and others Possessed or Developed by North Korea[21]

(a) Short-Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) A-D (including Rail-Launched Types)

Since 2019, North Korea has launched various kinds of short-range ballistic missiles that differ from Scud missiles and other traditional liquid fuel-propelled missiles. Based on published images, it can be ascertained that these SRBMs were launched from a wheeled-drive or continuous-tracked TEL or railway cars with the characteristics of solid fuel propelled engines. Many of these SRBMs are being launched towards the east coast of North Korea. It is assumed that North Korea aims to advance operational capabilities, and some images that show impact on a specific target have been released.

(i) SRBM A (referred to as a "new type of tactical guided weapon" by North Korea)

SRBM A has a maximum flight range of approximately 800 km, the longest ones achieved. It has a similarity to the Russian short-range ballistic missile "Iskander." It is also presumed that this missile is able to fly at a lower altitude than conventional ballistic missiles and on an irregular trajectory, and can be mounted with nuclear warheads.[22]

North Korea also launched two SRBMs on both September 15, 2021 and January 14, 2022. Based on images released by North Korea, these missiles were launched from railway cars that appear to have been converted from ordinary freight cars. They have external similarities with SRBM A, and it is possible that they were developed based on that missile. North Korea has announced that it was a firing exercise by the "railway-borne missile regiment."

(ii) SRBM B (referred to as a "new weapon" or "tactical guided weapon" by North Korea)

SRBM B has a maximum flight distance of about 400 km, the longest ones achieved and is believed to be capable of flying at lower altitudes with an irregular trajectory than conventional ballistic missiles. Regarding TELs, various types can be confirmed in images published by North Korea.

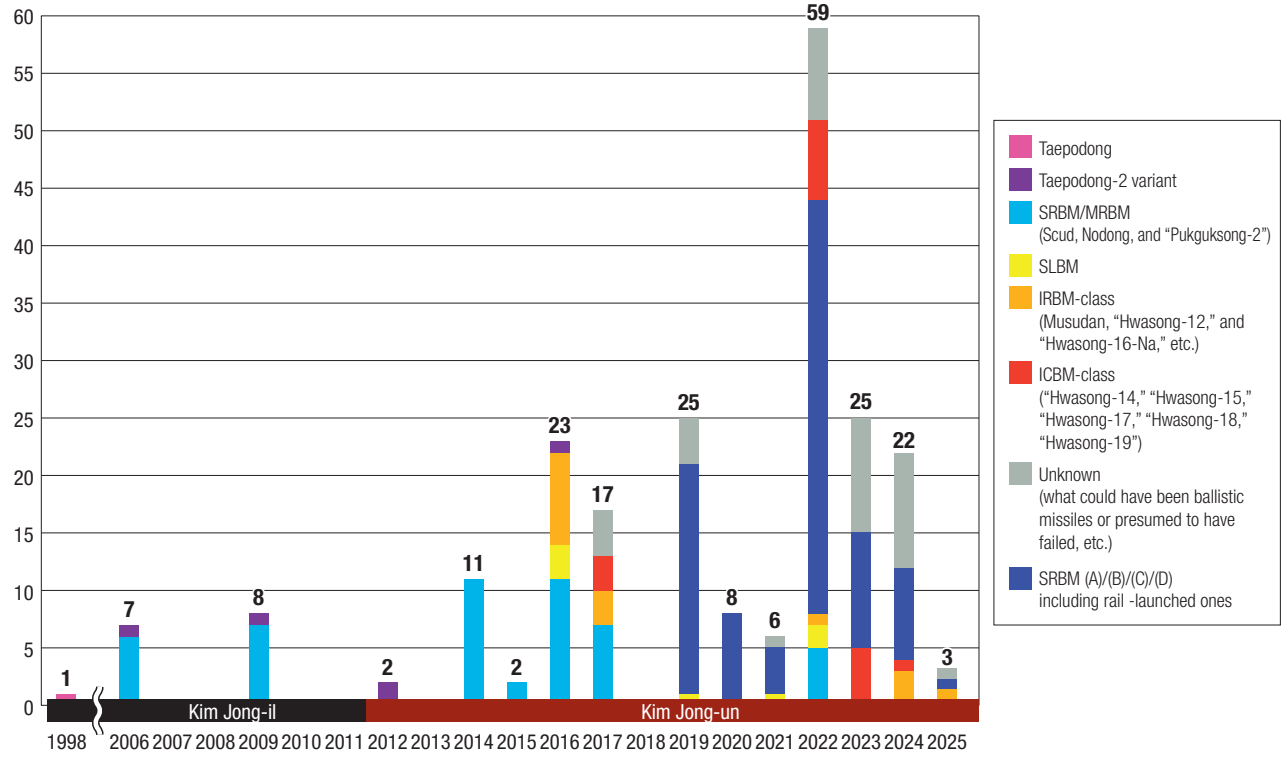
(iii) SRBM C (referred to as a "super-large multiple rocket launcher" by North Korea)

SRBM C has a maximum flight distance of approximately 400 km, the longest ones achieved. Some of the intervals between launches were estimated less than 1 minute, suggesting that North Korea is trying to improve the continuous fire capability required for saturation attacks and the like. Chairman Kim mentioned that they can be loaded

21 According to "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment China and Northeast Asia" (accessed in August 2024) North Korea possesses 700 to 1,000 ballistic missiles in total, 45% of which are presumed to be Scud-class, 45% Nodong-class, and the remaining 10% other intermediate- and long-range ballistic missiles.
22 According to the Congressional Research Service's "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons and Missile Programs" (January 2023) and others.

Fig. I-3-4-4 Major Trends in North Korea's Ballistic Missile and Other Launches

Number of Ballistic Missiles and Other Missiles Launched by North Korea (as of May 31, 2025)



[Enhancement of missile-related technologies]
1. Enhancement of launch secrecy and instantaneity
2. Enhancement of capabilities to breach Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)
3. Development of long-range missiles

[Enhancement of missile operation capabilities]
North Korea conducted simultaneous launches of multiple missiles, launches at very short intervals, and launches from different locations to a specific target, etc.

Fig. I-3-4-5 Cases of North Korean Ballistic Missiles Overflying Japan

· Launches of ballistic missiles allegedly as launches of satellites after reporting supposed falling areas to international organizations (three times)

Date	Presumed type of missile	Number of launches	Location	Flight distance
April 5, 2009	Taepodong-2 or variant	1	Taepodong Area	3,000 km or more
December 12, 2012	Taepodong-2 variant	1	Tongch'ang-ri Area	Approx. 2,600 km (second stage landfall)
February 7, 2016	Taepodong-2 variant	1	Tongch'ang-ri Area	Approx. 2,500 km (second stage landfall)

· Launches of ballistic missiles without prior notice (four times)

Date	Presumed type of missile	Number of launches	Location	Flight distance
August 31, 1998	Taepodong-1	1	Taepodong Area	Approx. 1,600 km
August 29, 2017	IRBM-class "Hwasong-12"	1	Near Sunan	Approx. 2,700 km
September 15, 2017	IRBM-class "Hwasong-12"	1	Near Sunan	Approx. 3,700 km
October 4, 2022	Ballistic missiles over IRBMs in the range	1	Inland	Approx. 4,600 km

(Notes) 1 After the launch of Taepodong-1 on August 31, 1998, North Korea announced that it was the launch of a satellite.
2 Quotation marks indicate the names used by North Korea.

with tactical nuclear warheads.[23] Regarding TELs, various types can be confirmed in images published by North Korea.

(iv) SRBM D (referred to as a "new-type tactical guided missile" by North Korea)

It has been suggested that the SRBM D was developed based on the SRBM A. It is capable of flying at lower altitudes with an irregular trajectory than conventional ballistic missiles, and their maximum range could reach about 750 km.

See Fig. I-3-4-6 (List of SRBMs A-D launch dates (including rail-launched types))

(b) Scud

The Scud is a liquid fuel propellant single-stage ballistic missile and is operated on a TEL.

Scud B is an SRBM with a range of 300 km, and Scud C is an SRBM with an extended range of 500 km. It is believed that North Korea has manufactured and retained them, and has exported them to the Middle East and other countries.

The Scud-ER is a ballistic missile that has an extended range due to the extension of the Scud's body as well as the reduction in weight of the warhead, among other factors. The range of the Scud ER is estimated to reach approximately 1,000 km, and it appears that a part of Japan falls within this range.

Furthermore, North Korea is also developing a ballistic missile that appears to be an improvement of the Scud missile. This ballistic missile was launched on May 29, 2017. A day later, North Korea announced that it had successfully conducted the new development and test launch of a ballistic rocket incorporating a precision navigation guidance system. Images released by North Korea show that the ballistic missile was launched from a continuous-track TEL and had what appears to be small wings on its warhead, i.e., characteristics different from those of existing Scud missiles. It has also been noted that this ballistic missile is equipped with a Maneuverable Re-entry Vehicle (MaRV).

(c) Nodong

The Nodong is a liquid fuel propelled single-stage ballistic missile and is operated on a TEL. It is assessed to have a range of about 1,300 km, reaching almost all of Japan.

Although the details of Nodong's performance have not been confirmed, Nodong may not be able to carry out precise strikes on specific target installations, as it is likely based on Scud technology. However, it has been suggested that North Korea is working to increase the Nodong's accuracy. The improved version, which aims to enhance accuracy through modifications to the warhead section, is believed to have a

Fig. I-3-4-6 List of SRBMs A-D launch dates (including rail-launched types)

Launch dates	Type of missile
May 4, 2019	SRBM (A)
May 9, 2019	SRBM (A)
July 25, 2019	SRBM (A)
August 6, 2019	SRBM (A)
August 10, 2019	SRBM (B)
August 16, 2019	SRBM (B)
August 24, 2019	SRBM (C)
September 10, 2019	SRBM (C)
October 31, 2019	SRBM (C)
November 28, 2019	SRBM (C)
March 2, 2020	SRBM (C)
March 9, 2020	SRBM (C)
March 21, 2020	SRBM (B)
March 29, 2020	SRBM (C)
March 25, 2021	SRBM (D)
September 15, 2021	SRBM (rail-launched)
January 14, 2022	SRBM (rail-launched)
January 17, 2022	SRBM (B)
January 27, 2022	SRBM (A)
May 12, 2022	SRBM (C)
May 25, 2022	SRBM (possibly A or D
June 5, 2022	SRBM (including A, B and C)
September 28, 2022	SRBM (D)
September 29, 2022	SRBM (C)
October 1, 2022	SRBM (A)
October 6, 2022	SRBM (C, A)
October 9, 2022	SRBM (C)
October 14, 2022	SRBM (A)
November 3, 2022[24]	SRBM (C)
November 9, 2022	SRBM (possibly A or D)
November 17, 2022	SRBM (C)
December 31, 2022	SRBM (C)
January 1, 2023	SRBM (C)
February 20, 2023	SRBM (C)
March 19, 2023	SRBM (A)
March 27, 2023	SRBM (A)
August 30, 2023	SRBM (B)
September 13, 2023[25]	SRBM (A)
March 18, 2024	SRBM (C)
April 22, 2024	SRBM (C)
May 30, 2024	SRBM (C)
September 12, 2024	SRBM (C)
May 8, 2025[26]	SRBM (A)

23 Chairman Kim attended the event to "present" a super-large multiple rocket launcher to the 6th plenary meeting of 8th Central Committee of the KWP in December 2022 and stated this missile's range covered the whole ROK territory, and "even can be loaded with a tactical nuclear weapon." He also said that the missile entered a mass production phase in January 2023.

24 It is presumed that of the six ballistic missiles launched on November 3, 2022, the two which flew approximately 350 km were both SRBM C.

25 The two ballistic missiles launched on September 13, 2023, are estimated to have flown approximately 350 km before maneuvering and ascending again, flying a total distance of approximately 650 km.

26 It is presumed that of the multiple ballistic missiles launched on May 8, 2025, the one which flew approximately 800 km was SRBM A.

range of approximately 1,500 km due to the weight reduction of the warhead.

(d) Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM)

North Korea is believed to possess one Gorae-class submarine (displacement of approximately 1,500 tons) that is capable of carrying and launching a single submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) and is being operated mainly as a test vessel. Additionally, in September 2023, a submarine called a "tactical nuclear attack submarine" appeared, which is believed to be a modified version of an existing Romeo-class submarine. Chairman Kim has stated that he intends to convert all existing medium-sized submarines into submarines capable of carrying tactical nuclear weapons. In January 2021, Chairman Kim also mentioned the goal of possessing nuclear-powered submarines, and in March 2025, it was officially announced that he had "learned about the building of a nuclear-powered strategic guided missile submarine," so it is believed that North Korea will continue to focus on building such submarines.

North Korea has been developing SLBMs to be mounted on these submarines, and, in May 2015, it announced the first successful test launch of an SLBM.[27] North Korea is believed to be seeking to diversify its ballistic missile strike capabilities and improve its survivability.

(i) SLBM "Pukguksong" (referred to as "Pukguksong"-type by North Korea)

This is a solid fuel-propelled submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launched from a Gorae-class submarine. Judging from the images and footage that it has made public, North Korea may have succeeded in operating the "cold launch system," in which the missile is ignited after it is ejected into the air. If launched with a normal trajectory, this missile is expected to have a range of over 1,000 km.

(ii) SLBM "Pukguksong-3" (referred to as "Pukguksong-3" by North Korea)

This solid fuel-propelled SLBM is different from the "Pukguksong" SLBM launched in October 2019, and, if launched with a normal trajectory, it could have a range of about 2,000 km. The SLBM in question could potentially have been launched from an underwater launch test equipment.

In addition, North Korea unveiled possibly new, SLBMs marked as "Pukguksong-4" and "Pukguksong-5," the launches of which have not yet been confirmed, at its military parades in October 2020 and January 2021, respectively.[28]

(iii) New Type of SLBM

This is a new type of SLBMs that have been launched since October 2021 and has a maximum flight distance of approximately 650 km, the longest ones achieved. Regarding the September 2022 launch, North Korea announced later that it had conducted a training exercise to launch a ballistic missile loaded with simulated tactical nuclear warhead at a "water reservoir underwater launch site" in the northwestern region and revealed the existence of a "water reservoir underwater launch site construction" plan.

Based on images released by North Korea, it is possible that the missile was developed based on the SRBM A, as it has external similarities with that missile.

Fig. I-3-4-7 List of Launch Dates and Platforms for SLBMs and "Pukguksong" Series Ground-launched Ballistic Missiles

Date	Presumed type of missile	Launch platforms
April 23, 2016	"Pukguksong"	Gorae-class submarine
July 9, 2016	"Pukguksong"	Gorae-class submarine
August 24, 2016	"Pukguksong"	Gorae-class submarine
February 12, 2017	"Pukguksong-2"	TEL
May 21, 2017	"Pukguksong-2"	TEL
October 2, 2019	"Pukguksong-3"	* Estimated to have been launched from underwater launch test equipment
October 19, 2021	New type of SLBM	Gorae-class submarine
May 7, 2022	New type of SLBM	Gorae-class submarine
September 25, 2022	New type of SLBM	* Estimated to have been launched from underwater launch test equipment

27 In addition to what the Ministry of Defense has so far presumed to be North Korea's SLBM launches, North Korea announced on May 9, 2015, that it had successfully test-launched an SLBM. In addition, on January 8, 2016, it released a video that appeared to show an SLBM ejection test different from the one it had released in May 2015.

28 In addition, at the military parade on April 25, 2022, what may have been a new type of SLBM that has not previously been made public by North Korea was unveiled, but it was not named, and no details have been released.

(e) Ballistic Missile Modified from the SLBM (referred to as "Pukguksong-2" by North Korea)

This is a solid-fuel propellant ballistic missile and is a modified version of the SLBM "Pukguksong" for ground launch. If it were launched with a nominal trajectory, the firing range is assessed to surpass 1,000 km. A day after the launch in February 2017, North Korea announced that it was developed as a ground-to-ground ballistic missile based on the results of the August 2016 SLBM launch. It also announced a day after the launch in May 2017 that it had again successfully conducted the test launch of the missile and that Chairman Kim had authorized its "operational deployment."

Moreover, the launch from a continuous-tracked TEL, by using a so-called "cold launch system," can be confirmed from each of the images that North Korea released.

See Fig. I-3-4-7 (List of Launch Dates and Platforms for SLBMs and "Pukguksong" Series Ground-launched Ballistic Missiles)

(f) Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM)-Class

(i) Liquid fuel-propelled intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs)

Since May 2017, North Korea has launched four liquid fuel-propelled IRBM-class "Hwasong-12" (according to its own designation) ballistic missiles. Of these, one was launched on August 29 and another on September 15, 2017, and each flew over Japan's territory in the vicinity of the Oshima Peninsula and Cape Erimo (both in Hokkaido). In view of their flight paths, "Hwasong-12" missiles appear to have demonstrated a certain level of function as IRBMs, and they seem to have a maximum range of approximately 5,000 km.

North Korea also launched a missile passing over Aomori Prefecture, Japan, on October 4, 2022. It is presumed that this missile was a ballistic missile with a range over that of an IRBM, based on the flight distance of around 4,600 km achieved at that time. North Korea announced later that a "new type of surface-to-surface long-range ballistic missile" was launched. From images released at the time, although the date of photography was not mentioned, the characteristics of a liquid fuel-propelled engine and TELs similar to those for "Hwasong-12" missiles were visually confirmed. On the other hand, since the shape of the warhead and engine structure differed from "Hwasong-12" missiles, the possibility that the missile North Korea launched at that time was a new type of IRBM-class ballistic missiles cannot be ruled out.

(ii) Solid fuel-propelled intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs)

In January 2024, North Korea launched a solid fuel-propelled IRBM-class ballistic missile for the first time. It has since been confirmed that North Korea has multiple types of solid fuel-propelled IRBM-class ballistic missiles.

On January 14, 2024, North Korea launched a new type of IRBM-class ballistic missile. The day after the launch, North Korea announced that it had successfully test launched an "intermediate-range solid fuel ballistic missile" equipped with a "hypersonic maneuverable controlled warhead." Based on released images, it has been confirmed that this warhead was conical.

On April 2, 2024, a new type of IRBM-class ballistic missile, different from the above-mentioned one launched on January 14, was launched. The day after the launch, North Korea announced that it had successfully test launched a "Hwasong-16-Na" (according to North Korea's designation) equipped with a "hypersonic glide vehicle." North Korea apparently views this "Hwasong-16-Na" missile as a "new-type intermediate-range solid-fueled ballistic missile," and, based on released images, it can be seen that the missile has a flat warhead and can be launched using a seven-axle TEL. In addition, on January 6, 2025, North Korea launched another IRBM-class ballistic missile with a flat warhead. Given that the launched missile was similar in appearance to the "Hwasong-16-Na," it is assumed that the missile was either a "Hwasong-16-Na" or an improved version of one.[29]

North Korea insists that these ballistic missiles were hypersonic missile, but the Ministry of Defense is currently analyzing them, including whether they were in fact hypersonic weapons.

In addition, on June 26, 2024, North Korea launched a solid fuel-propelled IRBM-class ballistic missile. The day after the launch, North Korea announced that it had conducted a

Image released by North Korea when it launched a "Hwasong-16-Na" IRBM-class ballistic missile [Korea News Service/Jiji]

29 The day after the launch, North Korea announced that it had launched a "new-type intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile." North Korea also announced that a "new composite carbon fiber material" was used in the engine body of the missile and that a "new comprehensive and effective method" had been introduced in the flight and guidance control system.

"separation and guidance control test" of MIRV and asserted that each separated warhead was guided correctly to its target, but the details of this launch, including whether it might have failed, are currently being analyzed.

(g) Intercontinental-Range Ballistic Missiles (ICBM)-Class

(i) "Hwasong-17" (according to North Korea's designation)
The "Hwasong-17" is a liquid fuel-propelled two-stage ICBM-class ballistic missile that is operated on an 11-axle TEL. On February 27, 2022, North Korea launched a "Hwasong-17" missile for the first time. The missile's range is estimated to be over 15,000 km based on the past flight trajectories depending on factors such as its warhead weight.

In addition, given that the size of the "Hwasong-17" is thought to exceed that of previous ICBM-class ballistic missiles, it has been suggested that North Korea might be trying to increase missile power by increasing their warhead weight or even incorporate multiple warheads, which are generally considered difficult to intercept.

(ii) "Hwasong-18" (according to North Korea's designation)
The "Hwasong-18" is a solid fuel-propelled three-stage ICBM class ballistic missile. On April 13, July 12, and December 18, 2023, North Korea each time launched one "Hwasong-18" missile. During the missile's launch on April 13, it is estimated to have flown about 1,000 km while changing direction to the left (north). North Korea announced this launch as its "first test launch," and images released by North Korea show that the missile was launched by using a so-called "cold launch system" and from a TEL assumed to be the same as the nine-axle TEL shown for the first time in the military parade in February 2023.

The Hwasong-18, was also launched as a "test launch" on July 12 of the same year, with a flight distance of approximately 1,000 km and a maximum altitude of over approximately 6,000 km, and depending on the weight of the warhead carried, the range of the Hwasong-18 could exceed 15,000 km. Regarding the launch on December 18 of the same year, North Korea announced that it was a launch training "with the purpose of inspecting the readiness of North Korea's nuclear war deterrence and confirming its maneuverability, combat capability, and reliability."

(iii) "Hwasong-19" (according to North Korea's designation)
The "Hwasong-19" is a new type of solid fuel-propelled three-stage ICBM-class ballistic missile. On October 31, 2024, North Korea launched a "Hwasong-19" with a lofted trajectory. This ballistic missile is estimated to have flown for approximately 86 minutes at an altitude of over 7,000 km, making it North Korea's longest and highest flying missile ever. The range of the "Hwasong-19" could be over 15,000 km based on the trajectory of this flight, depending on factors such as its warhead weight. The day after the launch, North Korea stated that the "Hwasong-19" is an "ICBM of ultimate version" and added that it will be used along with "Hwasong-18."

From the images released by North Korea, it can be observed that the missile is launched using a so-called "cold launch system" from an 11-axle TEL. In addition, it has been suggested that, given that the "Hwasong-19" is larger than the "Hwasong-18," it is possible that North Korea plans to outfit the missile with MIRV.

Image released by North Korea when it launched a "Hwasong-19" ICBM-class ballistic missile [Korea News Service/Jiji]

(h) Taepodong-2

Taepodong-2 is a long-range ballistic missile launched from a fixed launch pad. It is believed to use in its first stage, four engines, each of which was developed based on the technologies of Nodong, and the same type of engine in its second stage. Its range is estimated to be approximately 6,000 km for the two-stage type, while the range of its three-stage variant can be more than approximately 10,000 km assuming that the weight of the warhead is not over approximately 1 ton. Taepodong-2 missiles and its variants have been launched a total of five times by February 2016.

(i) Chollima-1 (according to North Korea's designation)

"Chollima-1" is what North Korea claims to be a "new satellite-carrying rocket" intended to launch a "military reconnaissance satellite." "Chollima-1" is launched from a fixed launch pad and is three-stage configuration.

North Korea used "Chollima-1" to conduct a total of three launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch in May, August, and November 2023, with the first two launches believed to have failed. As for the November launch, analysis in cooperation with the United States and the ROK confirmed that the object launched at that time was orbiting Earth.[30]

Image released by North Korea when it launched a "military reconnaissance satellite" [Korea News Service/Jiji]

(j) Ballistic Missiles Referred to as "Hypersonic Missiles"

At the 8th Congress of the KWP in January 2021, North Korea expressed its intention to develop and introduce "hypersonic gliding flight warheads." In fact, on September 28, 2021, North Korea launched a ballistic missile equipped with a flat warhead, referred to as a "hypersonic missile" ("Hwasong-8" according to North Korea's designation) and has repeatedly launched missiles also referred to as "hypersonic missiles" since then.

On January 5 and 11, 2022, North Korea launched one ballistic missile each day, which it referred to as a "hypersonic missile." Both missiles are believed to have flown at lower altitudes than conventional ballistic missiles. In particular, the missile launched on January 11 may have flown at a maximum speed of approximately Mach 10 on an irregular trajectory that included horizontal maneuvers.[31] Based on images released by North Korea, it is confirmed that the missiles were launched from a wheeled TEL and that they had a conical warhead and were equipped with an engine appearing to be a liquid-fuel propulsion system. It has been noted that this conical warhead might use technology related to maneuverable re-entry vehicles (MaRVs).

In addition, North Korea has been launching what it calls solid fuel-propelled "hypersonic ballistic missiles" since 2024. As mentioned above, North Korea launched a ballistic missile with a conical warhead on January 14, 2024, and ballistic missiles with flat warheads on April 2, 2024, and January 6, 2025. These ballistic missiles, including whether they were hypersonic weapons, are currently being analyzed.

Based on these trends, it seems clear that North Korea is attempting to breach missile defense networks by continuing to develop hypersonic weapons and other armaments while also improving its related capabilities. In addition, the confirmed existence of both conical and flat warheads implies that North Korea is developing hypersonic weapons with different ranges and modes of flight through the parallel development of different types of warheads in an attempt to make it more complicated for other countries to deal with them, so North Korea's technological progress must be closely monitored.

b. Other Missile Forces under Development by North Korea

(a) Cruise missiles

While North Korea has been supposed to develop and retain anti-ship cruise missiles with relatively short-range including ones modified from Chinese-made cruise missiles, in recent years it stated its intention to develop new cruise missiles which are supposed to load tactical nuclear weapons on them. For example, Chairman Kim mentioned the development of "ultra-modern tactical nuclear weapons including intermediate-range cruise missiles" in January 2021. In fact, North Korea announced that it successfully conducted a test launch of a newly developed long-range cruise missile in September 2021, then that a long-range cruise missile that is believed to be of another type was launched in January 2022. These cruise missiles were repeatedly launched after that and announced as launches of "strategic cruise missiles" said to be deployed in the "tactical nuclear weapons operation unit." It is clear that these missiles have come to be known as "Strategic Cruise Missile Hwasal-1" and "Strategic Cruise Missile Hwasal-2" respectively. According to a statement by

30 The launched object separated into several parts, the first of which is presumed to have fallen into the Yellow Sea approximately 150 km west of the Korean Peninsula, the second into the East China Sea approximately 350 km west of the Korean Peninsula, and the third passed over the airspace between the main island of Okinawa and Miyakojima island and into the Pacific Ocean approximately 1,000 km west of Okinotorishima, outside Japan's EEZ, all of which are presumed to have fallen outside the predicted drop zones.

31 It is presumed that the ballistic missile lunched on December 23 2022 was the same as the ballistic missiles launched on January 5 and January 11, 2022 that North Korea referred to as hypersonic missiles. In addition, a missile with an appearance similar to the Hwasong-8 was unveiled at an exhibition titled "Armed Equipment Exhibition 2023" in July 2023 and a military parade in the same month, but the missile also has different characteristics from the Hwasong-8, and details have not been revealed.

North Korea, these cruise missiles flew up to 2,000 km. It was also announced that "strategic cruise missiles" were launched from submarines in March 2023 and from a patrol ship in August of the same year. In January 2024, North Korea also test-fired a cruise missile it called "Pulhwasal-3-31," but details of the missile, including the differences with the conventional "Hwasal," remain unknown.

Furthermore, in April 2025, North Korea announced that it conducted test launches of "supersonic cruise missile" and "strategic cruise missile" from a newly launched vessel referred to as a "new-type multi-mission destroyer."

While many of the details, including their actual performance, are still unknown, it is obvious that North Korea pursues implementation not only of ballistic missiles but also of long-range nuclear capable cruise missiles. If the series of the announcements about flying distances and the like are factual, there is a need for concern, as these missiles pose threats peace and stability in the region.

Images of various missile test launches from North Korea's "new-type multi-mission destroyer" (April 2025) [Korea News Service/Jiji]

(b) "New Type of Tactical Guided Weapon"

On April 17, 2022, North Korea announced that a "new type of tactical guided weapon" was launched. The missile announced at that time was seen at the military parade on April 25 and also later appeared in North Korean media. It can also be confirmed that the missile is transported on a three-axle wheeled TEL and has the typical characteristic of solid fuel-propelled engines. This missile is believed to be one of the weapons that North Korea is developing as potentially tactical nuclear weapons, in aiming to deal with armed conflicts that may occur with U.S. Forces and ROK Forces involving conventional forces and/or tactical nuclear weapons. This belief is based on North Korea's announcements stating that these missiles are significant in drastically improving long-range artillery firepower and strike capabilities on each front and enhancing "effectiveness of tactical nuclear weapons operation."[32]

c. Trends in Ballistic Missile Development

North Korea has driven ballistic missile development and attempted to improve related technologies and operation capabilities quite rapidly and in continuous manner. These trends have the following characteristics.

(a) Improvement of missile-related technologies

(i) Improvement of secrecy and promptness

North Korea appears to be seeking to improve its ability to conduct surprise attacks by enhancing secrecy and instantaneity to make it difficult to detect signs of a launch.

North Korea has repeatedly launched missiles from various platforms such as TELs, submarines, and railway cars in recent years. Using these platforms, launchers can be concealed and missiles could be launched from any position. It appears that North Korea aims to make it difficult for signs of launch to be detected and identified, and in turn, for missiles to be intercepted, by improving secrecy of launching.

In addition, since 2019, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles using solid fuel in particular. Generally, solid fuel-propelled ballistic missiles are relatively easier to store and handle. Additionally, since they come preloaded with solid fuel, they can be quickly reloaded onto launchers and relaunched in a relatively short time. In this respect, they are considered militarily superior. Such characteristics are expected to contribute to improving the ability to conduct surprise attacks. When North Korea launched a solid fuel-propelled IRBM-class ballistic missile in April 2024, it made an announcement that appeared to boast of the achievement of "putting all the tactical, operational and strategic missiles with various ranges on solid-fueled, warhead-controlled and nuclear warhead-carrying basis." As North Korea emphasizes the solid fuel propulsion of ballistic missiles, it is important to pay attention to future trends, including whether it replaces existing liquid fuel-propelled ballistic missiles with the solid fuel-propelled ones.

(ii) Enhancement of penetration capabilities for Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)

North Korea is advancing the development of ballistic missiles that fly at low altitudes on irregular trajectories in an attempt to breach other countries' missile defense networks. The SRBM

32 In addition, on May 18, 2024, North Korea announced that it had launched a "tactical ballistic missile" that used new guidance technology. Based on images released by North Korea, the shape and exhaust of the new missile resembled the "new type of tactical guided weapon." In addition, on August 5, 2024, North Korea announced that it had held a ceremony for celebrating the transfer of 250 TELs for its "new-type tactical ballistic missile." During his speech at the transfer ceremony, Chairman Kim boasted about mass-producing the TELs in such a short period of time and then transferring them to its "first-line units on the border." Based on images released by North Korea, like the TELs for North Korea's "new type of tactical guided weapon," the transferred TELs were wheeled and had three axles.

A, SRBM B, and SRBM D, as well as rail-launched ballistic missiles and a new type of SLBM with a similar outline to the SRBM A are believed to be capable of flying at lower altitudes and on more irregular trajectories than conventional ballistic missiles.

Furthermore, North Korea raised the development of "hypersonic gliding flight warheads" as one of its priority targets. Actually, it has launched several types of missiles it called "hypersonic missiles" since September 2021. In particular, North Korea has been pushing ahead with launches of what it calls solid fuel-propelled "hypersonic ballistic missiles" since 2024. North Korea is developing hypersonic weapons with different ranges and modes of flight through the parallel development of different types warheads (both conical and flat) in an attempt to make it more complicated for other countries to deal with them, while improving the instantaneity of its missile launch through transitioning to solid fuel-propelled missiles. In this way, North Korea is relentlessly pursuing missile development to make interception difficult and to breach missile defense networks.

(iii) Developing long-range missiles

North Korea consistently pursues development of SRBMs flying on irregular trajectories as well as long-range missiles with ranges covering the United States. North Korea's ICBM-class ballistic missiles "Hwasong-17," "Hwasong-18," and "Hwasong-19" are thought to have a range of over 15,000 km depending on the weight of their warheads, etc. This means the entire U.S. territory, including the East Coast, is within their range.

For the operationalization of these ballistic missiles, it is said that technology to protect the re-entry vehicle from the ultrahigh temperature that is generated during the atmospheric re-entry of the warhead is required. Although North Korea announced that the reliability of warheads in the re-entry environment was proven after launching ICBM-class missiles "Hwasong-14" and "Hwasong-15" in 2017, careful analysis is still needed to determine whether this technology actually has been established.

On the other hand, should North Korea make further progress in the development of long-range ballistic missiles, it may come to have a one-sided understanding that it has secured a strategic deterrence against the United States. However, if North Korea has such a false sense of confidence and recognition regarding its deterrence, it could lead to an increase and escalation of military provocations by North Korea in the region and could create situations that are deeply worrying also for Japan.

(b) Enhancement of missile operation capabilities

North Korea has launched ballistic missiles in various patterns such as launching multiple missiles simultaneously, consecutive launches at very short intervals, and multiple launches from various launching points at specific targets.

First, there have been some cases since 2014 in which it launched multiple missiles from unprecedented locations, cutting across the Korean Peninsula, in the early morning and late hours of the night using TELs. In recent years, North Korea has conducted target practice and other training combining SRBMs with various types of artillery, showing that it has the capability to launch multiple missiles simultaneously with any timing and from any point.

Second, North Korea attempts consecutive launches at very short intervals. For example, the SRBM C which North Korea refers to as a "super-large multiple rocket launcher" is thought to be developed in order to enhance continuous fire capabilities. In fact, from 2019, in one case, two SRBM C were launched at estimated intervals of under one minute.

Third, there have been some cases since 2019, in which North Korea launched multiple ballistic missiles and other weapons from various places and hit specific targets.

Through these launches, North Korea is believed to be pursuing the enhancement of practical missile operation capabilities with saturation attack and the like in mind.

(4) Future Trends in Weapons Development

Chairman Kim specifically mentioned the development of various weapons as future military objectives at the 8th Congress of the KWP in January 2021. The goals presented at this time are believed to be included in the "five-year plan."

With regard to nuclear weapons and missiles, Chairman Kim also mentioned "tactical nuclear weapons" as further advancement of nuclear technology, miniaturization and weight reduction of nuclear weapons and development of tactical weapons. He also stated that North Korea would promote the production of "super-sized nuclear warheads," improve its hit rate on targets within a 15,000 km range and upgrade its "preemptive and retaliatory nuclear strike capabilities." In addition, North Korea mentioned the promotion of research and development of multi-warhead technology, "hypersonic gliding flight warheads," nuclear-powered submarines, "underwater-launched strategic nuclear weapons" and solid fuel-propelled ICBM, demonstrating its stance of relentlessly pursuing increasingly complex and diverse modes of attack. In addition, besides the nuclear and missile capabilities, development of reconnaissance means, including military reconnaissance satellites and unmanned reconnaissance aerial vehicles, was also mentioned.

In fact, since this year, North Korea has launched missiles repeatedly as if to advance the process of the development plan presented at the Congress.

Furthermore, these objectives seem to have a certain degree of priority. North Korea stated that the hypersonic missile R&D project was "belonging to the five high priority

challenges in the strategic weapons division of the five-year plan" when it launched a missile referred to as "hypersonic missile Hwasong-8" in September 2021. North Korea stated in December 2022 that the "captive firing test of high-thrust solid-fuel engine" was completed successfully and that Chairman Kim rated this highly, saying, "another significant problem has been solved to realize the five high priority challenges in the strategic weapons division of the five-year plan," and stated that he expected to "show another new strategic weapon" in the shortest period of time.[33] At a meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in December 2023, Chairman Kim stated that the launching of satellites would mark "the realization of the prerequisite task of modernizing the Republic's armed forces, as set out at the 8th Congress of the Party." From these statements, North Korea is believed to be promoting research and development while prioritizing the realization of "hypersonic gliding warheads," solid-fuel-propelled ICBMs, and the launch of "military reconnaissance satellites" in its "five-year plan."

On November 21, 2023, North Korea launched the "Malligyong-1," which it claims is a "reconnaissance satellite," using the aforementioned "Chollima-1," and it insisted that it had accurately entered its orbit. North Korea actually disclosed information about activities leading up to the launch of this "reconnaissance satellite" starting in 2022, and, in March of the same year, when Chairman Kim went to inspect the "reconnaissance satellite," he stated that the purpose of military reconnaissance satellites is to obtain real-time military information on the ROK, Japan, and the Pacific Ocean.

In May, August, and November 2023 as well as May 2024, North Korea went ahead with launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch. The launches in May and August 2023 and May 2024 are believed to have failed to deploy satellites, but as for the launch in November 2023, it was confirmed that the object launched at that time is orbiting Earth. The details of what functions this object is performing are still being analyzed. Given that launching "military reconnaissance satellites" is one of the priorities under North Korea's "five-year plan," it is expected that North Korea will continue to carry out launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch in the future.

Furthermore, Vice Department Director of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) Kim Yo-jong stated in December 2022 and February 2023, "try right now" and "the frequency for us to use the Pacific Ocean as our shooting range" was dependent on the action of U.S. Forces in refuting views questioning North Korea's acquisition of atmospheric re-entry technologies for ICBM-class ballistic missiles. It is pointed out that this was suggesting the possibility for North Korea to decide to verify whether its ICBM-class missiles can tolerate practical use through launching them towards the Pacific Ocean if North Korea escalates provocation in the future.

In addition, North Korea showed its stance to pursue the diversification of its nuclear delivery systems through the statement made in March and April 2023 and January 2024 that it had tested weapons called an "underwater nuclear attack boat," namely "Haeil," and a weapon described as an "underwater nuclear weapon system."

In this way, North Korea constantly focuses on the R&D of related technologies in line with its "five-year plan" while claiming that these are "defensive" actions and making the situation a fait accompli. With the plan's deadline approaching at the end of 2025, it is possible that North Korea will continue to repeatedly launch various missiles and the like to accomplish the "five-year plan."

Image released by North Korea when it held the military hardware exhibition Defense Development-2024 (November 2024) [Korea News Service/Jiji]

33 Chairman Kim also stated in the 6th plenary meeting of 8th Central Committee of KWP at the end of the same month that North Korea will develop "another ICBM system" with the mission of "rapid nuclear counterattack."

4 Domestic Affairs

(1) Developments Related to the Kim Jong-un Regime

In North Korea, the power base centered on Chairman Kim is being solidified. The constitution of North Korea stipulates that the Chairman of the State Affairs Commission is "the supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who represents the state," and it is pointed out that North Korea is run under the leadership of the KWP. Chairman Kim took the office of the general secretary of the party in January 2021.

(2) Economic Conditions

In the economic domain, North Korea has been facing chronic stagnation and energy and food shortages due to the vulnerability of its socialist planned economy and diminishing economic cooperation with the former Soviet Union and East European countries following the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, it faces enhanced independent sanctions by countries including Japan and the United States, and sanctions based on UN Security Council resolutions adopted in response to nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches.[34]

Chairman Kim presented the "five-year plan for the national economic development" based on self-reliance and self-sufficiency in January 2021. Regarding this plan, at the end of 2023, Chairman Kim stated that, upon reviewing the three years starting in 2021, he was "confident that the five-year plan can be fully completed." Later, at the end of 2024, he set it as the general orientation of the work for 2025 to push forward with the preparations for the next stage of development in a substantial way while successfully completing the five-year plan. Thus, even under difficult circumstances, it is believed that North Korea is continuing to focus on rebuilding the economy in accordance with "the plan." Nevertheless, as North Korea is unlikely to carry out any structural reforms that could lead to the destabilization of its current ruling system, it will face various challenges in making fundamental improvements to its current economic situation. Furthermore, it has also been pointed out that amid the difficult economic and food situation, the regime is wary of social unrest caused by the influx of information from abroad and is further strengthening its ideological control. This is notable from the perspective of the stability of the regime.

In addition, North Korea apparently attempts to evade sanctions of the United Nations Security Council, such as through involvement in illicit ship-to-ship transfers prohibited by United Nations Security Council resolutions.[35]

See Fig. I-3-4-8 (Sanctions based on UN Security Council Resolutions against North Korea)

5 Relations with Countries and Regions

(1) Relations with the United States

In June 2018 at the historic U.S.-North Korea summit meeting, Chairman Kim presented his intention to work towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, the second U.S.-North Korea summit meeting in February 2019 ended without any agreement being reached between the two countries. After that, while North Korea stated that the United States is its "biggest enemy," it has shown a stance that the key to establishing a new U.S.-North Korea relationship is withdrawal of hostile policy towards North Korea by the United States.

In April 2021, the United States announced that it had completed a review of its policy towards North Korea and that it would explore diplomacy with North Korea under a "calibrated practical approach" with the continued goal of "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Although the United States clearly stated in its National Security Strategy (NSS), which was published in October 2022, that it will seek sustained diplomacy with North Korea to make tangible progress towards complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, official talks have not been resumed, and the relationship between the United States and North Korea remains deadlocked.

Although North Korea voluntarily declared to stop "the test launch of inter-continental ballistic rockets" in April 2018, no progress has been seen in the U.S.-North Korea relationship. Then, in January 2022, Chairman Kim ordered North Korean officials to "promptly examine the issue of restarting all temporarily suspended activities" based on the assessment that the "hostile policy and military threat by the United States have reached a danger line that cannot be overlooked anymore." In fact, North Korea restarted launching ICBM-class ballistic missiles from February 2022. Chairman Kim stated that North Korea will thoroughly prepare for long term

34 In recent years, North Korean fishing boats and Chinese fishing boats have been conducting illegal operations within Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) surrounding Yamato tai, creating a situation that threatens the safety of Japanese fishing boats operating in the EEZ. In this sea area, the Fisheries Agency and the Japan Coast Guard are working together to conduct strict surveillance vigilance and control in the waters around Japan, including issuing warnings to foreign fishing vessels engaged in illegal fishing. See the Cabinet Annual Report "Implementation of Ocean-related Policies," the White paper on Fisheries, and the Japan Coast Guard Report for further details of the control activities.

35 In the period from the beginning of 2018 to the end of March 2025, the MSDF patrol aircraft and ships have observed 24 cases in which a North Korean-flagged tanker was sailing alongside a foreign-flagged vessel were anchored side-by-side on the high seas. As a result of comprehensive judgment by the government, there are strong suspicions that the observed vessels were engaging in illicit ship-to-ship transfers.

Fig. I-3-4-8 Sanctions based on UN Security Council Resolutions against North Korea

Main content

Items	Sanction content	Related resolution
Crude oil	Restriction of annual supply to 4 million barrels or 525,000 tons	No. 2397 (December 2017)
Petroleum refined products	Restriction of annual supply to 500,000 barrels	No. 2397 (December 2017)
Coal	Total ban on imports from North Korea	No. 2371 (August 2017)
Ship offloading (ship-to-ship transfer)	Banned	No. 2375 (September 2017)

Summary of recent UN Security Council resolutions on sanctions against North Korea

Date	Resolution	Catalyst event	Main content
July 15, 2006	No. 1695	Seven ballistic missile launches (2006/7/5)	Request transfer prohibition on related goods and funds for nuclear and missile plans
October 14, 2006	No. 1718	First nuclear test (2006/10/9)	Prohibition on export and import of weapons of mass destruction related goods and large weapons
June 12, 2009	No. 1874	Taepodong-2 launch (2009/4/5), second nuclear test (2009/5/25)	Adoption of financial regulations
January 22, 2013	No. 2087	Taepodong-2 launch (2012/12/12)	Addition of six organizations and four individuals to sanctions
March 7, 2013	No. 2094	Third nuclear test (2013/2/12)	Tougher financial regulations and obligation to conduct inspections of goods suspected of transporting embargoed goods within one's own territorial waters
March 2, 2013	No. 2270	Fourth nuclear test (2016/1/6), Taepodong-2 launch (2016/2/7)	Ban on air fuel exports and supply and ban on coal and iron ore exports by North Korea (excluding those for personal livelihood or unrelated to North Korea's nuclear and missile plans)
November 20, 2016	No. 2321	Fifth nuclear test (2016/9/9)	Establishment of an upper limit on coal exports by North Korea (roughly $400 million/7.5 million tons a year)
June 2, 2017	No. 2356	Ballistic missile launches since 2016/9/9	Addition of four organizations and 14 individuals to sanctions
August 5, 2017	No. 2371	ICBM-class "Hwasong-14" launch (2017/7/4 and 7/28)	Total ban on coal imports, total ban on iron and iron ore imports, and establishment of an upper limit on the total number of work permits for North Korean workers for the first time
September 11, 2017	No. 2375	Sixth nuclear test (2017/9/3)	Addition of oil to supply restrictions for the first time, addition of textile products to the import ban, and ban on work permits for overseas workers
December 22, 2017	No. 2397	ICBM-class "Hwasong-15" launch (2017/11/29)	Further supply restrictions in the oil area, expansion of the scope of bans on trade (exports/imports) with North Korea bans, and return of North Korean workers to North Korea

(Note) Quotation marks indicate the names used by North Korea.

confrontation against the United States.[36]

Given the start of the second Trump administration in January 2025, future trends by both the United States and North Korea will be closely watched.

(2) Relations with the ROK

The three inter-Korean summit meetings in 2018 led to major progress in inter-Korean relations, including an agreement on the "Panmunjom Declaration," which confirms, among other matters, that the two parties agreed to completely cease all hostile acts against each other in every domain and confirmed the common goal of realizing a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. The summit meetings also led to an agreement on the "Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018," which refers to the ending of military hostilities, and the "Agreement on the Implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain," which prescribes concrete measures to ease inter-Korean military tensions.

Meanwhile, there has been no progress in inter-Korean relations since the breakdown of the U.S.-North Korea summit meeting in 2019. Following the inauguration of the previous Yoon Suk-yeol administration in 2022, which adopted a strict stance toward North Korea, North Korea also shifted to a more confrontational stance toward the South.

In December 2023, Chairman Kim expressed the relationship between North and South Korea as "the relations between two states to hostile to each other." In January 2024, at the Supreme People's Assembly, he also asserted that "it is necessary to delete such expressions in the constitution as 'northern half' and 'independence, peaceful reunification and great national unity.'" All of this suggests a major shift in North Korea's awareness of South Korea. In October 2024, North Korea announced that it blasted and blocked sections of railways and roads that are located in North Korea and connected to the ROK, as part of "the phased complete separation of its territory, where its sovereignty is exercised, from the ROK's territory."

In addition, in November 2023, in response to North Korea's launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch, the ROK announced the

36 On July 17, 2023, Kim Yo-jong, Vice Department Director of the Central Committee of the KWP, said that if the United States further strengthens its extended deterrence posture, "the United States should recognize that the negotiating table will move even farther away."

intention to suspend some clauses of the "Agreement on the Implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain." In response, North Korea declared its intention to annul the agreement altogether. In June 2024, in response to North Korea sending large balloons carrying trash and flyers into the ROK to provoke the country, the ROK decided to suspend entire clauses of the agreement.

(3) Relations with China

China is a vital political and economic partner for North Korea and maintains a degree of influence on North Korea. The "Sino–North Korean Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation, and Mutual Assistance" signed in 1961 is still effective, and China is currently North Korea's biggest trade partner. In 2023, trade volume between China and North Korea was very large, accounting for over 90% of North Korea's total trade (excluding trade between North Korea and the ROK),[37] suggesting North Korea's dependence on China.

In regard to the situation in North Korea and its nuclear issue, China has stated that the issues should be resolved through dialogue and consultations based on the concept of a "dual-track approach" (denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the transition from the armistice mechanism to a peaceful mechanism) and the principle of phased and synchronized actions. In recent years, China has demonstrated a stance of defending North Korea's repeated provocations through exercising its power of veto with Russia to UNSC sanction resolutions proposed by the United States for North Korea's launching of ICBM-class ballistic missiles, and it stated that the current worsened situation on the Korean Peninsula was caused by the United States.

The China-North Korea summit meeting was held five times from March 2018 to June 2019. In October 2022, Chairman Kim sent a congratulatory telegram to General Secretary Xi Jinping on his reelection. In September 2023, General Secretary Xi sent a congratulatory telegram to Chairman Kim on the 75th anniversary of the founding of North Korea, in which he conveyed China's desire to work with North Korea to strengthen strategic communication and deepen practical cooperation.

(4) Relations with Russia

When Chairman Kim visited Russia in September 2023, North Korea expressed its intention to place the highest priority on relations with Russia. In June 2024, Russian President Putin visited North Korea for the first time in 24 years and held a summit meeting with Chairman Kim. During the visit, both signed the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which included a promise to provide military assistance in the event of an armed invasion, and Chairman Kim emphasized that the relations between North Korea and Russia was put on a new stage, a stage of relations of "alliance." (The treaty went into effect in December 2024.)

In addition, Russia clearly expressed approval for North Korea's development of nuclear and ballistic missiles, and, in September 2024, Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister of Russia, stated that "applying the term 'denuclearization' to DPRK no longer makes any sense" and that "this is off the table." Note that this is an example of Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, publicly denying multiple Security Council resolutions that Russia itself agreed to.

North Korea continuously shows the stance to assist Russia, insisting since the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 that the cause of the situation in Ukraine is the United States and Western countries. In addition, North Korea is enhancing its military cooperation with Russia. Since 2023, North Korea has been providing ammunition and weapons that include ballistic missiles to Russia. In addition, in October 2024, it was confirmed that North Korean troops had been deployed to eastern Russia and then engaged in combat against Ukraine. In April 2025, North Korea announced that Chairman Kim had made the decision to deploy troops in accordance with the article of the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

REFERENCE: Security Environment Surrounding Japan (North Korea)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/surround/index.html

REFERENCE: Information related to North Korean missiles, etc.
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/surround/northKorea/index.html

37 According to an announcement by the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA)

Commentary

Progress of Military Cooperation Between North Korea and Russia

As Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues, North Korea is reinforcing its military cooperation with Russia. For example, it has been revealed that North Korea has been providing Russia with weapons, including ballistic missiles, and ammunition since 2023. The provided weapons and ammunition are being used against Ukraine, contributing in no small way to Russia's war sustainability in Ukraine. Furthermore, North Korea's military cooperation with Russia does not stop at material support such as providing weapons and ammunition. In October 2024, it was confirmed that North Korean troops had been deployed to eastern Russia and subsequently the troops engaged in combat against Ukraine.

With regard to the deployment of North Korean troops, in declaring that Russia had regained full control of Kursk oblast in April 2025, Russia mentioned for the first time the engagement of North Korean troops in combat in Kursk, and Russia released a statement of President Putin expressing his appreciation for the engagement of North Korean troops in combat. North Korea also released a written stand by the Central Military Commission of the Korean Workers' Party, clarifying for the first time externally the participation in operation in Kursk oblast. It was also clarified that the decision on the participation of North Korean troops was made by Chairman Kim Jong-un in accordance with Article 4 of the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership concluded with Russia.

The Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership was signed by Chairman Kim Jong-un and President Putin on the occasion of a summit meeting in June 2024. This treaty came into force in December the same year. Article 4 of the treaty, which served as a basis of North Korea's participation in their view, stipulates that "in case any one of the two sides is put in a state of war by an armed invasion from an individual state or several states, the other side shall provide military and other assistance with all means in its possession without delay in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and the laws of the DPRK and the Russian Federation."

In the joint press statement after the Russia-North Korea summit meeting in which the treaty was signed, the North Korea described its relations with Russia as an "alliance" and the Russia explicitly stated that they would not rule out the development of military technical cooperation with North Korea, suggesting further close military cooperation.

It has been pointed out that there is a possibility that the backdrop to North Korea providing military support to Russia is that North Korea is seeking the transfer of Russia's nuclear or missile-related technologies in return. At the 8th Congress of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) in 2021, Chairman Kim Jong-un mentioned specific goals, including the miniaturization and weight reduction of nuclear weapons, the development of "super-sized nuclear warheads," "hypersonic gliding flight warheads," solid-fuel propelled ICBMs, and nuclear-powered submarines, and the operation of military reconnaissance satellites, and North Korea has systematically advanced development toward realization of these goals. On the other hand, concrete progress in some of the goals mentioned at the party congress has not been confirmed to date, and it is believed that one of the factors behind this is that North Korea is facing some technological issues.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that there is also a possibility that North Korea seeks not only nuclear or missile-related technologies but also equipment, etc. which could contribute to the modernization of North Korea's conventional forces. The current situation is that many of North Korea's conventional forces are obsolescent, so there is a marked qualitative gap between them and the ROK's military and the U.S. Forces Korea.

North Korea is still continuing its nuclear and missile development, and is repeatedly pushing ahead with launches of ballistic missiles and others, thereby significantly undermine the peace and security of the region and the international community. The fact that there is a possibility that North Korea could obtain military support from Russia including in the form of the transfer of nuclear or missile-related technologies, is in itself a matter which should be considered seriously in terms of the regional security surrounding Japan.

Therefore, regarding these developments in Russia-North Korea military cooperation, it will be necessary to carefully and closely monitor how North Korea is involved in the aggression against Ukraine and what kinds of cooperation it obtains from Russia, based on the recognition that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific region are inseparable.

President Putin and Chairman Kim Jong-un shake hands after signing the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
[Korea News Service=Jiji]

2 The ROK and the U.S. Forces Korea

1 General Situation

The previous Yoon Suk-yeol administration, established in May 2022, positioned North Korea's nuclear and weapons of mass destruction as the most pressing security threat in the "National Security Strategy" it announced in June 2023 and stated that it would actively deter various provocations from North Korea, including nuclear and missile threats, and would strongly retaliate and repel North Korea if it went ahead with a provocation.

The U.S. Forces, mainly the Army, have been stationed in the ROK since the ceasefire of the Korean War. The ROK has established very close security arrangements with the United States primarily based on the U.S.-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty. The U.S. Forces Korea have been playing an important role in securing peace and stability of the region such as playing a vital role in deterring a large-scale armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Also, in the aforementioned National Security Strategy, the ROK acknowledged that the U.S.-ROK alliance, which marked its 70th anniversary in 2023, has been playing a central role in maintaining peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula.

The strategy also stated that the geographic scope of the U.S.-ROK alliance will be expanded globally and that the ROK will work together with friendly nations, including the United States, to establish open, inclusive, and rule-based international order in the Indo-Pacific region based on the solidarity of freedom with them.

2 Defense Policies and Defense Reform of the ROK

The ROK has a defensive weakness, namely, its capital Seoul, which has a population of approximately 10 million, is situated close to the DMZ.

In Defense White Papers under the former Moon Jae-in administration, the phrases "main enemy" and "the North Korean regime and its military are an enemy of the ROK" had not been used, but, in the version of the previous Yoon administration, the latter expression was used again.

The ROK has continued to undertake reforms of its national defense. The previous Yoon administration promoted "Defense Innovation 4.0" based on cutting edge science and technology from the fourth industrial revolution, such as artificial intelligence (AI). The administration also stated that it will gradually construct a combined combat system of manned and unmanned systems to resolve the shortage of soldiers and minimize the loss of life in war.

3 Military Posture of the ROK

The ROK's military capacity is as follows. The ground forces consist of 17 army divisions with approximately 370,000 personnel and 2 marine divisions with approximately 29,000 personnel; the naval forces consist of approximately 230 vessels with a total displacement of approximately 280,000 tons; and the air forces (Air Force and Navy combined) consist of approximately 570 combat aircraft.

The ROK Forces has been modernizing its military forces-not only its Army but also its Navy and Air Force- in order to establish an omni-directional defense posture.

The ROK Forces are focused on building the "Korean Three-axis system," which consists of the Kill Chain, Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD), and Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation (KMPR). In January 2023, previous President Yoon stated that KMPR is the most important part of the "Korean three-axis system."[38] Amid this, in December 2023, the ROK military's first reconnaissance satellite, which the ROK Ministry of National Defense positions as the foundation of the "Korean three-axis system," was launched in the United States.[39] The strategic command for the effective integrated operation of forces in the system was established in 2024.

In terms of ballistic missiles, the ROK appears to have operationally deployed Hyunmoo-2 missiles with an estimated range of 300-800 km and other missiles. The ROK also promotes the development of "high power" and "ultra-high power" type missiles. For example, it is said that a test launch of a Hyunmoo-4 missile with a two-ton warhead and 800-km firing range was successfully conducted in 2020. In addition, a Hyunmoo-5 missile equipped with an even heavier warhead was seen at a military parade in October 2024. Moreover, the ROK announced that it successfully conducted a test launch of a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) in 2021.

With regard to cruise missiles, the ROK appears to have operationally deployed the Hyunmoo-3 surface-to-surface cruise missile, which is believed to have a range of about 500-1,500 km, and the Haeseong series ship-to-ship/ship-to-surface cruise missiles, which are believed to have a maximum range of 1,000-1,500 km.

Furthermore, the ROK has been actively working on equipment export in recent years. In particular, in 2022, the annual export resulted more than doubled that of 2021 on a

38 Shin Won-sik, Minister of National Defense at the time, stated in December 2023 that Korea Massive Punishment & Retaliation (KMPR) is a "strategy to eliminate the enemy leadership." He went on to point out that the ROK does not possess nuclear weapons that would constitute the basis for mutually assured destruction on nuclear terms, and that the safety of its leadership is more valuable than that of its citizens for North Korea, concluding that the combination of traditional U.S. nuclear forces and the ROK's high-power conventional forces could enhance the integrity of deterrence.

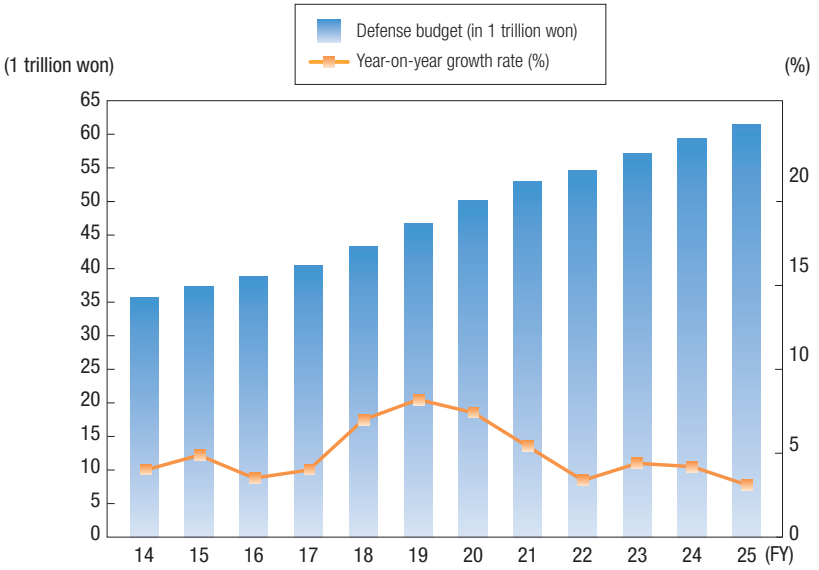
39 The ROK Forces plan to have five reconnaissance satellites by the end of 2025.

contract basis, reaching US$17.3 billion, including a large-scale export contract with Poland that is striving to enhance its defense capabilities after Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Although the value of the 2023 and 2024 contracts was down from the record-high value of 2022, the ROK Government hopes to achieve record-high exports in 2025 by pursuing diverse projects and expanding its support.

Defense spending in FY2025 (regular budget) increased by about 3.1% from the previous fiscal year to nearly KRW 61.2469 trillion, marking the 26th consecutive year of increases since 2000. In addition, according to its "2024-2028 Defense Mid-term Plan," the ROK will increase its defense budget by 7% on an annual average over five years until 2028.

See Fig. I-3-4-9 (Changes in the ROK's Defense Budget)

Fig. I-3-4-9 Changes in the ROK's Defense Budget



(Note) According to the website of the Ministry of National Defense of ROK (accessed in April 2025)

4 U.S.-ROK Alliance and U.S. Forces Korea

The United States and the ROK have taken various steps to deepen the U.S.-ROK Alliance in recent years. The two countries regularly confirm the strengthening of the U.S.-ROK Alliance at various levels.

As specific undertakings through the Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), a consultative body headed by the defense ministers of both countries, the two countries approved the "Tailored Deterrence Strategy," designed to enhance deterrence against North Korean nuclear and other WMD threats, at the 45th U.S.-ROK SCM in 2013.

At the 46th SCM in 2014, the two countries agreed on "Concepts and Principles of the ROK-U.S. Alliance Comprehensive Counter-missile Operations (4D Operational Concept)" to tackle North Korean ballistic missile threats. At the 47th SCM in 2015, the implementation guidance on the 4D Operational Concept was approved.

Recently, at the 53rd SCM in 2021, the United States and the ROK approved new Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG) for the first time in 11 years and agreed to update their operation plans based on the SPG. Moreover, at the 54th U.S.-ROK SCM in 2022, both countries agreed to several measures to enhance extended deterrence, such as strengthening the deployment of U.S. strategic assets[40, 41] around the Korean Peninsula. At the 55th U.S.-ROK SCM in 2023, the "2023 Tailored Deterrence Strategy," revised for the first time in 10 years, was approved, and it was confirmed that it reflects guidelines on how to utilize all categories of U.S. military capabilities, including U.S. nuclear capabilities as well as the ROK's conventional capabilities. At the 56th U.S.-ROK SCM in 2024, the two countries decided to include scenarios considering North Korea's use of nuclear weapons in future U.S.-ROK exercises.

40 According to the ROK "Defense White Paper 2022," U.S. strategic assets are the military capabilities provided by the United States that effectively deter external attack and provocations and ensure an overwhelming response. They include the U.S. nuclear triad (ICBMs, strategic bombers, and strategic submarine ballistic nuclear (SSBNs)), as well as some conventional forces (aircraft carrier strike groups, B-1B bombers, and cruise-missile nuclear submarines [SSGNs]).

41 The ROK stated that it is increasing the frequency and strength of deployment of U.S. strategic assets to a level equivalent to that of full-time deployment.

At the summit level, the ROK stated in the Washington Declaration of the U.S.-ROK summit meeting[42] in April 2023 that the country recognized the importance to trust the U.S. commitment for extended deterrence and reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The U.S.-ROK Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), whose establishment was announced at the summit meeting, held its inaugural meeting on July 18, 2023, and on the same day, a U.S. strategic nuclear submarine made its first port call in the ROK in about 40 years. At the U.S.-ROK summit meeting held in July 2024, the "United States and Republic of Korea Guidelines for Nuclear Deterrence and Nuclear Operations on the Korean Peninsula,"[43] which were considered at the 3rd NCG meeting in June of the same year, were approved.

The Unites States and the ROK have also been expanding the scope and scale of U.S.-ROK joint military exercises since the previous Yoon administration was established in May 2022. The regular command post exercises have been changed to the form that the Freedom Shield (FS) exercise is conducted in first half of a year and the Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) exercise is in the latter half. In the UFS exercise from August to September 2022, a field training was resumed in parallel with command post exercises for the first time in four years. Although the UFS exercise conducted in August 2024 did not incorporate any scenario assuming the use of nuclear weapons by North Korea as reported before the exercise, the first ever U.S.-ROK Conventional-Nuclear Integration Tabletop Exercise (CNI TTX) was conducted before the UFS exercise. In addition, the FS exercise conducted in March 2025 applied a scenario assuming North Korean strategies and tactics based on the recent progress of Russia-North Korea military cooperation.

At the same time, the two countries deal with such issues as the transition of operational control (OPCON) to the ROK[44] and the realignment of U.S. Forces Korea.

For the transition of OPCON to the ROK, aiming to complete the transition by December 1, 2015, the two countries have reviewed the approach of transitioning from the existing combined defense arrangement of the United States and ROK Forces, to a new joint defense arrangement led by the ROK Forces and supported by the U.S. Forces.

Nevertheless, based on the increasing seriousness of North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, the two sides decided at the 46th SCM in 2014 to re-postpone the transition of OPCON, and to adopt a conditions-based approach, i.e., implementing the transition when conditions such as the ROK Forces' enhanced capabilities are met. At the 50th SCM in October 2018, it was decided that following the transition of OPCON, a ROK military officer will serve as commander of the Future Combined Forces Command, replacing the current arrangement of a U.S. military officer serving as the commander of the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces.

Initial Operational Capability (IOC) verification was conducted as the first step to evaluate ROK Forces' capability in combined command post exercise in August 2019, and the important role of the exercise to verify IOC was confirmed. Furthermore, Full Operational Capability (FOC) evaluation was conducted as the second step in the UFS exercise in 2022, and in FOC evaluation successfully conducted at the 54th SCM in November 2022, all evaluation points were confirmed to meet the standard.[45]

The ROK Forces stated that the United States and the ROK comprehensively consider the results of joint evaluation of the ROK Forces' military capabilities, which lead the U.S.-ROK combined defense, and the ability to respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, which are necessary for the transition of OPCON, then steadily promote evaluation of the Future Combined Forces Command according to procedures for each stage. At the 56th U.S.-ROK SCM in 2024, it was also confirmed that a lot of progress has been made on jointly evaluating both the readiness and capabilities.

With regard to the realignment of the U.S. Forces Korea, an agreement had been reached in 2003 on the relocation of the U.S. Forces' Yongsan Garrison located in the center of Seoul to the Pyeongtaek area, south of Seoul and on the relocation of the U.S. Forces stationed north of the Han River to the south of the river. Subsequently, however, the agreement has been partially revised, particularly in relation to the postponement of the transition of OPCON, which has necessitated the continued presence of some U.S. Forces personnel at Yongsan Garrison and the retention of counter-fire forces north of the Han River to address the threat posed by North Korea's long-range rocket artillery.

In July 2017, the U.S. Eighth Army headquarters relocated to the Pyeongtaek area; in June 2018 the headquarters of U.S. Forces Korea and UN Command, and in November 2022, the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command Headquarters also relocated to the same area.

Concerning defense burden sharing, whereby the ROK government bears a portion of the total stationing costs of the U.S. Forces Korea to ensure a stable stationing environment,

42 President Biden (then) stated in the joint press conference after the U.S.-ROK summit meeting that the United States will not deploy nuclear weapons in Korean Peninsula.

43 At the U.S.-ROK summit meeting, it was announced that the "U.S.-ROK Guidelines for Nuclear Deterrence and Nuclear Operations on the Korean Peninsula" represent a joint statement aimed at maintaining and strengthening a reliable and effective nuclear deterrence policy and posture within the alliance, while also providing guidelines to the political and military authorities of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

44 The United States and the ROK have had the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command since 1978 in order to operate the U.S.-ROK combined defense system to deter wars on the Korean Peninsula and to perform effective combined operations in the case of a contingency. Under the U.S.-ROK combined defense system, OPCON over the ROK Forces is to be exercised by the Chairman of the Korea Joint Chiefs of Staff in peacetime and by the Commander of the U.S. Forces Korea, who concurrently serves as the Commander of the Combined Forces Command, in a contingency.

45 Furthermore, Full Mission Capability (FMC) evaluation as the third step is scheduled.

in March 2021, the United States and the ROK reached an agreement on the 11th Special Measures Agreement (SMA). This agreement is valid for the six-year period from 2020 to 2025. From 2022 to 2025, the rate of increase in the ROK defense budget from the previous year will be applied. In October 2024, the United States and ROK agreed to the 12th SMA, which will be applied starting in 2026. In 2026, the first fiscal year of the agreement, the rate will be 8.3% higher than in 2025, but, starting in 2027, the rate of increase will be linked to the ROK's consumer price index (CPI) instead of its financially burdensome defense budget.

5 Relations with Countries and Regions

(1) Relations with China

China and the ROK have made continuous efforts to strengthen their relations. China opposes the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system[46] to U.S. Forces Korea, saying that it undermines the strategic security interests of China. Although both countries agreed in October 2017 to continue communicating on the THAAD-related issues that China was concerned about through channels established between their respective military authorities, conflicting views still remain.[47] The previous Yoon administration made it clear that the THAAD issue is a matter relating to the sovereignty and security of the ROK and that it will respond consistently and resolutely based on national interests and principles. Attention will be focused on future trends in China-ROK relations.

(2) Relations with Russia

The ROK and Russia have agreed on cooperation in the areas of military technology, defense industry, and military supplies. Both countries held Defense Strategy Dialogue in August 2018 and agreed to promote the dialogue to vice minister level and, in November 2021, also agreed to set up hotlines between Navies and between Air Forces.

The ROK has implemented sanctions against Russia and provided military supplies and other resources to Ukraine in a show of solidarity with the international community following Russia's aggression against Ukraine since February 2022. In addition, when it was confirmed in October 2024 that North Korean soldiers had been dispatched to Russia, a government delegation of the ROK visited Belgium to provide information to NATO and the EU. At the same time, even as North Korean soldiers dispatched to Russia participate in fighting against Ukraine, the ROK maintains a cautious stance regarding the provision of lethal weapons to Ukraine. As the ROK continues to manage a stable relationship with Russia in light of the situation in Ukraine, attention will turn to the ROK's future actions.

46 A ballistic missile defense system designed to intercept short- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles in their terminal phase from the ground. It captures and intercepts targets at high altitudes outside of the atmosphere or in the upper atmosphere. Additionally, after North Korea went ahead with its nuclear test in January 2016, it was temporarily deployed by the U.S. Forces Korea in 2017.

47 After the China-ROK foreign ministers' meeting in August 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China insisted that the ROK Government stated the policy of "One Restriction" in which the ROK limits the operation of the THAAD already deployed to U.S. Forces Korea, in addition to the "Three Nos" (no participation in the United States' missile defense system, no consideration for supplement deployment, no development of Japan-U.S.-ROK security cooperation to military allies) that the ROK government is said to have announced externally in 2017.

Section 5 Russia

1 General Situation

President Putin, who has been seeking the revival of Russia as a strong and influential power, commenced full aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Russia's aggression against Ukraine undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and it is also a serious violation of international law including the Charter of the United Nations, which forbid the use of force. The aggression shakes the foundations of the international order and is understood as the most serious and direct threat to defense in the European area.

Russia also makes clear its stance that it continues to work on the modernization of strategic nuclear weapons, and repeats speech and behavior that can be taken as nuclear weapons threats in the middle of the aggression against Ukraine.

In recent years, Russian forces around Japan have introduced new types of equipment and activities. In addition, there has been movement to further enhance military cooperation with China, such as joint flights by Russian and Chinese bombers, joint navigation of warships, and continued mutual participation in exercises. Military trends of Russia in the Indo-Pacific region including Japan, combined with this strategic cooperation with China, are strong concerns for security. Also taking into account movements in the aggression against Ukraine, close observation of the situation is required.

See Chapter 2 (Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine)

2 Security and Defense Policies

1 Strategic and Policy Documents

Russia set out its objectives and strategic priorities of domestic and foreign policies in the "National Security Strategy" revised in July 2021.

The National Security Strategy states that Russia's policies through now to strengthen its defense capabilities, domestic unity, and political stability, and modernize its economy, and develop its industrial base, have strengthened Russia as a sovereign state capable of pursuing an independent domestic and foreign policy and effectively opposing external pressures. This indicates Russia's awareness of the existence of external threats and its belief that it is a "strong state" that will not succumb to them. It also states that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) military activities around Russia are a military threat and that the deployment of U.S. intermediate- and short-range missiles in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region is a threat to strategic stability.

In the defense section, the Strategy commits to giving continued priority to the role fulfilled by Russia's military force, and to ensuring strategic deterrence and preventing military conflict by maintaining a sufficient level of nuclear deterrent capability and combat readiness of Russian military forces, including the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF).

The Military Doctrine, revised in December 2014 as a document substantiating the principles of the National Security Strategy in the military sphere, states the existing view that while the probability of an outbreak of a large-scale war is decreasing, military risks to Russia are increasing, such as the movement of NATO's military infrastructure closer to Russia's borders including the expansion of NATO, and the establishment and deployment of strategic missile defense (MD) systems. In addition, the doctrine expresses growing alarm, defining the following as new military risks: NATO's military buildup; the realization of the U.S. Global Strike concept; the rise of global extremism (terrorism); the formation of governments in neighboring countries that carry out policies threatening Russia's interests; and the incitement of ethnic, social, and religious confrontations in Russia.

In addition, the doctrine raises characteristics of modern military warfare as being the massive use of precision weapons, hypersonic weapons, electronic warfare equipment, all types of autonomous vehicles, and the like, as well as the phenomena of automation and centralization of operations through a network of automatic management systems. In addition, without using the phrase "hybrid warfare," the doctrine also points out the integrated use of military force and political, economic, informational and other non-military measures, as well as participation in hostilities by irregular armed groups and private military companies.

The Military Doctrine positions nuclear weapons as an essential component for preventing the outbreak of nuclear wars and military conflicts that use conventional weapons. Regarding the criteria for its use, it states Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in retaliation not only for the use of nuclear or other WMDs, but also in the event of invasion using conventional weapons, where the survival of the country itself is imperiled.

In June 2020, for the first time, Russia released a policy document, "Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence," which is equivalent to the

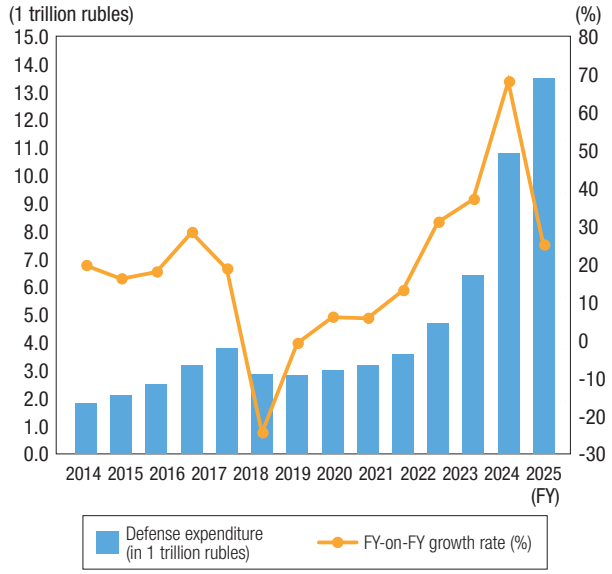
so-called nuclear doctrine. Subsequently, Russia indicated a revision of the document, stating that it should be "adapted to reflect current realities," and in November 2024, it released a revised version of the policy document. As a result of the revision, the criteria for using nuclear weapons were changed from "a threat to the very existence of the nation" to "a critical threat to sovereignty and/or territorial integrity." In the Basic Principles, it is explained that, in addition to "individual states [...] that consider the Russian Federation as a potential adversary" and "military coalitions (blocs, alliances)" in which these countries participate, an attack by any "non-nuclear state" with the participation or support of a nuclear state is also subject to nuclear deterrence by Russia. The document also clearly states the conditions for Russia to proceed with the use of nuclear weapons, military risks subject to nuclear deterrence, and other details while also clearly identifying where Russia's "red lines" are in terms of nuclear deterrence.

2 Defense Budget

With regard to Russia's defense budget, the amounts executed from FY2011 to FY2016 (implemented amounts) showed year-on-year double-digit growth and reached 4.4% of GDP. Since then, these amounts have generally remained at a level of around 3% of GDP, but following the aggression against Ukraine, they began to increase again from FY2023, the initial budget amount in FY2025 accounts for 6.3% of GDP. Furthermore, the initial budget for FY2024 increased by approximately 68% compared to the previous year, and the initial budget for FY2025 increased by approximately 25%.[1]

See Fig. I-3-5-1 (Changes in Russia's Defense Expenditure)

Fig. I-3-5-1 Changes in Russia's Defense Expenditure



(Note) Data announced by the Russian Ministry of Finance and Federal Treasury (the amount for FY2015-FY2022 is expenditures, for FY2023 is expenditures budget (provisional) as of September 1 of the year, and for FY2024-FY2025 is original budget.)

3 Military Reform

By 2021, Russia established joint strategic commands for four military districts (the Western, Southern, Central, and Eastern Districts) as well as the Northern Fleet (in charge of units facing the Arctic), and the military forces have been jointly operated under each District Commander in this system. However, since the commencement of the aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has shown some movements to increase strength as well as to enlarge and reorganize units.

Then Defence Minister Shoigu proposed increasing the total strength to 1.5 million troops, establishing two military districts in Moscow and Leningrad, reorganizing several existing brigades into divisions, deploying one new corps to the Finland border region, and other measures to President Putin at an expanded meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in December 2022. At a meeting in December 2023, it was reported that the number of military personnel had reached 1.15 million during the year and that two combined arms armies, a mixed aviation corps, four divisions, 18 brigades, and 28 regiments had already been newly formed. In February 2024, President Putin signed a presidential decree to create the Moscow Military District and Leningrad Military District, resulting in the Northern Fleet losing its status as a joint strategic command and military district. In September 2024, he signed another presidential decree to increase the number of military troops to 1.5 million.

In addition, in December 2024, Defence Minister Belousov announced the formation of a new branch, the "Unmanned Systems Forces," by September 2025 as well as plans to finish organizing the Moscow Military District and Leningrad Military District.

In addition, regarding the Navy and Air Force, in February 2025, President Putin signed a presidential decree to revise the countries "regulations on military districts," which went into effect on the same day. Under this decree, although military districts will maintain operational command during emergencies, naval and air units will be excluded from their jurisdiction during peacetime, which makes this decree a reversion to the system Russia used in and before 2010. This is believed to be because the Russian Navy and Aerospace Forces placed more importance on establishing unified operation by each General Headquarters than on a unified operation system at the military district level.

1 According to documents published by Russia's Ministry of Finance and Federal Treasury

3 Military Posture and Trends

Russia's military forces are comprised of forces such as the AFRF, the Border Guard Service of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB), and the Federal National Guard Service of the Russian Federation. The AFRF consists of three services and two independent forces: Land Forces; Navy; Aerospace Forces; Strategic Missile Forces; and Airborne Forces.

In developing its military capabilities, after having been conscious of the United States, which it has confronted in the past, and ensured a balance in its nuclear forces, Russia is expanding equipment similar to that of advanced nations, such as land-attack cruise missiles capable of being precision-guided and unmanned vehicles, for its conventional forces that it perceives as inferior to those of advanced nations. As for its asymmetric responses, it is believed that Russia places importance on improving its so-called "A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area-Denial)" capabilities through long-range surface-to-air and surface-to-ship missile systems and electronic warfare equipment.

See Fig. I-3-5-2 (Location and Strength of Russian Military (image))

1 Nuclear and Missile Forces

Russia places a strong emphasis on its nuclear forces not only to maintain its international status and ensure a proper balance with U.S. nuclear capabilities, but also to compensate for the significant attrition of its conventional forces amid the ongoing invasion of Ukraine. To that end, it is working to maintain a high state of readiness while modernizing various platforms and early warning systems.

Regarding strategic nuclear forces, Russia possesses intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and long-range bombers comparable to the United States in scale.

In 2011, Russia started deploying the ICBM "Yars," which is considered a multi-warhead version of the ICBM "Topol-M." The large **ICBM "Sarmat"** was scheduled to be deployed in 2024 in order to replace the ICBM "Voyevoda," which was made in Ukraine during the Soviet era, but it has been pointed out that its launch tests in February and November 2023 as well as September 2024 may have failed. Seven Borey-class Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBN), which carry the new-type SLBM Bulava, were commissioned. Also, there are plans to deploy five of such vessels each to the Northern Fleet and Pacific Fleet in the future. Russia also continues to carry out. The modernization renovation of Tu-95 bombers and the new production of Tu-160 strategic bombers and Russian Ministry of Defence announced that four new Tu-160 strategic bombers were delivered in 2023.

As for non-strategic nuclear forces, Russia is working to deploy various non-strategic missiles such as the **land attack missile system "Iskander,"** which is believed to be capable of carrying either conventional or non-strategic nuclear warheads, the **sea-launched cruise missile system "Kalibr,"** the air-launched cruise missile Kh-101, and the **air-launched ballistic missile "Kinzhal."** Russia places these missiles as "non-nuclear deterrence by precise guided weapons," and considers them important.

In addition, in November 2024, President Putin announced that Russia had used its new intermediate-range ballistic

ICBM "Sarmat"

[Specifications, performance]
Under development

[Description]
Advanced large (silo-launched) ICBM. It is believed to be available for various types of warheads as a response to advanced missile defense systems and to be guided with Russian satellite navigation system GLONASS. 46 missiles scheduled to be deployed.

ICBM "Sarmat"
[Official Rutube channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

Surface-to-surface missile system "Iskander"

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum firing range: 500 km

[Description]
Ballistic and cruise missile types exist. The ballistic missile type is said to fly at a lower altitude than a normal ballistic missiles and to take an irregular trajectory during the terminal phase.

Surface-to-surface missile system "Iskander"
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

Sea-launched cruise missile system "Kalibr"

[Specifications, performance]
Range: Submarine-launched type (to-ground) approximately 2,000 km; Surface-launched type (to-ground) approximately 1,500 km
Speed: Mach 0.8

[Description]
Actually used in Syria and Ukraine. Can be loaded on various platforms, and the Russian Navy continues to acquire loaded ships.

Sea-launched cruise missile system "Kalibr"
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

Fig. I-3-5-2 Location and Strength of Russian Military (image)

		Russia
Total military forces		Approx. 1,130,000 personnel
Ground forces	Ground troops	Approx. 615,000 personnel
	Tanks	T-90, T-80, T-72, etc. Approx. 2,730 (Not including mothballed tanks. Approx. 5,630 including mothballed ones)
Sea power	Warships	1,180 vessels, Approx. 2,010,000 tons
	Aircraft carriers	1 vessel
	Cruisers	3 vessels
	Destroyers	11 vessels
	Frigates	20 vessels
	Submarines	51 vessels
	Marines	Approx. 250,000 personnel
Air power	Combat aircraft	1,387 aircraft
	Modern fighter aircraft	MiG-29 × 108, Su-30 × 128 (estimated), MiG-31 × 144 (estimated), Su-33 × 17 Su-25 × 166 (estimated), Su-34 × 124 (estimated), Su-35 × 117 (estimated) (Fourth generation fighter aircraft: Total 804), Su-57 × 19 (estimated) (Fifth generation fighter aircraft: Total 19)
	Bombers	Tu-160 × 13 Tu-95 × 58 Tu-22M × 55
Reference	Population	Approx. 140.82 million
	Term of service	1 year (In addition to conscription, there is a contract service system)

(Note) Sources are "The Military Balance 2025," etc. Ground force's strength is including 550,000 Ground Force personnel, 35,000 Airborne troops personnel, and the 30,000 personnel of "the separatist in Eastern Ukraine" forces that Russia announced to incorporate to AFRF.

ALBM "Kinzhal"

[Specifications, performance]
Speed: Mach 10 or more
Range: 500 km (Total range with combat action radius of loaded aircraft: 2,000 km)

[Description]
Air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM) loaded on a fighter that can be maneuvered during flight. Some point out that ALBM is an air-launched version of a ground-to-ground short-range ballistic missile system "Iskander."

ALBM "Kinzhal"
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

missiles "Oreshnik"[2] to attack Ukraine. He also asserted that Russia was developing intermediate- and short-range missiles as a countermeasure against the United States, which continues to manufacture and deploy similar weapons. In December 2024, President Putin stated that "Oreshnik" missiles could be deployed to Belarus by the second half of 2025, and he mentioned that mass production was underway at the expanded meeting of the Defence Ministry Board held during the same month.

2 New Types of Weapons

Russia has opposed ongoing missile defense system build ups by the United States domestically and abroad in recent years.

Russia announces that it develops the following various advanced weapons in order to penetrate missile defense systems deployed in the United States and other countries, that can be countermeasures for Russian ballistic missiles which are the foundations of Russia's nuclear forces.

- Hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) "Avangard," which is claimed to be capable of flying at speeds greater than Mach 20 in the intercontinental atmosphere
- Sea-launched hypersonic cruise missile (HCM) "Zircon," which has a believed range of 1,500 km with the maximum speed of Mach 9
- Nuclear-powered cruise missile "Burevestnik," which is capable of flying at lower altitudes with no substantial range limitation
- Nuclear-powered unmanned underwater drone weapon "Poseidon," which is claimed to be able to navigate at high-speed in the deep sea

Of these new weapons, the **HGV "Avangard"** has already been deployed, and the **HCM "Zircon"** is believed to have been deployed because Russia announced in January 2023 that the Gorshkov-class missile frigate RFS Admiral Gorshkov, which is equipped with this HCM, is going to be deployed to the high seas as part of the Northern Fleet. In addition, in February 2024, President Putin stated that the Russian military used "Zircon" missiles in Ukraine.

Regarding Russia's own missile defense equipment, it is reported that the delivery of **advanced surface-to-air missile system "S-500"** to each unit started in spring of 2022, and it was announced that test launches of an advanced ballistic missile intercept missile system were conducted in November 2022.

HGV "Avangard"

[Description]
This missile is said to fly within the atmosphere at speeds exceeding Mach 20, evading missile defense (MD) systems by altering its altitude and trajectory. It is reportedly carried by the UR-100UTTKh and the R-36M2 (Voevoda), and is expected to be deployed with the Sarmat in the future. It is believed that twelve missiles were deployed as of the end of 2023.

HGV "Avangard"
[Official YouTube channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

HCM "Zircon"

[Specifications, performance]
Speed: Mach 9
Range: 1,500 km

[Description]
Ship-borne HCM sharing its launcher with "Kalibr" cruise missiles. Started to be deployed in January 2023. Ground-to-ship version is reportedly under development.

HCM "Zircon"
[Official YouTube channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

Surface-to-air missile system "S-500"

[Description]
Ground-to-air missile system succeeding "S-400." It is believed that pre-production models are currently experimentally deployed in air defense units around Moscow.

Surface-to-air missile system "S-500"
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

2 According to U.S. Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Singh, this intermediate-range ballistic missile was developed based on the Russian ICBM "Rubezh."

3 Conventional Forces and Other Issues

Russia has conducted research and development for equipment based on its State Armament Program (GPV). However, it is pointed out that several factors, such as the need to cover the loss of equipment from the aggression against Ukraine, and very low availability of machine tools and various parts due to economic sanctions, are hindering the continuation of the GPV.

Land Forces continue tests for advanced equipment such as T-14 tanks and Koalitsiya-SV self-propelled 155 mm howitzers.

The Aerospace Force announced that deployment of the pre-production model of the so-called "fifth-generation fighter" Su-57 was started, and that it is putting effort into integration of unmanned aircraft and manned aircraft for UAV development.

The Russian Navy plans to increase the rate of modernization of its equipment to 70% by 2027. Because the development of surface vessels for coastal waters is being completed, the Navy will now move on to building surface vessels for the open sea.

4 Space and Electromagnetic Domain

The AFRF has also been stepping up its activities in the fields of space and the electromagnetic spectrum in recent years. Russia is believed to be promoting the development of anti-satellite weapons such as the "Nudol" anti-satellite missile system. In November 2021, Russia announced that it would conduct a satellite destruction test using an anti-satellite missile. Since 2013, Russia has put satellites into both low and geostationary orbits to conduct rendezvous and proximity operations (RPO), which have repeatedly been observed engaging in frequent RPO with other countries' satellites on geostationary orbits.

In the electromagnetic spectrum domain, since 2009, the AFRF has established an Electronic Warfare (EW) Unit, and many new EW systems have been procured and distributed or allocated to each service and force. In particular, it has been pointed out that in Ukraine, various electronic warfare equipment, including the Pole-21, are being deployed on the front lines and used against the Ukrainian military's GPS-guided artillery shells and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

See Chapter 4, Section 2-2-3 (Russia)

5 Trends Related to the AFRF (General)

Since 2010, the AFRF has been conducting large-scale round-robin exercises in each military district, with the objective of verifying the combat readiness of the military districts, etc.[3] These exercises are helping to improve the long-distance mobilization capability of the AFRF. These exercises are helping to improve the long-distance mobilization capability of the AFRF. In 2022, the strategic command and staff exercise Vostok 2022 was conducted in the Eastern Military District with over 50,000 troops, and 14 countries including China and India participated. Zapad 2023 scheduled for 2023 in The Western Military District, was canceled. In September 2024, the Russian Navy and Aerospace Forces conducted the strategic command and staff exercise Okean 2024 under the command of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy in the Pacific Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Caspian Sea, and Baltic Sea. Chinese military ships and aircraft also participated in this exercise, training alongside the Russian Navy's Pacific Fleet.

Among exercises for nuclear and missile forces, in February 2022, just prior to the start of the aggression against Ukraine, a large-scale missile exercise was conducted across Russia as a "strategic deterrence forces exercise" using strategic nuclear forces such as ICBMs and SLBMs as well as missile forces capable of carrying conventional or tactical nuclear warheads (Iskander, Kalibr, Kinzhal, and Zircon). In addition, similar missile exercises for strategic nuclear forces were also conducted as "strategic deterrence training" in October 2022, October 2023, and October 2024. Furthermore, the Russian Ministry of Defence took steps to maintain the readiness of its units and conducted exercises to test non-strategic nuclear forces for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union in response to provocative statements and threats from Western officials. These exercises were conducted in three stages, specifically in the Southern Military District in May 2024, the Leningrad Military District and Belarus in June 2024, and the Central Military District and Southern Military District in July 2024, and activities conducted during each exercise included simulated "Iskander-M" missile launches.

In the Arctic Region, Russia is developing coastal surveillance radar networks for enhanced vigilance and surveillance. At the same time, Russia is rebuilding airfields and deploying Tu-22M medium-range bombers and MiG-31 interceptor fighters, while also deploying surface-to-air missiles and surface-to-ship missiles to develop sufficient preparedness for dealing with airborne threats from the north and attacks from ships. Along with these developments, Russia has built a large-scale residential facility for personnel at the base in two places within the Arctic Region.

3 The exercises were conducted primarily in the Eastern, Central, Southern, and Western Military Districts, and they are respectively called "Vostok (East)," "Tsentr (Central)," "Kavkaz (Caucasus)," and "Zapad (West)."

In addition to the development of such military facilities, the AFRF has also been conducting such activities r4 as various exercises by naval vessels, strategic nuclear deterrence patrols by SSBN, and patrol flights by long-range bombers. For example, the comprehensive Arctic expedition "Umka-2022" was held in the Chukchi Sea in 2022. In contrast, the tactical exercise "Finval-2023" was held in 2023, in both the Bering Sea, which is outside the Arctic Ocean, and the Chukchi Sea, suggesting that the AFRF is strengthening its defensive position in the Arctic by expanding the area in which it conducts exercises. In addition, in July 2024, Chinese and Russian bombers participated in a joint flight over the Chukchi Sea and Bering Sea. Furthermore, Tu-95 bombers flew over the Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea in June 2023, and some believe that these activities were conducted to contain Finland, which joined NATO in April 2023, and Sweden, which joined in March 2024.

Russia thus appears to be stepping up military activities, so close scrutiny of developments in this regard will be required.

6 Russian Forces in the Vicinity of Japan

Russia newly established the Eastern Military District and the Eastern Joint Strategic Command in 2010. Land Forces, the Pacific Fleet, and the Air Force and Air Defense Units have been placed under the Military District Commander, who conducts unified operation of these services. Meanwhile, in December 2023, Russian media reported that command of each fleet, including the Pacific Fleet, was transferred from the Military District Commanders to the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. It will be necessary to continue to closely monitor the trends in the Russian military's chain of command, organizational restructuring, and changes in its joint operational posture since the aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of how the Russian military will reflect the lessons it learned in Ukraine in its operational posture.

The current presence of the AFRF in the Far East region is significantly smaller than it was at its peak. However, a considerable scale of military forces, including nuclear forces, still remains in the region. In recent years, Russia has also been deploying the latest equipment in the Far East. It announced that the percentage of new equipment in the Eastern Military District was 56% as of December 2021.

Given that the AFRF set their basis of operation on maintaining the combat readiness of their strategic nuclear units and dealing with conflicts through the inter-theater mobility of its round-the-clock readiness units, it is necessary to keep our attention on the trends of the AFRF in the Far East region while also keeping in mind the trends of units in other regions.

(1) Nuclear Forces

As for strategic nuclear forces in the Far East region, approximately 30 Tu-95 bombers are deployed in Ukrainka in Amur Oblast, and it is reported that the Russian Ministry of Defence reportedly has plans to deploy Tu-160 long-range bombers newly in the Far East, so it will be necessary to keep e4 on future deployment trends of these bombers. As for maritime nuclear forces, five Borey-class SSBNs equipped with SLBMs have been deployed in and around the Sea of Okhotsk.

(2) Ground Forces

The Eastern Military District now consists of 31 brigades and two divisions with approximately 80,000 personnel in total, including motorized rifles (mechanized infantry), tanks,

"Bastion" surface-to-ship missiles
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

"Bal" surface-to-ship missiles
[Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

artillery, surface-to-surface missiles, material and technology security (logistics), and air defense, as well as a marine brigade equipped with amphibious operations capability. The Eastern Military District has introduced new equipment, such as the "Iskander" surface-to-surface missile system, "Bal" and "Bastion" surface-to-ship missiles, and the "S-400" surface-to-air missile system.

(3) Naval Forces

The Pacific Fleet is stationed or deployed at its main bases in Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. The fleet consists of approximately 248 vessels, including about 21 major surface combatants and 26 submarines, roughly 16 of which are nuclear-powered. Warships equipped with Kalibr cruise missiles have also been deployed successively to the Pacific Fleet since 2021. As of the end of FY2024, deployed warships included one Udaloy-class frigate and four improved Kilo-class submarines in Vladivostok as well as one **Steregushchiy III-class frigate** and two Yasen-M-class nuclear-powered attack submarines in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy.

Steregushchiy-class frigates

[Specifications, performance]
Full-load displacement: 2,235 tons (for the type without "Kalibr"), 2,500 tons (for the type with "Kalibr")
Maximum speed: 26 knots
Main armament: SS-N-30A anti-ground cruise missile (anti-ground "Kalibr," maximum range: 1,500 km), SS-N-27A anti-ship cruise missile (anti-ship "Kalibr," maximum range: 660 km), SS-N-26 anti-ship cruise missile ("P-800 Onix," maximum range: 300 km), 9M96 surface-to-air missile (maximum range: 60 km)
On-board aircraft: One helicopter (Ka-27)

Steregushchiy III-class frigates [Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

[Description]
Russian Navy's new type of frigate. One frigate armed with "Kalibr" cruise missiles and four without are assigned to the Pacific Fleet.

(4) Air Forces

In the Eastern Military District, Russia deploys approximately 320 combat aircraft from its Aerospace Forces and Navy combined. Existing models are being modernized and new models, such as the Su-35 fighters and the Su-34 fighter-bombers, are being introduced to improve their capabilities.

Su-35 fighters [Official YouTube channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

(5) Operations in the Vicinity of Japan

In the vicinity of Japan, the AFRF has been actively continuing its activities, including exercises and drills which are believed to be conducted for objectives such as verifying the results of the military reform.

The number of exercises carried out by the Russian Land Forces in the areas adjacent to Japan has decreased from the peak.

With regard to naval vessels, their activities are generally increasing in recent years. For example, various exercises and long-distance voyages have been carried out by Pacific Fleet vessels, along with patrols by nuclear-powered submarines.

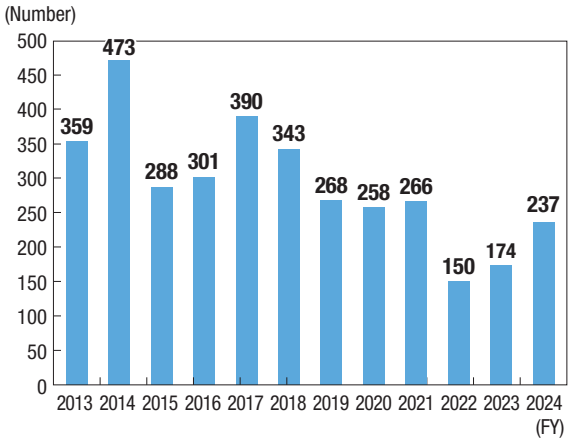
In April 2023, the commander of the Pacific Fleet was replaced for the first time in 11 years, and the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that a surprise inspection of the Pacific Fleet was conducted with the participation of more than 25,000 personnel and more than 160 vessels. Then Defence Minister Shoigu explained that the objective of this inspection was to "prevent the aggression of an enemy into the southern Sea of Okhotsk," indicating that Russia intended to show off the capability of the Russian Navy to actively operate in the Sea of Okhotsk, which Russia considers crucial as an operating area for strategic nuclear submarines even while engaged in aggression against Ukraine. In addition, President Putin stated during a related exercise that military power "can be used in conflicts on all fronts." It is believed that his statement was aimed to emphasize that the naval forces in the Far East are maintaining the combat readiness even while ground forces are dispatched from the Eastern Military District to Ukraine.

Regarding aircraft, since the resumption of the patrol activities by its strategic aviation units in 2007, Russia has been increasing flights by long range bombers. Also, there were flights of Tu-95 bombers refueled in mid-flight and supported by A-50 early warning and control aircraft and Su-

27 fighters as well as flights of Tu-160. Two Tu-95 bombers escorted by two fighters were confirmed flying around Japan in April, July, and October 2024. In addition, in September 2024, two Tu-142 patrol aircraft circled Japan, and one IL-38 patrol aircraft intruded into Japanese territorial airspace north of Rebun Island, Hokkaido three times in a single day, resulting in an ASDF fighter launch flares to warn.

See Fig. I-3-5-3 (Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Russian Aircraft), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-2 (Warnings and Scrambles in Preparation against Airspace Violation)

Fig. I-3-5-3 Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Russian Aircraft



4 Russian Forces in Japan's Northern Territories

Since 1978 during the former Soviet Union era, Russia has redeployed Land Forces units on Kunashiri, Etorofu, and Shikotan Islands of the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan.

While the Russian troop strength is thought to be far less than that at peak times, one division, which belongs to a corps still stationed in South Sakhalin, is located on Kunashiri and Etorofu Islands. Furthermore, tanks, armored vehicles, various types of artillery, anti-air missiles, and unmanned reconnaissance vehicles are deployed.

Furthermore, in recent years, Russia has been upgrading the facilities of its troops located in the Northern Territories. It is also deploying new equipment such as coastal (surface-to-ship) missiles belonging to its Navy and fighter aircraft belonging to its Aerospace Forces, conducting large-scale exercises, and continuing its vigorous military activities under the illegal occupation of the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan.

Some point out the background for such moves as being the rising military importance of all of the Sea of Okhotsk, an operating area of SSBN, as well as the trend of increasing Russian military activities not only in the Northern Territories but also in South Sakhalin and the Chishima Islands, whose jurisdiction has not been determined.

In recent years, the deployment of major new equipment in the Northern Territories has included the announced deployment of coastal (surface-to-ship) missiles to Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands in 2016, and in August 2018, three Su-35 fighters were reportedly deployed at the new civilian airport on Etorofu Island, which was opened to military and civilian dual use in January of that year.

As for equipment of the Land Forces, in December 2020, media related to the Russian Ministry of Defence reported the deployment of **"S-300V4" surface-to-air missile** (maximum firing range of 400 km) in Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands. It has been revealed that the S-300V4s on both islands have disappeared since the aggression against Ukraine. The missing S-300V4s are believed to have been diverted for use in Ukraine, and the impact of continued operations in Ukraine is also evident in Russia's air defense posture in the Far East. Furthermore, in January 2022, it was announced that in the previous year, the tanks of the units located in the Northern Territories had been replaced with T-80BV tanks, which are suitable for operation in cold regions.

Military exercises have also continued in the Northern Territories. In June 2021, landing and anti-landing exercises were conducted on Etorofu Island, Kunashiri Island, and South Sakhalin, involving over 10,000 military personnel, 500 ground equipment and machines, 32 aircraft, and 12 vessels.

In addition, in the vicinity of Sakhalin and the Chishima Islands, which, like the Northern Territories, are adjacent to the Sea of Okhotsk, it is reported that the AFRF deployed the S-400 surface-to-air missile system to South Sakhalin in February 2021 and the surface-to-ship missile system Bastion to South Sakhalin at the end of 2021, Matua (Matsuwa) Island of the Chishima Islands in December 2021, and Paramushir Island of the Chishima Islands in December 2022. There are reports on the establishment of a new coastal

Surface-to-air missile system "S-300V4"

[Specifications, performance]
Maximum firing range: 400 km
Maximum altitude: 37 km

[Description]
Air defense missile said to have capabilities to deal with stealth aircraft.

Surface-to-air missile system "S-300V4" [Official YouTube Channel of the Russian Ministry of Defence]

(surface-to-ship) missile brigade placed in South Sakhalin, with jurisdiction over units located on Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands. It is necessary to monitor with strong concern the Russian military movements in the Far East, including the Northern Territories, while taking into account developments in the aggression against Ukraine.

5 Relations with Countries and Regions

1 General Situation

On March 31, 2023, President Putin approved the new Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation for the first time since 2016. In this document, Russia condemns Western countries for adopting anti-Russian policies and emphasizes cooperation with countries such as China and India, while stating that it aims to build a multipolar international order. Moves to strengthen collaboration with China in particular have been seen since the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, seemingly in inverse proportion to the deepening of Russia's conflict with Western countries, and is significant especially since the aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

2 Relations with the United States

President Putin has striven to deepen cooperative relations with the United States in the economic domain, while opposing the United States on any action Russia considers as "a U.S. attempt to encroach on Russia's strategic interests."

On the military front, feeling that the United States' installation of missile defense systems both at home and abroad - including in Europe and the Asia-Pacific - undermines global and regional security, Russia has criticized these moves for upsetting the strategic balance. Russia is also moving forward with the development of new strategic weapons that are said to be capable of reliably penetrating missile defense systems.

In regard to arms control between the United States and Russia, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty ended in August 2019 during the first Trump administration after having gone through a series of processes originating from the withdrawal announcement of the United States side. In November 2020, the United States pulled out of the Open Skies Treaty, which was signed by the Western countries and Russia allowing its participants to mutually conduct unarmed observation and surveillance flights, and this was followed by Russia announcing its withdrawal in January 2021.

On the other hand, with regard to the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which set the upper limit of strategic nuclear forces for Russia and the United States, although both countries agreed on its unconditional extension for five years in January 2021, just before the expiration of the treaty in February of the same year, President Putin unilaterally declared "holding the treaty in abeyance" in February 2023, which is not stipulated in the treaty.

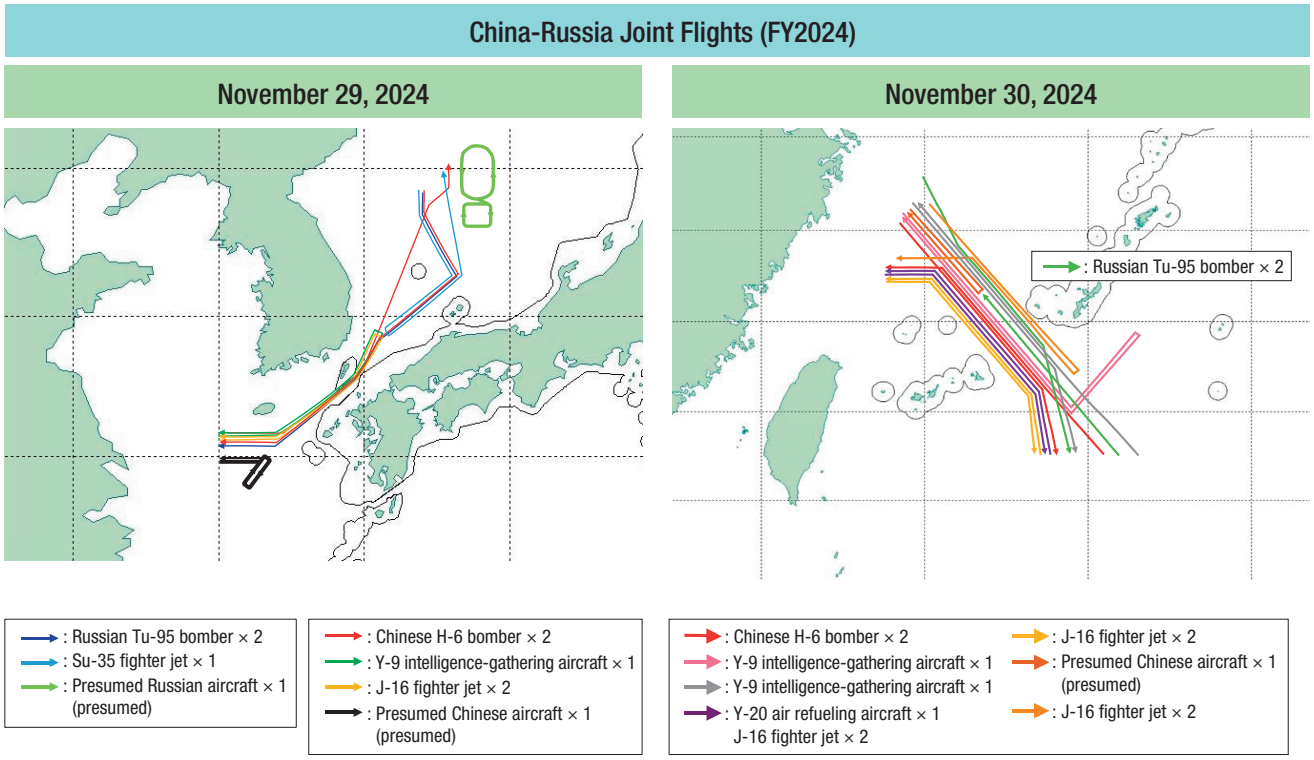
See Chapter 2, 3-2 (How NATO Member States and Other Countries Deal with the Situation)

3 Relations with China

Russia has exported military equipment such as surface-to-air missiles, fighter jets, and submarines to China since the 1990s until recent years. Russia also continues to advance close military cooperation even during the aggression against Ukraine, and Russia and China conduct various joint military actions.

See Fig. I-3-5-4 (China-Russia Joint Flights (FY2024)), Section 2-3-2 (Relations with Russia)

Fig. I-3-5-4 China-Russia Joint Flights (FY2024)



4 Relations with Former Soviet Republics

Russia positions the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with former Soviet republics as one of its most important foreign policy objectives. Russia considers its vital interests to be concentrated in this region.

It stations its troops in the Collective Security Treaty Organization[4] (CSTO) member states Armenia (which declared its intention to withdraw from the CSTO in February 2024), Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan as well as Moldova (Transnistria), Georgia (South Ossetia, Abkhazia), and Ukraine (Crimea). Through the conclusion of an alliance and strategic partnership treaty with Abkhazia in November 2014, the conclusion of an alliance and integration treaty with South Ossetia in 2015, and other efforts, Russia has been working to ensure its military influence.

However, today, after more than thirty years have passed since the collapse of USSR, none of the former Soviet Union countries except Belarus support Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Some consider that Russia's influence on the former Soviet area will decline still further in the wake of the aggression against Ukraine.

Russia indicates moves to intensify military involvement with Belarus along with the start of the aggression against Ukraine. President Lukashenko of Belarus requested support from President Putin for the modification of Belarusian Air Force aircraft to specifications for equipment of nuclear weapons in June 2022, and President Putin agreed. It was announced in February 2023 that Belarus deployed an "Iskander" surface-to-surface missile system received from Russia. In July 2023, it was announced that the defense ministers of the two countries had signed documents regarding procedures for storing Russian tactical nuclear weapons on Belarusian territory. In December 2023, Belarusian President Lukashenko stated that the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons that Russia had delivered to the Belarusian territory was completed in October 2023. Under Russia's revised Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence (the so-called nuclear doctrine), Russia added attacks on Belarus to the conditions under which it would use nuclear weapons. In addition, in December 2024,

4 CSTO is a military alliance consisting of six member states, namely Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Armenia. Article 4 of the 1992 Collective Security Treaty, which is the grounds for establishing the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), states that, in the event of an act of aggression against any of the member states, "all the other Member States at request of this Member State shall immediately provide the latter with the necessary help, including military one, as well as provide support by the means at their disposal in accordance with the right to collective defence pursuant to article 51 of the UN Charter."

the leaders of Russia and Belarus signed a security treaty that imposes an obligation on the countries to mutually defend each other, including the use of Russian tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Belarus.

In the Caucasus region, Azerbaijan launched a military operation in September 2023 to make Armenian forces withdraw from the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, which had unilaterally declared independence on Azerbaijan's territory and had been exercising effective control over the region. After being attacked by Azerbaijani forces, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic surrendered in September and signed an agreement to dissolve the republic by January 2024.

As a result of this conflict, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, which had been exercising effective control over part of Azerbaijan's territory for more than 32 years since the end of the Soviet Union, disappeared.

The Russian armed forces, stationed as peacekeeping forces in the republic, were unable to prevent the military conflict, which caused Armenia, a CSTO member state and Russia's military ally, to lose trust in Russia,[5] and some believe this has exposed the decline of Russian influence in the region.

5 Relations with Other Countries

(1) Relations with Asian Countries

Russia recognizes that the significance of the Asia-Pacific region is increasing within its multi-pronged foreign policy and considers it strategically important to strengthen its status in the region from the viewpoint of socioeconomic development in Siberia and the Far East, and security. In Asia, in addition to its relations with China, Russia assigns an important role to its Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership with India and continues to pursue wide-ranging military cooperation. Furthermore, Russia is working to strengthen its relations with ASEAN countries and conducted its first-ever joint maritime exercise with such countries in the inshore waters of Indonesia in December 2021. From November to December 2023, vessels from the Russian Pacific Fleet visited eight countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia. In particular, Russia co-hosted an anti-terrorism tabletop exercise with Myanmar within the framework of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) in August 2023 and then conducted the first joint maritime exercise between the two countries, the Myanmar-Russia Maritime Security Exercise (MARUMEX), in November 2023. From October to November 2024, Russia visited five countries from Southeast Asia to East Asia. In addition, in October, Russia conducted MARUMEX with Myanmar for the second year in a row, and, in November, Russia conducted ORRUDA, its first-ever bilateral naval exercise with Indonesia, and PASSEX, its first-ever bilateral naval exercise with Thailand.

Russia is also seen to be strengthening its cooperation with North Korea. In September 2023, Chairman Kim Jong-un visited the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia's Far East and held the first summit meeting with President Putin in four years. He also visited Komsomolsk-on-Amur and was briefed on the Su-57 fifth-generation fighter jet, and then he visited Vladivostok, where he was briefed on the Udaloy-class destroyer the Marshal Shaposhnikov. In June 2024, President Putin visited North Korea, where he signed a Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the country, which included a promise to provide military assistance in the event of an armed invasion. (The treaty went into effect in December 2024.) At the joint press conference after the summit meeting, President Putin stated that this treaty will not preclude the development of military-technical cooperation with North Korea.

See Section 4-1-5 (4) (Relations with Russia), Section 8-1-3 (3) (Relations with Russia)

(2) Relations with European Countries

Through the framework of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), Russia has worked with NATO as an equal partner in the areas of common interest, such as by participating in certain decision-making processes. However, following the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, NATO and European countries suspended their practical cooperation with Russia thereafter, including that in the military domain, except for the NRC's ambassador-level meetings. Moreover, with the aggression against Ukraine, the relationship between Russia and European countries is the tensest it has been since the Cold War era.

See Chapter 2, 3-2 (How NATO Member States and Other Countries Deal with the Situation)

(3) Relations with Middle Eastern and African Countries

In the Foreign Policy Concept published in March 2023, comprehensive mutual cooperation with Iran, total support for Syria, and deepened partnerships with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and other countries are stated definitely. Above all, for Syria, the AFRF has continued to secure the Tartus Naval Base and Khmeimim Air Base in Syria since September 2015 to conduct operations to support the Assad administration. In operations in Syria, Russia has conducted bombings using fighter bombers and long-range bombers, as well as attacks using cruise missiles from surface ships and submarines deployed in the Caspian Sea

5 In June 2024, Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan indicated the intention to withdraw from the CSTO. On January 14 2024, the foreign ministers of Armenia and the United States signed the Armenia-U.S. Strategic Partnership Charter.

and the Mediterranean Sea. After the collapse of the Assad administration in December 2024, Russian Presidential Press Secretary Peskov stated that no final decision has been made regarding Russian military bases in Syria and that this decision will be made based on consultation by the powers that control the country. In addition, in January 2025, President Putin and Iranian President Pezeshkian signed a Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership covering a wide range of fields, including security and energy. Although this treaty includes military-technical cooperation, it does not include any regulations on the provision of military assistance in the event of an armed invasion.

Russia is also increasing its influence in Libya, while at the same time coordinating its interests with Türkiye.

See Section 10-2-2 (1) (China and Russia)

6 Arms Exports

Russia actively promotes the export of arms not only to maintain the defense industrial base and to make economic profit, but also to help promote better foreign policy. Export operations are exclusively conducted by the Rosoboronexport State Corporation. Currently, Russia has the third largest share of arms exports in the world after the United States and France,6 exporting fighters, vessels, and surface-to-air missiles to regions including Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. In recent years, Russia has actively tried to sell not only to conventional importers of its products but also to U.S. allies and U.S. friendly countries such as Türkiye. However, the U.S. Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) passed in 2017, and sanctions against Russia from Russia's aggression against Ukraine are seen to be having a severe impact on Russia's defense industry.

See Chapter 4, Section 1-5 (Trends Concerning Defense Production and Technology Bases)

Commentary

Russia's Military Trends in the Area Surrounding Japan

Russia appears to be reinforcing its nuclear forces even as it continues its aggression against Ukraine. In the area surrounding Japan, Russia is considered to be further focusing on the defense of the area surrounding the Sea of Okhotsk, which is its waters of operation for strategic nuclear-powered submarines.

Regarding the strategic nuclear submarines, since 2021 a new type of Borey A-class SSBN has been deployed every year, bringing the current total of SSBN to five, and some of the existing nuclear submarines have been modernized and upgraded.

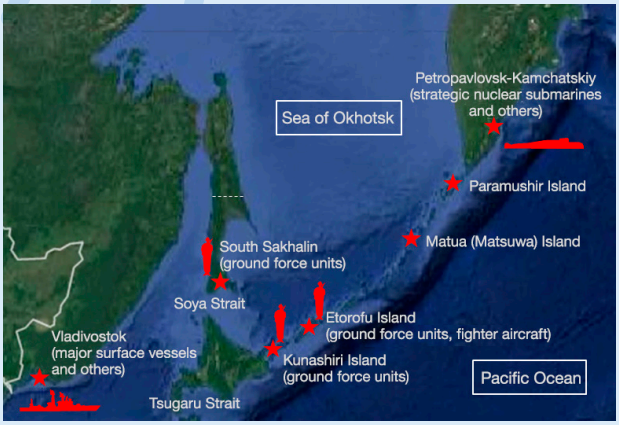
In recent years, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF) has newly deployed "Bastion" and "Bal" surface-to-ship missiles and S-400 surface-to-air missiles in the Kamchatka Peninsula, which is in the vicinity of the Sea of Okhotsk, Russia's waters of operation for nuclear-powered submarines; in the Chishima Islands and South Sakhalin, which are disputed territories; and in Japan's Northern Territories. These moves are thought to be part of Russia's so-called "bastion" strategy, in which it seeks to prevent other countries' militaries from approaching the area around the Sea of Okhotsk, the waters where it operates its strategic nuclear-powered submarines.

In addition, from the perspective of strengthening the "bastion" strategy, the AFRF is considered to be advancing the development and utilization of naval and air forces based in Primorsky Krai and the Kamchatka Peninsula. Specifically, Russia is in the process of upgrading the Pacific Fleet with ships armed with "Kalibr" cruise missiles, which are precision-guided munitions capable of carrying tactical nuclear and conventional warheads. In Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, it is newly deploying Steregushchiy III class frigates and Yasen M class submarines, and in Vladivostok, it is newly deploying Improved Kilo-class submarines, and it is expected to increase the number of these kinds of naval vessels going forward as well. Furthermore, Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles, which were deployed in January 2023, can also be equipped on Gorshkov-class missile frigates, and naval vessels equipped with Zircon may be deployed in the Far East region in the future.

These naval and air forces are considered to be utilized on a regular basis to act as a deterrent to the United States, Japan, and others. Increased activity was seen even before the start of the aggression against Ukraine. For example, in 2021 the Pacific Fleet reportedly conducted a large-scale exercise in the central Pacific west of the Hawaiian Islands. In September 2024, it was confirmed that an IL-38 patrol aircraft intruded into Japan's territorial airspace three times on the same day.

Furthermore, in recent years, Russia has further reinforced its military cooperation with China. Specifically, Russia has been conducting joint navigation of warships, joint flights of bombers, and various trainings with China. Regarding the joint navigation of warships, the sea areas in which these activities take place have been expanding. Regarding joint flights of bombers, expansion of the airspace in which the activities take place and an increase in the types of aircraft other than bombers participating in the activities have been seen. Moreover, regarding the various trainings, in September 2024 the militaries of China and Russia each participated in exercises organized by the other country and conducted in the same timeframe.

We must watch Russia's military developments in the Indo-Pacific region, including the area surrounding Japan, as well as Russia's increasing naval and air forces and trends in Russia's military cooperation with China, with strong concern.



Deployment of the Russian Military in the Area Surrounding Japan

REFERENCE: Security Environment Surrounding Japan (Russia)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/surround/index.html

Section 6 Oceania

1 Australia

1 General Situation

Australia is an island nation that forms a continent solely with its own territory and has the geopolitical characteristics of being located at a certain distance from major powers. Australia is promoting an open, inclusive, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region and is a special strategic partner with Japan; sharing fundamental values and strategic interests.

2 Defense Policies

(1) Defense Strategies

Given the normalization of diplomatic relations between the United States and China in 1970s, Australia had improved its relations with China and it continued to assume that there was no immediate or direct threat to Australia. Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities conducted in 1986, assessed itself as "one of the most secure countries in the world" and indicated that it would receive at least 10-years' warning before any major attack on Australia. This outlook defined Australia's defense policy even after the Cold War.

In July 2020, the former Morrison Conservative Coalition Government released the 2020 Defence Strategic Update to reconsider its defense strategy in response to Australia's strategic environment, which had deteriorated more rapidly than anticipated due to military modernization in the Indo-Pacific region and intensifying competition between major powers, including the United States and China. The former government stated that Australia's defense plan based on the aforementioned 10-year warning time was no longer appropriate.

Furthermore, the objectives for Australia are to deploy military power: (1) to shape Australia's strategic environment, (2) to deter actions against the country's interests, and (3) to deploy military capabilities including long-range strike capabilities and gray zone response capabilities.

The Albanese Labor Party Government established in May 2022 clearly stated that it would follow the basic direction of the previous government's defense policy and announced that it would conduct Defence Strategic Review (DSR) to implement this policy and optimize the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

In April 2023, following the completion of the DSR, conducted by the former Minister for Defence and the former Chief of the ADF, the Government released the National Defence: Defence Strategic Review, which includes the Review itself and the government's response to the challenges set out in the DSR to reform the ADF's posture and structure. The DSR recommended to transform the ADF from a traditional "balanced force" capable of responding to range of contingencies and having low-level conflicts in mind to a "focused force" designed to address the nation's most significant military risks. It also recommended that the A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) capability be enhanced by adopting a "Strategy of Denial"[1] and improving long-range strike capability, undersea warfare capability and shorter-range capability.

In response to the above recommendation, Australia developed the National Defence Strategy (NDS) and the Integrated Investment Program (IIP) in April 2024. Australia has announced that it will update these two documents biennially and will also gradually boost the defense spending to 2.4% of the GDP by 2033.

In the NDS, it is assessed that, with the recent emergence of new capabilities and methods of warfare, such as long-range missiles, cyber, space, and information warfare, Australia no longer enjoys the same degree of geographic advantages in its security environment as it once did. Based on this assessment, Australia has identified six key capability effects it will focus on delivering: (1) the ability to project force, (2) the ability to hold a potential adversary's force at risk, (3) the ability to protect the Australian Defence Force and supporting critical infrastructure, (4) the ability to sustain protracted combat operation during a conflict, (5) the ability to maintain persistent situational awareness in the primary area of military interest, and (6) the ability to achieve a decision advantage. In addition, under the IIP, Australia outlines the priority capability area for investment and concrete measures, such as optimization of existing projects, necessary to achieve the capabilities sets out in the NDS.

1 According to the "National Defence: Defence Strategic Review," a strategy of denial is "a defensive approach designed to stop an adversary from succeeding in its goal to coerce states through force, or the threatened use of force, to achieve dominance."

(2) AUKUS initiatives

In September 2021, former Prime Minister Scott Morrison, along with the leaders of the United States and the United Kingdom, announced the establishment of a new trilateral security cooperation framework, AUKUS, aimed at deepening diplomatic, security and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. Under the announced joint statement, Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. will promote the following concrete initiatives: (1) support for Australia to acquire at least eight nuclear-powered submarines[2] and (2) technical cooperation for advanced capabilities (cyber, artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology, and undersea capabilities).

In April 2022, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States announced in relation to aforementioned (2) that they would deepen their cooperation regarding hypersonics and counter-hypersonic capabilities, electronic warfare, defense innovation and information sharing.

In addition, Australia has announced its intention to advance cooperation with the United States on the acquisition of Tomahawk cruise missiles and standoff missiles as well as on the development of hypersonic missiles for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). In December 2024, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) announced the successful test firing of a Tomahawk missile from the destroyer HMAS Brisbane.

In March 2023, the leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States held a summit meeting in the U.S. and announced that they will deliver conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines for Australia through three-phase approach, while meeting the commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. In the first phase, the U.S. and the U.K. plan to establish the rotational presence of their nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSN) as early as 2027 at HMAS Stirling, which is on the west coast of Australia, and the RAN will also conduct practical training. The second phase is to acquire up to five U.S. Virginia-class submarines in the early 2030s. In the third phase, AUKUS partners will deliver a trilaterally-developed submarine (SSN-AUKUS) for both Australia and the U.K. They will incorporate the cutting-edge submarine technologies of the U.S. to the U.K.'s next-generation design. The two countries intend to build the submarines in their domestic shipyard.

In December 2023, Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. held an AUKUS defense ministers' meeting, and, during the meeting, it was announced that: RAN crew members would begin operations in Guam in 2024 to acquire nuclear-powered submarine maintenance skills in support of the Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-West), which will be established off the west coast of Australia. The three countries will conduct joint experiments and exercises with uncrewed maritime systems to improve their maritime domain awareness, and all three countries will promote the technological development of quantum sensing to improve undersea positioning capabilities and to accelerate technological development of submarine-based undersea vehicles as part of efforts to further develop the SSN-AUKUS.

AUKUS defense ministers' meeting (September 2024)
[PA Images/Jiji Press Photo]

In April 2024, an AUKUS defense ministers' joint statement was issued, confirming cooperation in the acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines under AUKUS's Pillar I and announcing its consideration of cooperating with Japan under Pillar II, the area of advanced capabilities.

The AUKUS leaders' joint statement and defense ministers' joint statement released in September 2024 announced that AUKUS will cooperate with Japan in the maritime autonomous systems as an initial area of cooperation and is also consulting with Canada, New Zealand, and the ROK to identify possibilities for collaboration on advanced capabilities under Pillar II.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (12) (AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States))

3 Relations with Other Countries

(1) Relations with the United States

Australia and the United States have an alliance based on the ANZUS Treaty[3] (security treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America), a mutual defense treaty that underpins Australia's security policy. In response to the spread of communism in East Asia and the descending British influence in the Asia-Pacific after World War II, Australia strengthened its alliance with the United States, mainly possessing U.S.-made high-performance land, sea and air equipment. Australia has dispatched its troops to U.S.-led wars and conflicts, such as the Viet Nam War, the Gulf War and military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

2 Australia had planned to procure 12 conventional submarines (attack-class submarines) from France, but this plan was suspended when it was decided to acquire nuclear-powered submarines within the framework of AUKUS.

3 A trilateral security treaty among Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, which went into effect in 1952. Since 1986, the United States has suspended its obligation to defend New Zealand due to its adoption of a non-nuclear policy. The treaty is thus effective only between Australia and the United States and between Australia and New Zealand.

Since 1985, the two countries have been regularly convening the foreign affairs and defense ministerial consultations or AUSMIN (Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations), to discuss major diplomatic and security issues. In the joint statement released at the AUSMIN meeting held in the United States in August 2024, the United States and Australia reaffirmed that the U.S.-Australia alliance is essential to promoting prosperous and peaceful region. The two countries committed to strengthen cooperation further, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions; to ensure an Indo-Pacific that is open, stable, peaceful, and prosperous; that promotes and protects human rights, and that is respectful of sovereignty and international law.

In November 2011, the United States and Australia announced the "Force Posture Initiative," a framework for the rotational deployment of the U.S. forces to Australia as part of the U.S. rebalance policy during the Obama administration. Since 2012, the U.S. Marine Corps has been deployed on a rotational basis to northern Australia, including Darwin. Additionally, the U.S. Air Force has been deploying B-52 strategic bombers and F-22 fighter jets to Australia as needed to conduct joint exercises and training with the RAAF. In July 2023, the rotational deployment of the U.S. Army landing craft took place for the first time during the U.S.-Australia joint exercise "Talisman Sabre." The United States and Australia have also indicated their intention to deploy the U.S. Navy patrol and reconnaissance aircraft on a rotational basis in Australia in the future.

Since 2005, the U.S. Forces and ADF have biennially conducted "Talisman Sabre" to improve interoperability and strengthen ties among participating countries. According to the Australian Department of Defence, it was the largest exercise ever in 2023 with the participation of 13 countries. Exercises were conducted in the land, maritime and air domains, including amphibious operations and land combat training.

(2) Relations with China

China is Australia's largest trading partner and two countries have conducted various exchanges in the defense area such as dialogues between the defense authorities, bilateral exercises, and mutual visiting of vessels, in addition to exchanges and cooperation in the political areas.

Meanwhile, Australia has been clearly showing its wariness towards China by explicitly conveying its position on China given the military use of South China Sea and its expansion to Pacific island countries.

The Australian government has been expressing strong concerns over China's reclamation and construction activities in the South China Sea and opposing any unilateral attempt to change the status quo through militarization or coercive actions on disputed features. It has also expressed its intent to continue exercising its rights to freedom of navigation and overflight.

In 2020, Australia, which was under the former Morrison government at the time, suggested the necessity of an independent investigation into the origin of the COVID-19 outbreak in China. China successively imposed trade blockages on Australian beef and other products, leading to a rapid deterioration of Australia-China relations.

Subsequently with the change of government in Australia, the two countries resumed diplomatic and security dialogue and the first Australia-China defense ministers' meeting in about three years was held in June 2022. In November 2023, Prime Minister Albanese visited China and met with General Secretary Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang. This visit of Australian Prime Minister to China was the first time in seven years. In addition, in June 2024, Premier Li Qiang visited Australia, which was the first time the Chinese premier had done in around seven years. Dialogues between Australia and China continued after that and, in December 2024, China lifted all the import restrictions.

Meanwhile, the Australian government has announced that the Chinese military interfered with an Australian ship and aircraft which were conducting monitoring and surveillance activities in response to "illicit ship-to-ship transfers." Similarly, in May 2024, a PLA fighter aircraft released flares at a RAN helicopter that was undertaking monitoring and surveillance activities over the Yellow Sea in response to "illicit ship-to-ship transfers" by North Korea. In addition, according to the Australian government, in February 2025, a PLA fighter aircraft released flares at a RAAF patrol aircraft while it was conducting a routine maritime surveillance patrol. In the same month, Chinese vessels navigated around Australia and conducted a live-fire exercise near the eastern coast of Australia. The Australian government has expressed serious concerns to the Chinese government, describing PLA's activities as unsafe and unprofessional interaction, while the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted that the PLA had consistently conducted professional activities in accordance with international law and practice.

(3) Relations with Southeast Asia and Pacific Island Countries

In its 2020 Defence Strategic Update, Australia announced a policy of focusing on the Indo-Pacific region, particularly the adjacent areas from the northeastern Indian Ocean, through maritime and mainland Southeast Asia to Papua New Guinea and the South West Pacific.

Australia has been deepening its relations with Indonesia in the security and defense fields following the signing of the Lombok Treaty, a security cooperation framework, in November 2006 and the elevation of their relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in August 2018. This bilateral relationship has been strengthened through initiatives such as the regular holding of Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meetings (2+2) and the signing of a treaty-level defense cooperation agreement in August 2024.

With Singapore and Malaysia, Australia carries out regular combined joint exercises in the South China Sea and

other areas under the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA; entered into force in 1971) framework, whereby the aforementioned two countries, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand would consult together in the event of any form of armed attack or the threat of such attack against Singapore or Malaysia, for the purpose of deciding what measures should be taken. Australia considers that Singapore is its most advanced defense partner, and that they share Australia's interest in a secure maritime trading environment. In November 2024, based on the Memorandum of Understanding on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership concluded between the two countries in October 2016, the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area was expanded and developed. The commemorative ceremony was held along with the "Exercise Trident 2024," biennial training between the Australia and Singapore.

Regarding Malaysia, Australia stations the ADF in Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth and contributes to maintaining regional security and stability through patrol activities in the South China Sea and the northern Indian Ocean.

Australia has been strengthening its defense relationship with the Philippines, primarily through support for building counter-terrorism capabilities and at the Australia-Philippines defense ministers' meeting in February 2023, it was concurred that this meeting would be held annually from the following year. According to the release by the Australian Department of Defence, Australia has been participating in the U.S.-Philippines joint exercise Balikatan since 2014 and in August 2023 it conducted its first Australian-Philippines amphibious exercise, Exercise Alon, which included scenario training for reclaiming enemy-captured island. Additionally, in November the same year, ADF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) conducted Maritime Cooperative Activity in the water and air around the Philippines for the first time.

Regarding Pacific Island countries, the Albanese Government criticized the former Morrison Government for failing to intervene in the signing of a framework agreement between Solomon Islands and China on security cooperation in April 2022 and announced a basic policy to strengthen engagement with Pacific Island countries. Based on this policy, the government announced the establishment of Australia-Pacific Defence School to provide training programs for members of defence and security forces from Pacific Island nations and the establishment of a framework to support the development of climate-resilient infrastructure for these countries for which climate change is a critical issue. Furthermore, Australia has been demonstrating its active engagement with Pacific Island countries, such as through the conclusion of the security agreement with Papua New Guinea and the Falepili Union Treaty with Tuvalu in 2023, as well as the signing of a treaty on economic and security with Nauru in 2024.

Furthermore, Australia plays a leading role in assisting these countries in fields such as maintaining public security, coping with natural disasters, and maritime patrols. In the maritime patrol field, Australia still regularly deploys ADF assets to the South Pacific to assist with patrol activities. It has also delivered Pacific Island countries with 21 Guardian-class Patrol Boats as of October 2024.

See 2 (New Zealand), Section 7 (Southeast Asia)

2 New Zealand

New Zealand is located in the Indo-Pacific and is an important strategic cooperative partner that shares fundamental values with Japan.

In July 2022, the Ministry of Defence announced that the government would conduct a Defence Policy Review to formulate the country's long-term defense strategy based on issues such as the growing impacts of climate change and intensifying strategic and geopolitical competition, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In August 2023, the New Zealand government announced the country's first-ever five-year security policy guidelines, New Zealand's National Security Strategy 2023-2028 (NSS), analyzing the security challenges it faces. The country also announced the Defence Policy and Strategy Statement (DPSS), which specifies the country's objectives and defense strategy under its defense policy as the first phase of the Defence Policy Review, as well as the Future Force Design Principles (FFDP), which guides the New Zealand Defence Force's (NZDF) investment plans for the next 15 years.

In the DPSS, it was noted that the heightened competition and tensions in the disputed areas of the Indo-Pacific region pose potentially significant impact for New Zealand's interests and that the impact of climate change will exacerbate existing fragilities within Pacific Island countries and across the region which in turn could increase economic and governance risks. On China, New Zealand observed that the country is using all its instruments of national power in ways that can pose challenges to existing international rules and norms. Also, it is assessed that China continues to invest heavily in growing and modernizing its military, and is increasingly able to project its military and paramilitary force beyond its immediate region, including across the wider Indo-Pacific.

In light of this assessment, New Zealand indicated that the Defence Forces would shift its focus to more actively shaping the country's security environment, rather than responding to incidents as they happen. Regarding climate change, New Zealand affirmed its commitment to continuing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) activities for Pacific Island countries in cooperation with like-minded countries and others.

In April of 2025, the New Zealand government released the Defence Capability Plan (DCP); outlining plan such as for procurement and equipment acquisition, designed with a 15-year horizon in mind. Under the plan, the defense spending will be lifted to more than 2% of its GDP in the next eight years.

In terms of foreign policy as well, the coalition government inaugurated in November 2023, announced the foreign policy reset. In addition, to achieve a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, the government has called for the enhancement of security and defense capabilities recognizing the close interdependence between economic prosperity and regional stability.

As for diplomatic relations, New Zealand has maintained close relationships with the United States and Australia and sees Australia as its only formal defense ally.

3 Pacific Island Countries

The Pacific island countries, a collective term for island nations and regions located in the Pacific Ocean, are important to Japan for their abundant marine resources as they posses vast exclusive economic zones and serve as transport route for energy resources.

Pacific Island countries face challenges regarding their small size and land distribution, distance from major international market, and the vulnerabilities to natural disasters and climate change.

In addition, the number of Pacific Island countries with their own military forces is limited to just three: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Tonga.

Given these circumstances, these countries consider climate change to be the single greatest threat to their security and sees the loss of national territory due to rising sea levels and the increasing scale of natural disasters as the matter of serious concern.

Traditionally, these countries have deep relationships with Australia, France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. However, China's increasingly active approach in recent years has made geopolitical competition between major powers become even more prominent. For example, in April 2022, China concluded an agreement on security cooperation with the Solomon Islands that reportedly includes provision that allow deployment of Chinese police and military to the island, also allowing the port call and replenishment of Chinese vessels. Meanwhile, in May 2023, the United States and Papua New Guinea signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement that enables the U.S. military to access to ports and airports in the Papua New Guinea. Furthermore, amid China's effort to expand its influence through large-scale infrastructure development and deployment of hospital ships, the United States is striving to maintain and enhance its military presence in the region. Australia has also been actively expanding its regional presence, notably through substantial increase in its budget for supporting Pacific Island countries. In 2023, it concluded the security agreement with Papua New Guinea and the Falepili Union Treaty ("falepili" means good neighborliness and mutual respect) with Tuvalu and signed the Nauru-Australia Treaty in 2024. The growing competition for engagement in the region, primarily among the United States, China, and Australia, has drawn great attention.

Section 7 Southeast Asia

1 General Situation

Southeast Asia is the center of the Indo-Pacific region, located at the intersection of the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean and occupies a strategic position for traffic, linking the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, such as the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea. Therefore, it is an important region for Japan, which relies on maritime transport for many of the supplies needed for economic activities and the lives of the Japanese people.

Meanwhile, this region still has destabilizing factors, including the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, ethnic minority issues, and separatist and independence movements. Moreover, there has also been problems with Islamic extremist groups and piracy incidents obstructing the safe passage of ships. In order to cope with these issues, the countries in Southeast Asia are working to build military forces for national defense and the maintenance of domestic public security, as well as for addressing new security issues that include counterterrorism and counter-piracy. Each country is also pursuing cooperation respectively with countries such as the United States, China, Russia, and Australia to this end. Recently, given the backdrop of economic growth, countries have been increasing their defense spendings, modernizing their military forces, mainly their naval and air forces, and strengthening their maritime law enforcement capabilities. These modernization effort includes introduction of fighters such as fourth generation fighters and submarines, enhancement of the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities such as naval vessels and unmanned vehicles.

2 Security and Defense Policies of Each Country

1 Brunei

In May 2021, Brunei released its first defense white paper in 10 years since 2011, outlining its national defense guidelines in anticipation of the expected security environment through 2035. In this defense white paper, Brunei mentioned issues related to maritime security for the first time, recognizing the growing importance of Brunei's maritime security, including the increasing necessity of security in territorial waters and the internal security as well as concerns regarding tensions in the South China Sea and the militarization of maritime features.

2 Cambodia

In 2022, Cambodia released its first defense white paper in 16 years since 2006, identifying the following key challenges in its national defense policy: modernizing equipment, developing military infrastructure, enhancing cyber security capabilities, etc.

Moreover, with regards to Cambodia's Ream Naval Base, located in southwestern Cambodia, the possibility of China's exclusive use of portion of the base has been pointed out. In June 2021, Cambodia's Minister of National Defence acknowledged that China had contributed to the development of the Ream Naval Base. However, he stated that access to the base facilities was not limited to China alone. Amid these circumstances, in December 2023, two Chinese naval vessels reportedly entered the Ream Naval Base to conduct "training" for the Royal Cambodian Navy and participated in the bilateral exercise "Golden Dragon 2024" in May 2024. It has been reported that after the exercise, these vessels were replaced by two other Chinese naval vessels. In addition, in February 2025, it was reported that another two Chinese naval vessels had called at the port, and it has been suggested that these vessels may be provided to Cambodia in the future. Meanwhile, in April of the same year, an inauguration ceremony was held to commemorate the completion of upgrade work at Ream Naval Base and the establishment of the "Cambodia-China Joint Logistics and Training Center." The Cambodian Prime Minister has stated that hosting foreign military bases is against its Constitution and that it welcomes all friendly countries. Naval vessels from Japan and Viet Nam have made port calls at the base following the upgrade. Further movements pertaining to the Ream Naval Base continues to draw attention.

3 Indonesia

As part of its military force reform, Indonesia aims to meet the minimum requirement for defense capabilities or "Minimum Essential Force (MEF)"—a level of capability necessary to carry out missions while avoiding excessive expenditures—as its goal. Accordingly, Indonesia has announced a defense budget increase as well as a policy to bolster its deployment of assets to the Natuna Islands, the South China Sea, and other locations. It has been reported that Indonesia has deployed an integrated unit, air squadron, etc. to the Natuna Islands and that the transfer of its naval combat command headquarters to Natsuna is almost completed and is now capable of operating fighter jets, surface vessels, and

submarines in the area.

In addition, Indonesia pursues non-aligned and omni-directional diplomacy, and it conducted exercise with Russia, Australia, and China after the inauguration of the Prabowo administration in October 2024.

With the United States, Indonesia is strengthening its cooperative relationship in such fields as military education and training and military equipment procurement. In addition, Indonesia has carried out bilateral training including army exercise Garuda Shield, naval exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)[1] and counter terrorism exercise Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism (SEACAT)[2] with the U.S. Since 2022, the Super Garuda Shield, a multilateral exercise expanding both the military services and participating countries of the original Garuda Shield, has been conducted.

Concerned about the "nine-dash line" claimed by China, which overlaps with part of Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the vicinity of the Natuna Islands, Indonesia has enhanced its patrol activities in the area. Meanwhile, in November 2024, President Prabowo made his first overseas visit to China, and following a summit meeting, a joint statement was released announcing that they had reached important common understanding on joint development in areas of overlapping claims. Although the specific details remains unclear, future developments are to draw attention.

4 Laos

Under the defense policy released in 2013, Laos adopted self-defense as the core of its approach and stated its intention to strengthen the integration of national defense with politics, diplomacy, and economics, while promoting peace, friendship, and collaboration at both the global and regional levels. Laos maintains good relationships with ASEAN member states as well as China, and, although there was a military confrontation between Laos and Cambodia over a un-demarcated border area in 2019, there have been no other military conflicts between Laos and neighboring countries ever since.

5 Malaysia

Malaysia's first defense white paper, which was published in December 2019, finds its potential to serve as a bridge between the vast Pacific and Indian Oceans as the country is divided in two territories—Peninsular Malaysia, and Sabah and Sarawak, on the island of Borneo—located between the two oceans. The white paper also recognizes that, while Malaysia's strategic location and natural resources are blessing ones, they also pose a security challenge to itself. Given these attributes, Malaysia has historically been affected by the political dynamics of major powers, and even today, Malaysia sees in its defense white paper that uncertain U.S.-China relationship is the most important strategic challenge for Malaysia.

In response to the continued presence of Chinese vessels near the South Luconia Shoals, over which Malaysia claims sovereignty, the country has expressed its determination to defend its sovereignty through around-the-clock monitoring by its navy and maritime law enforcement agencies.

Along with this expression of protest and the strengthening of its maritime defense capabilities, Malaysia also has striven to bolster its defensive position in eastern Malaysia. It has been reported that the construction of a new air base near Bintulu Airport, area close to James Shoal and the South Luconia Shoals, has commenced and in 2019, the Royal Malaysian Air Force carried out live-fire missile exercises in Sabah state, on Borneo in eastern Malaysia.

As well as conducting joint exercises with the United States such as "CARAT" and "SEACAT," Malaysia has been promoting military cooperation including capacity building in the maritime security field.

Malaysia also prioritizes defense relations based on the Five Power Defence Arrangements[3] (FPDA) and the headquarters of the Integrated Area Defence System (IADS), which coordinates the activities of the FPDA, is based at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Butterworth Air Base.

6 Myanmar

Myanmar's armed forces had control over the government following the collapse of the socialist regime in 1988. However, due to an economic stagnation caused by the economic sanctions imposed by the West, the transition to civilian rule was completed based on road map to democracy.

Myanmar's parliamentary election was conducted in November 2020, and the National League for Democracy (NLD) secured an overwhelming single majority in both houses with the number of seats significantly higher than the previous election. However, in February 2021, then State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and her party's senior members were detained by Myanmar's military, which was claiming election fraud, and the armed forces declared a state of emergency to carry out a coup d'état, and power was handed over to the commander-in-chief. The State Administration Council (SAC) chaired by Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Armed Forces Min Aung Hlaing was formed by the Armed Force. In addition, in August of the same year, the SAC announced the establishment of an "provisional government" with the

1 A general term that refers to a series of bilateral naval exercises that the United States conducts with Bangladesh and other Southeast Asian nations.
2 Refers to counter-terrorism combined exercises that the United States conducts with Southeast Asian nations.
3 Entered into effect in 1971. This agreement states that Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom will discuss what response should be adopted in the event of an aggression towards or a threat of an attack on Malaysia or Singapore. The five countries carry out various exercises based on these arrangements.

commander-in-chief of the Myanmar Armed Forces as the "provisional prime minister."

However, in April of the same year, although the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), which was established primarily by NLD members elected during the 2020 general election, declared the establishment of the National Unity Government (NUG), the Armed Forces designated them and other related entities as terrorist organizations.

At the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held in April 2021 with the attendance of Myanmar military's commander, a "Five-Point Consensus"[4] was announced, recognizing ASEAN's proactive and constructive role in promoting a peaceful resolution. A Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar is appointed by the ASEAN Chair and ASEAN is working to support a resolution, including the timely implementation of the "Five-Point Consensus."

In October 2024, the SAC continued preparations to hold an election, including the implementation of national census. In March 2025, it announced its intention to hold a general election in either December 2025 or January 2026. As such, future movements regarding Myanmar will continues to draw attention.

In late March of 2025, a major earthquake of magnitude 7.7 struck central Myanmar, and in response, various Asian countries, including Japan, as well as other countries and international organizations participated in the support operations. Although Myanmar's military has announced a temporary ceasefire given the relief and reconstruction efforts, persisted airstrikes in rural areas has been reported.

Myanmar has maintained a good relationship with China since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1950 and the country is regarded as a major supplier of equipment. Myanmar has also received Chinese aid for pipeline construction and the development of Kyaukpyu Port. In January 2020, General Secretary Xi became the first Chinese leader to visit Myanmar in 19 years and affirmed China's policy of promoting economic cooperation through the "Belt and Road" Initiative (BRI). In November 2024, Myanmar's Commander-in-Chief visited China for the first time since the coup d'état and held a meeting with the premier of China.

Myanmar maintains a cooperative relationship with Russia in the military field since the period of the past military regime, and Russia was a destination for students from Myanmar and a supplier of major defense equipment. In July 2022, the Commander-in-Chief visited Russia, and discussed promotion of defense cooperation with the Deputy Defense Minister. Furthermore, in September 2022, the Commander-in-Chief met President Putin for the first time, in Vladivostok, to exchange views on cooperation in all sectors, emphasizing their good bilateral relations. In March 2025, the Commander-in-Chief visited Moscow to meet with President Putin again, where they confirmed the intention to cooperate on area such as development and investment of a nuclear power plant.

Cooperative relations with North Korea, including weapons trades, were maintained under Myanmar's military regime in the past. Following the transition to democracy, although Myanmar denied its military ties to North Korea, the "Final Report of the Panel of Experts assisting the 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee" in March 2018 pointed out that the country received a ballistic missile system and other weapons from North Korea.

7 The Philippines

In the National Security Policy 2023-2028 (NSP) released in August 2023, it identifies that the South China Sea issue remain as a primary national interest of the Philippines, while strengthening cooperation with allies and partner countries and developing a comprehensive national security policy encompassing a wide range of areas including the economy, energy, and climate change.

The Philippines, with a historically close relationship with the United States, has maintained a cooperative relationship with the U.S. under Mutual Defense Treaty and Military Assistance Agreement, even after the withdrawal of the U.S. Forces in 1992.

In February 1998, the two countries signed a Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), which prescribed the legal status of U.S. military personnel when the U.S. Forces conducts combined military exercises or other related activities in the Philippines.

Furthermore, in April 2014, the two countries signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), which allows enhanced cooperation in disaster relief, rotational deployment of the U.S. Forces, construction and improvement of agreed locations in the Philippines by the U.S., and U.S. Forces' prepositioning of equipment and others. In March 2016, under EDCA, the two countries agreed on designating five bases of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as sites for the rotational deployment of the U.S. Forces.

In June 2022, President Marcos took office, and in February 2023, the U.S. and the Philippine defense ministers jointly announced the designation of four new bases for the EDCA. These four bases consist of three in northern Luzon Island near Taiwan and one on Palawan Island facing the South China Sea. Furthermore, in May 2023, the U.S.-Philippines Bilateral Defense Guidelines were adopted and released for the first time, which serve as a roadmap of modernization of alliance cooperation and deepening interoperability between

4 It was announced at the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held in April 2021 and consists of five items: (1) there shall be immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar; (2) constructive dialogue among all parties concerned shall commence; (3) a special envoy of the ASEAN Chair shall facilitate mediation of the dialogue process; (4) ASEAN shall provide humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre; and (5) the special envoy of the ASEAN Chair shall visit Myanmar to meet with all parties concerned.

the U.S. and the Philippines.

In September 2023, the two countries conducted a joint navigation in the South China Sea and in November, in the water and air surrounding the Philippines, including the South China Sea, they carried out Maritime Cooperative Activities. Additionally, the U.S. Army's ground-launched, mid-range missile system, Typhon, has been deployed in the Philippines since April 2024. During the U.S.-Philippines defense ministers' meeting in March 2025, it was announced that the U.S. Marine Corps' NMESIS, or Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction system, would be deployed in the Philippines for the multilateral joint exercise "Balikatan," hosted by the U.S. and the Philippines.

The Philippines and China have competing claims over the sovereignty in the Spratly Islands and Scarborough Shoal of the South China Sea. In January 2013, to seek a resolution under international law, the Philippines started arbitral tribunal proceedings pursuant to UNCLOS against China. In July 2016, the final award was rendered, accepting nearly all of the Philippines' submissions. The government of the Philippines released a statement that it welcomed the award by the arbitral tribunal and strongly affirmed its respect for the decision, while China stated that it would not comply with this decision.

In January 2023, President Marcos met with General Secretary Xi Jinping. They agreed to appropriately manage the differences between the two countries regarding the South China Sea issue through peaceful means, and they also agreed to establish a direct communication mechanism between the diplomatic authorities of the two countries. However, since then, there have been frequent reports of obstructive activities by China Coast Guard vessels and other vessels against Philippine vessels in areas such as the Spratly Islands.

In particular, the Philippine government announced that in June 2024, the Philippine supply ship and the Philippine Coast Guard vessel were obstructed by Chinese Coast Guard vessel and others through dangerous maneuvers such as collisions and firing of water cannons near the Second Thomas Shoal, in the Spratly Islands, where the Philippine warship Sierra Madre was stranded. According to the Philippine government, the Philippines' supply ship, escorted by the Philippine Coast Guard, was attempting to replenish the supplies of the stranded warship and such action by Chinese Coast Guard resulted in injuries to the Philippine personnel onboard and damage to the Philippine vessel. In response, President Marcos condemned the action by the China Coast Guard and the maritime militia against the vessels and personnel, pointing out that it was provocative and a clear violation of international law. The United States has reiterated that the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty extends to both countries' armed forces, public vessels, and aircraft of either country- including those of its coast guard- anywhere in the Pacific to include the South China Sea.

In July 2024, the Philippine and Chinese governments announced that they had reached a "provisional agreement" concerning rotation and resupply missions to Sierra Madre. Nevertheless, the tension between the two countries in the South China Sea remains persistent.

See Chapter 4, Section 5-1 (Trends Related to the "Principle of the Freedom of the High Seas" etc).

Chinese Coast Guard vessel colliding with Philippine Coast Guard ship near Sabina Shoal (August 2024) [AFP-Jiji]

8 Singapore

Singapore highly prioritizes its national defense, with defense spending accounting for about 10% of its national budget. In October 2022, the Digital and Intelligence Service was established as the fourth service of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), integrating existing command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, and cyber capabilities.

In addition, Singapore emphasizes the importance of cooperative relationships with ASEAN and the FPDA, and has concluded defense cooperation agreements with countries within and outside the region.

With the aim of contributing to peace and stability in the region, Singapore supports the United States' presence in the Asia-Pacific. Since signing the 1990 Memorandum of Understanding (November 1990), Singapore has been allowing the United States to use military facilities in the country. In addition to port calls to Changi Naval Base by the U.S. aircraft carriers, the rotational deployment of littoral combat ships (LCSs) began in 2013. Since 2015, the U.S. P-8 patrol aircraft are regularly deployed. In addition, Singapore conducts combined exercises with the United States, such as CARAT and SEACAT.

Singapore has strong economic ties with China. Both countries also conduct joint naval exercises. In October 2019, the two countries signed the enhanced Agreement on Defence Exchanges and Security Cooperation (ADESC), which formalized existing defense cooperation, including regularization of dialogue and exercises. Meanwhile, Singapore's position differs from China's in some areas such as South China Sea, as Singapore advocates for a resolution based on the Philippines-China arbitral tribunal ruling and partly due to its military cooperation with Taiwan.

In March 2020, Singapore and Australia signed the Treaty on Military Training and Training Area Development in

Australia. As part of this treaty, the expansion and updates of the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area was completed in November 2024. A commemorative ceremony was held following the completion, alongside with the "Exercise Trident 2024," the bilateral training exercise hold every two years.

9 Thailand

Thailand's defense policy includes: strengthening defense cooperation through ASEAN, international organizations, and other entities; defense that makes comprehensive use of political, economic, and other national strengths; and effective defense aimed at increasing the readiness of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTAF) and developing the defense industry.

In the defense white paper released in 2023, Thailand identified cyber and space operations as capabilities that needed to be enhanced for the future national defense. In October 2024, it reportedly established a dedicated cyber-command unit, reorganized existing cyber units within the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and created an institution for training cyber personnel. In addition, in terms of the space domain, Thailand plans to change the name of the Royal Thai Air Force to the "Royal Thai Air and Space Force."

Under its flexible omni-directional diplomatic policy, Thailand pursues cooperation with other Southeast Asian countries and coordination with major countries.

In particular, Thailand has an alliance with the United States based on the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty (Manila Treaty) (effective from February 1955), and the U.S. military has access to the Thai military's U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Airfield. Thailand has been conducting the U.S.-Thailand combined exercise "Cobra Gold" since 1982, which is currently one of the largest multilateral exercises in Southeast Asia. In addition, the Marine Corps of the two countries have continued their bilateral naval training CARAT and counter-piracy and trafficking exercise SEACAT.

Thailand and China have conducted joint training such as Blue Strike between their navies and Falcon Strike between their air forces.

10 Viet Nam

Based on its viewpoint that the sea is closely associated with the national construction and defense, Viet Nam has established the objective of becoming a strong marine country, particularly prioritizing the modernization of its military forces and law enforcement forces at sea as well as ensuring the capability for maritime domain awareness, maritime independence, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and national interests at sea.

Viet Nam deploys its omni-directional diplomatic policy and intends to actively participate in international and regional cooperation in order to build friendly relations with every nation. In March 2016, Viet Nam opened an international port in the Cam Ranh Bay, a strategic location, and Navy vessels from many countries including Japan have called at the international Cam Ranh Bay port.

Viet Nam and the United States have strengthened their military relations in recent years. This has taken such forms as joint training with the U.S. Navy and port calls by U.S. Navy vessels in Viet Nam. In 2023, during then U.S. President Biden's first visit to Viet Nam as president, he met with then President Thưởng and agreed to upgrade the bilateral relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Viet Nam and Russia have been strengthening cooperation in the area of national defense, and, in April 2018, the two countries signed a military and technical cooperation road map. In addition, in July 2019, a Vietnamese naval vessel visited the port of Vladivostok for the first time. In December of the same year, a submarine rescue vessel from Russia's Pacific Fleet visited the port of Cam Ranh and participated in the first bilateral joint submarine rescue exercise.

See Chapter 3, Section 5-5-5 (1) (Relations with Asian Countries)

Viet Nam has been actively engaging in high-level government exchanges with China under their comprehensive strategic cooperation partnership. In December 2023, General Secretary Xi Jinping visited Viet Nam and met with then General Secretary of the Communist Party Nguyen. The joint statement noted that joint patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin and mutual visits by warships would continue, and that cooperation and exchange mechanism between their navies and coast guards would be deepened.

However, there are conflicting claims over territorial issues in the South China Sea. The defense white paper published in November 2019 demonstrates an acknowledgement that Viet Nam and China need to resolve with special precaution, avoiding negative impacts on general peace, friendship, and cooperation for development between the two countries. As such, the white paper recognizes that the two countries should continue negotiations and consultations to find peaceful solutions based on international law. On the other hand, it is also pointed out that, while it falling short of the China's past reclamation, Viet Nam has accelerated and expanded landfill work at several of its outposts in Spratly Islands, where Viet Nam is competing for territorial rights against China.[5]

See Chapter 4, Section 5-1 (Trends Related to the "Principle of the Freedom of the High Seas" etc.)

5 According to "Viet Nam's Major Spratly Expansion," Center for Strategic and International Studies (December 2022).

3 Intra-and Extra-Regional Cooperation

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) serves as a framework for regional multilateral security and have made effort to improve the security environment in the region and promote mutual trust by holding venues for dialogue on security such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM).

In September 2023, ASEAN held its first maritime exercise on its own in the waters surrounding Indonesia, including the North Natuna Sea.

In addition, ASEAN attaches importance to expanding its relations with countries outside of the region. It holds the ADMM-Plus, a platform that adds eight non-ASEAN countries including Japan to ADMM. In addition, ASEAN conducts maritime exercises with the United States, China, Russia, India, and other major powers.

In November 2024, it was announced that the second ASEAN-U.S. Maritime Exercise since 2019 will be conducted in 2025.

In addition, ASEAN and China have continued talks to discuss the formulation of the Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (COC) . In July 2019, China announced at the ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting that they had completed the first reading of COC's Single Draft Negotiating Text. Subsequently, a second reading was initiated. At the August 2021 ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, it was noted that a provisional agreement on the Preamble had been reached. In the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-China Special Summit in November of that year, there was mention of expectations for the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC. At the ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting in July 2023, the "Guidelines for Accelerating the Early Conclusion of an Effective and Substantive COC" was adopted. The third reading began in October 2023 and its completion was announced in the Press Statement by the Chair of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in January 2025.

Section 8 South Asia

1 India

1 General Situation

India is the world's largest democratic country. It has achieved rapid economic growth in recent years and has significant influence in the South Asian region. Also, it is located in the middle of the Indian Ocean, which is of strategic and geopolitical importance. India has also increased its presence as a geopolitical player, while the international community in return has high expectations for the country's role.

India has traditionally aimed at nonaligned and omnidirectional diplomacy while emphasizing the preserving of strategic autonomy. The Modi administration has maintained a neighborhood first policy, which emphasizes strengthening relations with South Asian countries, while expanding the focus of strengthening India's external relations to the Indo-Pacific region in accordance with the "Act East" policy. In addition, the administration has carried out proactive foreign policy, prioritizing India's relations with the United States, Russia, and Europe as well as the Middle East and Africa.

On the other hand, India has non-demarcated border issues with China and Pakistan. There are also concerns about the activities of ultra-leftists and secession and independence movements, as well as activities of Islamic extremists. Accordingly, defending its land borders and tackling the threat of domestic terrorism are major concerns for India. In addition, in recent years, India has considered efforts for maritime security as a focus point important, strengthened its presence in the Indian Ocean, and clearly recognized China's increased activity in the Indian Ocean.

2 Military Affairs

India is vigorously strengthening and reorganizing its armed forces. It is considering the establishment of unified commands with the aim of strengthening operational and organizational cooperation among military services. Under the "Make in India" and "Self-Reliant India" initiatives, the Modi government is actively working towards the domestic production of military equipment and taking measures to promote exports. In addition, India has announced the intention to create an "Adaptive Defense"[1] to counter modern challenges that include cyber attacks, hybrid warfare, and information warfare.

The Army is the world's largest scale ground force and boasts about 1,240,000 personnel. It is believed that the army strengthens firepower by deploying self-propelled artillery guns and howitzers, and promotes deployment of UAVs for attack and reconnaissance near the India-China border. In addition, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is developing the "Zorawar," a new domestically-produced light tank that is intended for highland use, and, in December 2024, the tank was successfully test fired in the highlands at an altitude of over 4,200 m.

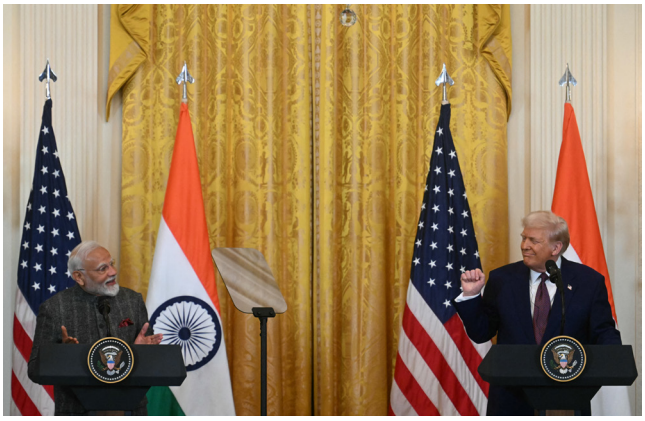
The Navy has placed "Sea Control[2]" as the key concept to operate the fleet, and aircraft carriers as the key vessels for the Sea Control concept. In addition, the Navy mentioned its plan to build three aircraft carrier battle groups. The country's first domestically built aircraft carrier "Vikrant" was commissioned in September 2022. This brings the total number of Indian Navy's aircraft carriers to two, including "Vikramaditya," which was modified after purchasing it from Russia. India is also emphasizing submarine operations, and, in August 2024, the country commissioned the "Arighaat," its second domestically produced Arihant-class nuclear-powered submarine. In addition, in March of the same year, the Navy established a new base on Minicoy Island, which is on the southern tip of the Lakshadweep islands on the west coast of India, in an effort to strengthen surveillance and supply capabilities in the Indian Ocean region.

The Air Force is operating French-made Rafale and Mirage 2000 fighters, as well as Russian-made Su-30MKI fighters and domestically produced Tejas light fighters. In addition, from August to September 2024, the Air Force conducted its first multilateral air force exercise "Tarang Shakti 2024," and is striving to enhance its relationships among air forces services of partner countries. As for its air defense system, in addition to deploying the Russian-made "S-400" surface-to-air missile system, India is also developing its own ballistic missile defense system and announced the successful completion of its phase-2 flight test in July of the same year. India has also introduced the Israeli-made Heron MKII unmanned aircraft for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) purposes.

In addition, India is a nuclear-weapon state with approximately 172 nuclear warheads as of January 2024,

1 During a speech delivered at a think tank meeting in November 2024, Indian Defence Minister Singh stated that "Adaptive Defence" is a strategic approach where a nation's military and defense mechanisms continuously evolve to effectively counter emerging threats. He explained that this approach includes not only responding to past events, but also anticipating potential future threats and proactively preparing for them.

2 According to the Indian Navy's "Maritime Security Strategy," "Sea Control" means that a defined maritime space (including surface, underwater, and air) can be used for specific period of time and for one's own purposes and its use by adversary can be denied.



After the U.S.-India summit meeting, President Trump and Prime Minister Modi holding a joint press conference (February 2025) [AFP/Jiji]

and while it maintains the nuclear doctrine published in 2003[3] and policies that include the unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests announced immediately after the nuclear test in 1998, it has been promoting the development, performance improvement, diversification, and deployment of various ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. Specific results of this include the country's first test launch of its intermediate-range ballistic missile "Agni-V" with MIRV (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle) technology in March 2024 as well as the announcement of the country's first-ever successful flight test of a long-range hypersonic missile in November of the same year.

3 Relations with Other Countries

(1) Relations with the United States

In line with their Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, India and the United States have steadily been deepening their defense and security cooperation in recent years. According to the Indian government, the two countries also participate in joint exercises across military services, including the long-standing bilateral joint army exercise "Yudh Abhyas," which focuses on counter-terrorism, the multilateral joint naval exercise "Malabar," and the multilateral joint air force exercises "Red Flag" and "Pitch Black." In the equipment field, India is promoting cooperative relationships in the defense industry. For example, in October 2024, India concluded a contract with the United States to acquire 31 MQ-9B UAVs from them. In February 2025, Prime Minister Modi visited the United States and met President Trump. According to the joint statement issued after the meeting, the two countries plan to expand their cooperation in the defense field, including the United States supplying equipment to India as well as the expansion of joint production by the two countries. In addition, at the joint press conference after the meeting, President Trump mentioned plans to supply India with F-35 fighter jets.

(2) Relations with China

Although economic ties between China and India are strengthening, the two countries have not demarcated their borders in areas such as Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh.

In May 2020, a clash between Chinese and Indian forces occurred near the China-India border in Ladakh, which is part of the Kashmir region of India, and tensions between the two countries escalated with the first deadly clash in 45 years on June of the same year. Since then, China and India have regularly held commander-level meetings based on the management agreement for the Line of Actual Control (LAC), a temporary border between the two countries. In October 2024, India announced that the two countries agreed patrolling agreements along the LAC that borders their countries. During the same month, the countries also held the first China-India Summit in five years, where the LAC agreement was welcomed. They later held a China-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting and China-India Defense Ministers' Meeting in November as well as a Special Representatives' Meeting in December, the first one in five years, and have been working to gradually ease the tensions between them.

(3) Relations with Russia

India and Russia have had an old-line relationship, which goes back to the days of the Soviet Union, and they cooperate in a wide range of fields based on their "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership." The two countries maintain a cooperative relationship in terms of their militaries as well, with India using Russian-made Su-30MKI fighter jets and other equipment. In addition, India and Russia founded the joint venture "BrahMos Aerospace" and later jointly developed and started producing the supersonic cruise missile "BrahMos."

President Putin and Prime Minister Modi holding the India-Russia summit meeting (July 2024) [AFP/Jiji]

3 India raises its continued commitment to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, along with credible minimum deterrence, "no first use policy," and its policy of no use against non-nuclear weapon countries in the nuclear doctrine published in 2003.

Meanwhile, Russia's aggression against Ukraine is making it difficult for India to repair parts for Russian-made fighter jets and transport aircraft. As a result, India is working to produce such parts domestically.

In July 2024, the India-Russia summit meeting was held in Moscow for the first time in three years, and, according to the joint statement issued after the meeting, the two countries intend to strengthen their cooperation. Meanwhile, in August 2024, Prime Minister Modi visited Ukraine for the first time as the prime minister of India, where a summit meeting was held with President Zelenskyy. According to the joint statement issued after the meeting, India reiterated its principled position and focus on a peaceful resolution to the conflict through dialogues and diplomacy.

(4) Relations with South Asian Countries and Southeast Asia

India exports and provides military equipment as a part of cooperation that India promotes with other South Asian countries in the security field under its "Neighborhood First Policy." On the other hand, India keeps guard on heightening Chinese influence on South Asia countries, and showed apprehension to Chinese tracking ship Yuan Wang 5's port call to the Port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka from July to August 2022.

Based on its Act East policy, India continues to engage with Southeast Asian nations and other countries in the Indo-Pacific region on a bilateral, regional, and multilateral basis. On the military front, for example, India exports the supersonic cruise missile "BrahMos," which were jointly developed with Russia, to the Philippines. In addition, India regularly engages in joint military exercises with various countries and makes naval vessel port calls.

2 Pakistan

1 General Situation

Wedged between the powerful South Asian nation of India and politically unstable Afghanistan, and sharing borders with China and Iran, Pakistan is placed in a geopolitically significant and complex position. Particularly in the border area with Afghanistan, extremist organizations are engaging in cross-border terrorist activities, and Pakistan's actions in the fight against terrorism could significantly impact the stability of Afghanistan[4]. In 2024, Pakistan launched a cross-border attack against facilities in eastern Afghanistan, claiming that they were terrorist facilities, and there is ongoing friction between the two countries surrounding the handling of extremist organizations.

In January 2024, Pakistan and Iran exchanged cross-border attacks targeting militant strongholds near their border, resulting in casualties, but their relationship has since been restored.

2 Military Affairs

Pakistan takes the position that maintaining nuclear deterrence against attacks with nuclear and conventional weapons by India is essential to ensure national security and self-defense. Pakistan is believed to retain around 170 nuclear warheads as of January 2024. The development of ballistic missiles and cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads is still continuing. Tactical nuclear missile "Nasr" and IRBM "Shaheen-II" are already operative. In addition, the flight test of ground-to-ground missile "Shaheen-III" with the range of 2,750 km was successfully conducted in April 2022. Pakistan has been enhancing its military capabilities, as evidenced by the October 2023 launch test of the ballistic missile "Ababeel," which has been converted into an MIRV.

In recent years, Pakistan has also been promoting the modernization of equipment, and while it makes attempts at domestic production through joint development of equipment and technology transfer, it promotes its relationship with China in military fields, and rising of dependence to China is observed. The Pakistan Army operates "Al-Khalid" tanks, which were jointly developed with China, as its main battle tanks. Pakistan is enhancing the Comprehensive Layered Integrated Air Defense (CLIAD) system by purchasing air defense systems such as "LY-80" and "HQ-9/P" from China.

The Pakistan Navy is replacing or augmenting its aging warships, introducing submarines, and cooperating with China and Türkiye while also conducting bilateral exercises with both countries.

The Pakistan Air Force operates JF-17 fighter jets, which were jointly developed with China and produced domestically, Chinese-made J-10CE fighter jets, and other aircraft. In October 2024, the Pakistan Air Force conducted its multilateral air force exercise "Indus Shield" alongside a bilateral exercise with China.

In addition, Pakistan is promoting the introduction of UAVs, including UAVs acquired from China and Türkiye as well as domestically developed and produced vehicles.

4 Pakistan Security Report 2024, published by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), pointed out that, in 2024, Pakistan experienced 521 terrorist attacks, a 70% increase compared to the previous year. The report further noted that approximately 95% of terrorist attacks in 2024 were concentrated in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces along the Afghan border.

3 Relations with Other Countries

(1) Relations with the United States

The United States designated Pakistan as a "Major Non-NATO ally" in 2004 and has strengthened the relationship because Pakistan has cooperated with the United States in the field of counterterrorism since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. However, the two countries continued a tense relationship, with both countries blaming each other over their responses to terrorism.

The relationship between Pakistan and the United States improved under the Sharif administration established in April 2022. Later, in September of the same year, the U.S. Department of State decided to approve a contract for a maximum of US$450 million related to F-16 fighter-jet maintenance and support for Pakistan to facilitate counter-terrorism operations. Furthermore, General Bajwa, then Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan, visited the United States in October 2022 for the first time in three years and met with then U.S. Secretary of Defense Austin.

At the same time, in December 2024, the United States, apparently to respond to the ongoing threat posed by the proliferation of long-range missiles, announced its intention to impose sanctions on four Pakistan-based companies and organizations involved in ballistic missile plans. As a result, it will be necessary to monitor the relationship between these countries.

(2) Relations with China

Pakistan and China maintain a close relationship under their "all-weather strategic partnership," and mutual visits by their summit leaders take place frequently. Their cooperation in the military sector, including bilateral training, exporting weapons, and transferring military technology, is also deepening. As the importance of sea lanes increases for China, it is believed that the importance of Pakistan is rising for China accordingly, partly because of the geopolitical features of Pakistan which faces the Indian Ocean.

At the same time, there have been more and more terrorist attacks aimed at Chinese people in Pakistan in recent years, which is a serious issue. In response, Pakistan and China conducted their bilateral counter-terrorism exercise "Warrior-VIII" in Pakistan from November to December 2024—the first such exercise in five years since 2019.

3 Disputes over the Sovereignty of Kashmir

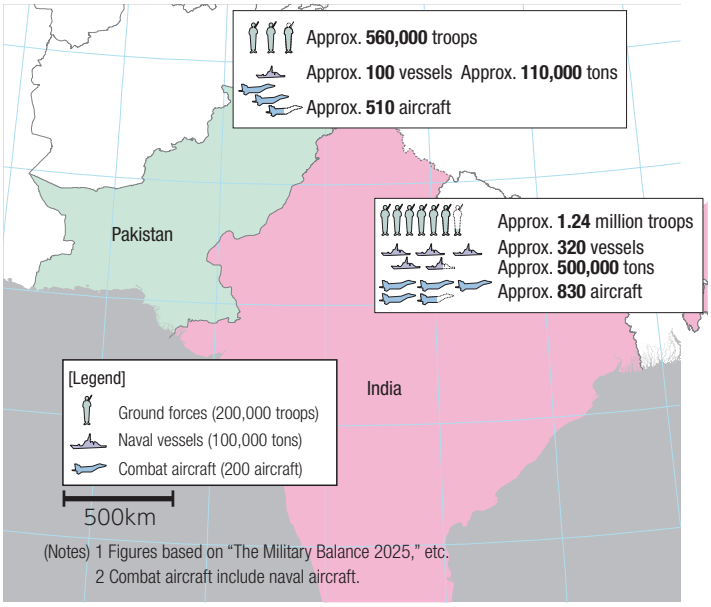
India and Pakistan have disputes over the sovereignty of Kashmir,[5]5 and have had three armed conflicts of significant scope. In the Kashmir region, collisions often occurred along the Line of Control, and the two countries repeatedly restarted and suspended dialogue. Finally, the countries agreed to comply with the ceasefire in February 2021. The Indian Ministry of Defense announced in December 2023 that this agreement significantly improved the situation.

In April 2025, a terrorist attack occurred near Pahalgam in the Indian-controlled area of Kashmir, where an armed group opened fire on tourists and others, resulting in at least 26 deaths. In May of the same year, the Indian military conducted cross-border attacks on nine terrorist bases located in Pakistani territory and the Pakistan-controlled area of Kashmir, prompting retaliatory action by the Pakistani military. That same month, it was announced that both countries had agreed to halt military action.

See Fig. I-3-8-1 (Military Forces of India and Pakistan (approximate numbers))

5 India asserts the accession of Kashmir to India, based on the Instrument of Accession document by which the ruler of Kashmir acceded to India at the time of Pakistan's independence, and contends that this matter should be resolved through bilateral negotiations on the basis of the 1972 Simla Agreement (an agreement on the peaceful resolution of disputes and the withdrawal of their military forces that was reached following a summit meeting held in Simla in northern India). On the other hand, Pakistan declares that this should be decided through a referendum, in line with a 1948 UN resolution. The two countries have taken a significantly different fundamental stance towards the resolution of the dispute.

Fig. I-3-8-1 Military Forces of India and Pakistan (approximate numbers)



(Notes) 1 Figures based on "The Military Balance 2025," etc.
2 Combat aircraft include naval aircraft.

Section 9 Europe and Canada

1 General Situation

With the end of the Cold War, many European countries and Canada now recognize the need to address diverse security challenges. At the same time, these countries had recognized that the threat of large-scale invasion by other countries had disappeared. Nevertheless, since the heightening of tensions in Ukraine in February 2014 and particularly with the aggression against Ukraine that began in February 2022, there is a growing need to revisit existing strategies and plan new concepts in order to deal with Russia's unilateral changes to the status quo by force as well as hybrid warfare. With regard to international terrorism, the continuity of threats has been recognized and there is a continuous need to take counterterrorism measures. In addition, border security problems remain a challenge, including those regarding refugees and migrants that have rapidly increased due to turmoil in the Middle East.

To respond to such challenges and situations, Europe and Canada have sought to further strengthen and expand multilateral frameworks, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). At the same time, it is working to contribute to the security and stability of the international community by proactively participating in activities outside the region. Moreover, steps are taken at the national level by reviewing security and defense strategies, reforming national defense systems, and strengthening bilateral and multilateral defense and security cooperation.

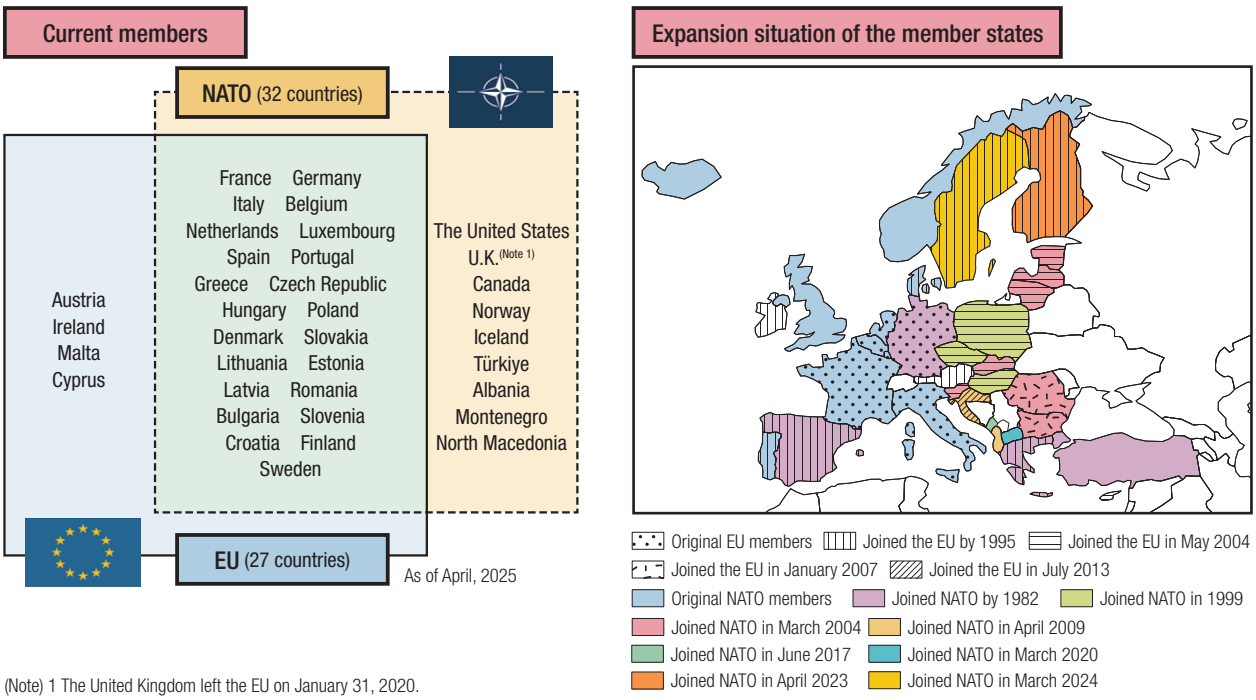
See Fig. I-3-9-1 (Expansion Situation of NATO/EU Member States), Chapter 2, 3 (Effects of Russian Aggression against Ukraine on International Affairs and How Various Countries Respond to It)

2 Enhancement of Multilateral Security Frameworks

1 NATO

Founded for the core task of collective defense among member states, NATO celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2024. It has expanded the scope of its activities to conflict prevention and crisis management since the end of the Cold War. NATO's three core tasks are deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security.

Fig. I-3-9-1 Expansion Situation of NATO/EU Member States



(Note) 1 The United Kingdom left the EU on January 31, 2020.

Amid an increasing sense of crisis among member states in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, a new NATO Strategic Concept was adopted at the NATO Summit in June 2022 for the first time in twelve years since 2010. This new Strategic Concept states that the Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace and that the possibility of an attack against member states' sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be discounted.

In addition, NATO placed Russia as the most significant and direct threat to member states' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

This new Strategic Concept mentioned China for the first time, stating that China's ambition and coercive policies are the challenge against NATO's interests, security and values.

The Washington Summit Declaration, issued at the NATO Summit in July 2024, referenced emerging cooperation between Russia and North Korea as well as between Russia and China. Regarding military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, the declaration stated that it is having a serious impact on Euro-Atlantic security and expressed grave concern. As for China, the declaration noted that the country is a decisive supporter of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In addition, recognizing that the situation in the Indo-Pacific region could directly impact Euro-Atlantic security, NATO decided to advance cooperation with its partners in the Indo-Pacific region (Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, and Japan) in flagship projects including support for Ukraine, cyber defense, measures against disinformation, and technology.

Through these actions, NATO has emphasized one of its core missions of defending member states while strengthening deterrence and defense capabilities based on an understanding of how the situation has drastically changed.

Since 2014, NATO has overhauled its plans and structures to ensure member states can respond to any threat from any direction, with an agreement to establish a forward presence, particularly in the east. The first multinational battalion-sized battlegroups were deployed in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland in 2017, with further battlegroups having been created in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia since 2022. At the NATO Summit in June of the same year, it was agreed that these battlegroups would be expanded from battalion to brigade size as needed.[1] A new force model was also agreed, on offering greater combat readiness on a far larger scale with far greater readiness than traditional readiness. In June 2024, NATO announced that it had achieved a combat-ready force of 500,000 troops, and, in July of the same year, NATO launched its Allied Reaction Force (ARF) as a replacement for the NATO Response Force (NRF).[2]

In addition, at the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting held in June of the same year, the establishment of a NATO command in Finland[3] was approved in addition to the deployment of a multinational battlegroup. Sweden also stated that it will be a framework nation for this battlegroup.

Regarding defense spending among NATO member states, in 2014, NATO member states agreed to set a target of spending 2% of GDP on defense, and, at the July 2023 NATO Summit, NATO member states agreed to invest a minimum of 2% of their respective GDPs in defense spending. As a result, in 2024, 22 countries achieved defense spending equivalent to 2% of their GDP. In addition, NATO Secretary General Rutte, since his taking office in October 2024, has been urging the member states to further increase defense spending.

2 EU

The EU is strengthening its security initiatives under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy[4] (CSDP).

In December 2017, the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) was launched. The EU made it clear that it promotes developing new capabilities in aviation and maritime domains, training and support for armed forces and sharing expertise of specific domains such as the cyberspace domain through this framework. Therefore, the strengthening of Europe's defense capabilities is expected[5].Moreover, in May 2024, the EU concluded a new security and defense partnership with Norway, a non-member state.

Furthermore, the EU is enhancing its engagement to the Indo-Pacific region, disclosing its first Indo-Pacific strategy in April 2021 followed by a joint communication detailing it in September 2021. This joint communication states that the growing tensions resulting from China's significant military buildup and show of force in the East China Sea, South China Sea, and Taiwan Strait have a direct effect on security and prosperity in Europe. To achieve the aim of a rules-based international order, partnership with countries sharing the same values, including Japan, is necessary, along with the reinforcement of economic relations with Taiwan, including through trading and investments.

In March 2022, the European Council adopted the Strategic Compass laying out a common strategic vision for

1 In 2024, the Latvia battlegroup was upgraded to a brigade.
2 The ARF provides NATO with a strategic, high-readiness, multi-domain and multinational capabilities, and its forces, firepower, and other assets can be deployed within 10 days.
3 NATO established a new Land Component Command in Finland, and it is under the command of Joint Force Command Norfolk. This command will enable planning, command, and control of operations in NATO's northern region.
4 The EU, although it has a property of non-binding multilateral cooperation, introduced the CFSP, which covers all areas of foreign and security policy based on the Treaty of Maastricht, which took effect in 1993. In June 1999, the European Council decided to implement the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) to offer peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance activities in conflict areas, as a part of the CFSP framework. The Treaty of Lisbon, made effective in 2009, renamed the ESDP to CSDP and clearly positioned it as an integral part of the CFSP.
5 The EU announced that the number of ongoing joint projects was 75 as of May 2025.

security and defense policies in the next five to ten years. The document stated that the EU will establish a fully operational EU Rapid Deployment Capacity of up to 5,000 troops by 2025 for use in rescue and evacuation operations.

In addition, the new European Commission, the executive body of the EU, took office in December 2024. Under the new framework, the Commission has appointed a Commissioner for Defence for the first time, who will be in charge of strengthening the EU's defense industry.

In March 2025, the European Commission published its White Paper for European Defence - Readiness 2030, which calls for each EU country to implement policies to increase its defense budget through the "ReArm Europe Plan," which includes the relaxation of fiscal discipline.

3 Relations with China

China's recent rise has attracted attention from NATO as well. The new strategic concept announced at a NATO summit meeting in June 2022 states that "China's ambition and coercive policies challenge NATO's interests, security, and values," and mentioned rapid enhancement of nuclear forces, absence of transparency, and malicious hybrid and cyber activities. Based on this, it mentioned that NATO will engage constructively with China for the alliance's security interests, and to prevent China's coercive efforts to divide NATO.

China's relations with European countries, including NATO's policy on engagement with China, should be continuously watched.

3 Security/Defense Policies of European Countries and Others

1 The United Kingdom

After the end of the Cold War, the United Kingdom, perceiving that there is no direct military threat against the country, has advanced national defense reform with particular focus on improving its overseas deployment capability and readiness, in order to deal with new threats such as international terrorism and proliferation of WMDs.

The Johnson administration (then) published the Integrated Review 2021 for security, defense, development, and diplomatic policy in March 2021. The administration set forth a framework of the Indo-Pacific tilt while maintaining and strengthening the relationship with the United States, European countries, and NATO.

Furthermore, the Sunak administration (then) announced Integrated Review Refresh 2023 in March 2023. In the 2023 Refresh, the administration stated that the U.K. considers the Euro-Atlantic region a first-order priority and views Russia as "the most acute threat." It also stated that the U.K. would further enhance NATO and contest malign Russian influence by exposing disinformation. In addition, the administration evaluated that China "is posing an epoch-defining and systematic challenge." Furthermore, it stated that the U.K. consider the Indo-Pacific as a permanent pillar of the U.K.'s international policy, support for the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific and adopt a policy to enhance its commitment in the Indo-Pacific through various measures such as building deep relations anchored in decades-long economic, technological and security ties with partners including Japan.

In July 2024, the Starmer administration was inaugurated and, under its One Defence principle, aims to contribute to NATO, support Ukraine, and set the U.K.'s defense budget to 2.5% of GDP. In addition, in the same month, the U.K. launched a Strategic Defence Review and plans to publish the results in the first half of 2025. The United Kingdom remains committed to the Indo-Pacific region. According to an announcement by the U.K. Ministry of Defence, the U.K. participated in the Royal Australian Airforce exercise "Pitch Black 24" in July 2024, and, in 2025, the carrier strike group (CSG), which has been deployed in the Indo-Pacific, will make a port call in Japan.

In addition, the U.K. has conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in waters around Japan in response to illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels since FY2018. In this connection, from mid to late June 2024, HMS Spey conducted monitoring and surveillance activities.

2 France

Since the end of the Cold War, France has focused on maintaining independence of its defense policies, while having led initiatives to enhance the defense structure and capability in Europe. It has worked on the development of its military capacity by streamlining and integrating military bases, dealing with operational requirements to strengthen its defense capability, as well as enhancing its intelligence capabilities and modernizing equipment required in the future.

The Macron administration presented in November 2022 the National Strategic Review 2022 (Revue Nationale Stratégique 2022) that showed an analysis of the security environment home and abroad, as well as its strategic goals and priorities for 2030. The administration also stated that the relationship with Russia transferred from potential competition to an open opposition, and its relationship with China transfers to a more intense contest. In addition, the review indicated enhanced strategic autonomy and secured nuclear deterrence as France's strategic objectives to be achieved by 2030.

Since France has territories in the Indo-Pacific region, it

is the only EU member state that has continuous military presence in the region, with approximately 7,000 personnel and vessels permanently stationed. France places importance on commitment to the region. The Defense Strategy in the Indo-Pacific, which was published in June 2019, states that China's growing influence is shifting the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and highlights the importance of strengthening partnerships with the United States, Australia, India, and Japan.[6] The National Strategic Review 2022 mentioned above stated that France will strategically strive to build partnerships with countries in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, and play the role of a balancing power in order to maintain the strategic stability of the region.

Based on France's policy of active involvement in the Indo-Pacific region, from June to August 2024, the French Air and Space Force conducted a mission for large-scale power projection to the Indo-Pacific called "Pégase 24," showcasing its capability to swiftly deploy from its mainland to the region to deal with various crises and regional instabilities. According to an announcement by France's Ministry of Armed Forces, in 2025, the CSG that included the aircraft carrier "Charles de Gaulle" was dispatched to the Indo-Pacific region as part of the mission "Clemenceau 25," during which the CSG participated in joint trainings with the U.S., Canada, Australia, and other states. In February of the same year, this CSG also participated in the Japan-U.S.-France multilateral exercise "Pacific Steller."

In addition, France has conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in response to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels, since 2019. In 2024, France also conducted monitoring and surveillance activities by using the patrol aircraft "Falcon 200" and the frigate "Prairial," the former from mid-October to early November and the latter from late October to late November. In mid-February of 2025, monitoring and surveillance activities were also conducted by the logistic supply ship "Jacques Chevallier" and others.

France also prioritizes its involvement in the Middle East. The French Armed Forces have been conducting activities in Iraq since 2014, providing military support to Iraqi security forces fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

See Section 10-2-2 (Relations between African Countries and Other Countries)

3 Germany

While Germany has been implementing a large-scale reduction of its military personnel since the end of the Cold War, it has been gradually expanding the dispatch of its federal forces overseas. At the same time, Germany has advanced the reform of its armed forces to enable them to execute multiple responsibilities encompassing conflict prevention and risk management in the context of multilateral organizations, including NATO, the EU, and the UN.

However, following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Germany made major changes in its security policy, acknowledging that it was at a "watershed era (Zeitenwende)." Specifically, it provided arms to Ukraine, imposed strict economic sanctions against Russia, increased its defense spending as a ratio of GDP to over 2%, strengthened its contribution to NATO, and established a special fund equivalent to 100 billion euros for the Bundeswehr.

In June 2023, the German government announced the first comprehensive national security strategy that considered security as part of all policy areas, not just the diplomatic and military. The government assessed Russia as the most significant threat in the Euro-Atlantic region, and pointed out that while China is a partner in solving global issues, the elements of systemic rivalry and competition have increased. Regarding defense spending, the government clarified its policy of setting it at 2% of GDP on average over multiple years.

Furthermore, in November the same year, the German Ministry of Defense announced the Defense Policy Guidelines 2023 based on said strategy. Recognizing that Germany must become the backbone of deterrence and collective defense in Europe, the policy stated that the core missions of the German Bundeswehr would return to national and collective defense. In particular, it underlined Germany's responsibility to make an ever-greater contribution to the defense of NATO's eastern member states, and Germany decided to station one brigade permanently in Lithuania.

In September 2024, Germany signed the defense agreement serving as the legal basis for the brigade to be permanently stationed in Lithuania and then established the brigade in April 2025. The brigade is planning to be fully operational by 2027 with a strength of around 5,000 personnel.

Regarding the Indo-Pacific as well, the German government formulated the "Policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific" in 2020 and announced that it would strengthen its involvement in security policy in this region. In recent years, Germany has continued to dispatch assets to the Indo-Pacific region to strengthen its presence, while at the same time placing emphasis on cooperation with partner countries that share common values, such as Japan.

In 2024, Germany dispatched the frigate FGS Baden-Württemberg and the replenishment ship FGS Frankfurt am Main to the Indo-Pacific region. According to an announcement by the German Armed Forces, the two ships participated in "RIMPAC 24," the international maritime exercise organized by the U.S. Navy from June to August in that year, in order to enhance multilateral cooperation and interoperability.

6 Meanwhile, the French government strongly condemned the United States and Australia because of Australia's cancellation of the purchase contract for French-built submarines resulting from the implementation of AUKUS in September 2021, and temporarily recalled French ambassadors from Washington and Canberra.

In addition, Germany has conducted monitoring and surveillance activities in response to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels, since 2021. From late August to mid-September of 2024, the two vessels above also conducted such activities.

German federal election was held in February 2025, and the new Merz coalition government was inaugurated in May 2025. At press conferences held with NATO Secretary General Rutte and others after Merz took office as Chancellor, he mentioned his interest in increasing Germany's defense budget as well as expanding Europe's security and defense capabilities while also expressing the ongoing support for Ukraine by Germany.

4 Canada

In a National Defence Policy paper published in April 2024, the Department of National Defence of Canada indicated that the world is currently in a period of global uncertainty due to the three connected trends: climate change, the rise of autocracies and destructive states such as Russia and China, and the spread of new and disruptive technologies. Based on this recognition of the security environment, Canada has positioned the securing of its sovereignty in the Arctic and North American region as the core of its defense policy. To ensure a ready, resilient and relevant Canadian Armed Forces, Canada has decided to update its human resource base and equipment, procurement reform, renewing national defense infrastructure, promote digitalization, and building stronger defense industrial base. In addition, to build up its defense capabilities, Canada plans to spend $73 billion in the next 20 years. More specifically, the country plans to respond to new and existing threats through a network of operational support hubs as well as early warning aircraft and satellite ground station in High Arctic, thereby establishing a greater presence, reach, mobility, and responsiveness. To do this, Canada is projecting its defense spending to GDP ratio to reach 1.76% and building its number of active personnel to 71,500 by FY2029 to FY2030. Furthermore, Canada released the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework in September 2019, indicating a policy to enhance Canada's military presence in the region, based on the recognition that strategic, military, and economic importance of the region is increasing. Canada has also been conducting "Operation Nanook," a military exercise in the Arctic region, since 2007.

Canada regards the United States as its most important ally and conducts air defense, space defense, and maritime patrolling and monitoring activities in North America jointly with the United States through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). As a founding member, Canada also places importance on its relationship with NATO, and has been actively participating in NATO-led operations. The country has also traditionally supported UN activities.

Concerning its involvement in the Indo-Pacific region, in November 2022, Canada announced its first Indo-Pacific Strategy as a comprehensive road map to deepen its engagement in the region over the next decade. In the strategy, China is mentioned as an "increasingly disruptive global power" and that it is looking to shape the international order into a more permissive environment for China's interests and values. The strategy also states that Canada will challenge China if it engages in behavior that undermines Canada's national interests or those of its partners in the region. On the other hand, Canada showed its intention to cooperate with China to find solutions to global issues such as climate change.

In addition, Canada has clarified its strategic objectives, such as promoting the peace, resiliency, and security of the region as well as expanding and deepening security relationships with allies and partners that include Japan. Canada has also stated its intention to continue monitoring and surveillance activities[7] in response to illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels, which started in April 2018. Most recently, between mid to late February of 2025, Canada conducted monitoring and surveillance activities using naval vessels. On the other hand, Canadian warships have passed through the Taiwan Strait[8] several times since 2018 in accordance with international laws, Canada has stated that it is strengthening its naval presence in the Indo-Pacific region, including by increasing the number of frigates, and the country sent multiple naval warships through the Taiwan Strait in 2024 as well. In January 2025, Prime Minister Trudeau announced his resignation, and in March, Mark Carney of the same Liberal Party took office as Prime Minister. In April, a general election was then held, and the Liberal Party led by Prime Minister Carney won. Canada's future involvement in the region should be closely watched.

7 They have been deployed within the framework of "Operation NEON" to execute the sanctions against North Korea from June 2019. In October 2023, a Canadian military patrol aircraft in the operation was reportedly approached in an unusual manner by Chinese military aircraft over the East China Sea.

8 The activity is a part of the "Operation PROJECTION" to ensure worldwide maritime security for the purpose of showing Canadian commitment to the peace of the world.

Section 10 Middle East, Africa, and Other Regions

1 Middle East

1 General Situation

The Middle East region is a geopolitical key point which connects Asia and Europe. In addition, the Middle East is a major source of energy supply for the world and contains major routes for international commerce. Japan is also dependent on the region for approximately 90% of its crude oil imports. Peace and stability in the Middle East region is extremely important for the peace and prosperity of the international community, including Japan.

At the same time, this region has been experiencing ongoing instability, including high tension between Israel and Iran, clashes between Israel and Palestinian militants, and attacks against vessels by the Houthis, a group of Yemen-based Shiite militants.

2 Situation in Israel

(1) Military Affairs

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) state that their mission is the defense of the State of Israel and its citizens. Israel maintains a qualitative military advantage over neighboring countries, including its possession of F-35 fighter jets. In addition, to defend itself against rockets, missiles, and other weapons launched by neighboring countries and organizations, Israel has a multi-layered air defense system consisting of the Arrow, the David's Sling, and the Iron Dome.

(2) Conflict with Palestinian Militants

In 1993, Israel and Palestine agreed to the Oslo Accords, which assigned provisional autonomy over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank the Jordan River, and the two countries started the peace process, negotiating to achieve a peaceful coexistence. However, there has been little progress on these negotiations, Israel and Palestine have repeatedly clashed, and the peace process has stagnated.

In such circumstances, in 2017, the first U.S. Trump administration announced its recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. In addition, in 2018, the U.S. moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and tensions have risen, particularly in the Gaza Strip. In 2020, the administration announced a new Middle East peace plan, but the Palestinian side refused to negotiate, opposing the plan's descriptions concerning the Israeli-Palestinian border and the possession of Jerusalem. Since then, clashes have frequently erupted between Israel and Palestinian militants, and tensions between the two sides continue.

Meanwhile, on October 7, 2023, Palestinian militants such as Hamas, which is active in the Gaza Strip, fired thousands of rockets at Israel. Additionally, numerous militants invaded Israeli territory, killing and abducting Israeli soldiers and civilians, including foreigners. In response, the IDF began airstrikes on the Gaza Strip the same day as well as ground operations in the Gaza Strip starting on October 27. A temporary truce held from November 24 to 30, and some hostages taken by Hamas and other Palestinian militants were released. However, fighting resumed on December 1.

In the Gaza Strip, the IDF killed Hamas fighters, seized or destroyed weapons, demolished an underground tunnel network, and rescued hostages. In October 2024, Yahya Sinwar, chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau (then), was killed in the southern part of the Gaza Strip. On the other hand, there have also been many civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip due to attacks by the IDF.

Later, on January 19, 2025, a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, an agreement facilitated by mediators such as the United States, Egypt, and Qatar, went into effect. Although some of the hostages were released based on this agreement, on March 18, the IDF resumed large-scale attacks, claiming that Hamas had rejected a proposed ceasefire extension, and there has since been little progress in terms of negotiations aimed at getting the remaining hostages released or achieving a permanent ceasefire.

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

(3) Conflict with Hezbollah

Since the beginning of the clashes between Israel and Palestinian militants in October 2023, attacks by Hezbollah involving rockets, drones, and missiles have intensified in northern Israel. The IDF has responded with airstrikes and other action against Hezbollah military bases, and many Hezbollah fighters and leaders, including Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary-general of the group (then), have been killed.

In addition, in September 2024, a lot of communication devices being used by Hezbollah fighters simultaneously exploded, and Israel admitted being involved. In October of the same year, the IDF launched a ground invasion of southern Lebanon, strengthening their offensive against Hezbollah. Later, in November 2024, thanks to the mediation efforts of the United States and France, Israel and the Lebanese government concluded a ceasefire agreement, which included the withdrawal of the IDF from southern Lebanon, including the border between Israel and Lebanon, as well as the disarming of Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon. However, even after February 18, the withdrawal deadline agreed to by the two countries, Israel insisted that the Lebanese government and Hezbollah still had not completely held up their end of the ceasefire agreement, and Israel continues to have forces stationed at five locations in southern Lebanon. In addition, in March, following attacks by Lebanese forces, the IDF conducted attacks on areas including the Beirut suburbs.

(4) Conflict with the Houthis

Since October 19, 2023, the Houthis have intermittently launched missiles, drones, and other weapons toward Israel, claiming that they act in solidarity with the people. Israel has intercepted many of these weapons by using its various air defense assets including the Arrow system. However, Israel has also suffered damage as a result of failing to intercept some of these missiles and drones, and there have also been cases of fragments of intercepted missiles falling on the country. More recently, in May 2025, a missile launched by the Houthis hit the perimeter of Ben Gurion Airport. In addition, the Houthis have attacked merchant ships off the coast of Yemen, sinking them and killing their crews.

In July 2024, as attacks by the Houthis continued, Israel started launching airstrikes against regions controlled by the Houthis, including Hudaydah Port in Yemen. F-35, F-16, and F-15 fighter jets as well as air refueling aircraft participated in these airstrikes. There were also airstrikes in September and December 2024 as well as January and May 2025.

Note that, after the ceasefire agreement going into effect in Gaza on January 19, 2025, the Houthis temporarily stopped attacking ships, but in response to Israel stopping the delivery of supplies to Gaza, the Houthis once again started attacking Israeli ships on March 11, 2025. Amid these developments, the United States had been conducting strikes against the Houthis as part of "powerful military action" since the 15th of that month. However, in May of that year, the U.S. announced a halt to its attacks on the Houthis, stating that the group had agreed to cease attacks on U.S. naval vessels and other assets. Nevertheless, the Houthis have continued their attacks against Israel.

See Chapter 4, Section 5-2-1 (Maritime Security in the Middle East)

(5) Conflict with Iran

On April 1, 2024, an airstrike was launched against Iranian embassy complex in Syria. Iran, convinced that the airstrike was launched by Israel, retaliated by launching numerous missiles and drones at Israel from the evening of April 13 to the dawn of April 14, 2024.

In addition, on October 1, 2024, Iran launched numerous ballistic missiles at Israel in response to actions by Israel that included killing Ismail Haniyeh, then chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau, and Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of Hezbollah (then).

It has been pointed out that these Iran-launched ballistic missiles were intercepted by Israel's Arrow system as well as the SM-3s (Standard Missile 3s) of U.S. destroyers deployed in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

On October 26, 2024, Israel retaliated against Iran by attacking military facilities and other structures in Iran. It has been reported that over 100 fighter jets and other aircraft participated in these attacks.

Tensions remain high between the two countries.

A school building in southern Israel heavily damaged by an Iranian missile strike (October 1, 2024) [AFP/Jiji]

(6) Military Cooperation with Other Countries

Israel has a "special relationship" with the United States. More specifically, Israel has been receiving military support from the United States since the 1960s and continues to receive the equivalent of around US$3.8 billion in military support every year.

Immediately after Israel started clashing with Palestinian militants in October 2023, the United States announced the deployment of a carrier strike group to the Middle East. In addition, in line with subsequent changes in the situation, the United States has deployed additional assets to the

Middle East, including Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missiles, a THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) air defense system, and F-22 fighter jets. U.S. destroyers deployed to the Middle East have also frequently intercepted missiles and other weapons launched at Israel by Iran and the Houthis.

In April 2024, when Iran launched missiles and drones toward Israel, they were intercepted by fighter jet units from not only the United States but also the United Kingdom and other countries.

3 Situation in Iran

(1) Military Affairs

In addition to the Islamic Republic of Iran Army and the Law Enforcement Command, Iran has the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which was established to defend the revolutionary regime. Unlike the Islamic Republic of Iran Army, which engages in symmetric (conventional) warfare, the main mission of the IRGC is to engage in asymmetric warfare. The IRGC also includes the Quds Force, which is responsible for overseas operations. It is believed that the IRGC extends Iran's influence in the corresponding regions by supporting pro-Iranian groups abroad.

According to a report published by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency in 2019, Iran's military strategy is to develop military capabilities to respond to air attacks and ground invasions by the United States and other countries. The report also assessed that, Iran's deterrence is focused on the following three core capabilities: (1) ballistic missiles capable of long-range strikes, (2) naval capabilities to interfere with navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, and (3) foreign covert operations conducted through pro-Iranian group abroad.

It has also been pointed out that Iran has been developing its ballistic missiles since the 1980s, and the country currently possesses both short-range and intermediate-range ballistic missiles. In 2023, the country also unveiled its hypersonic ballistic missiles. In addition, Iran's development of drones has also been especially striking, including drones for both offensive and reconnaissance purposes.

As described above, the country uses such missiles and drones to attack Israel. For example, during the attacks in April 2024, Iran launched over 120 ballistic missiles, over 30 cruise missiles, and around 170 drones. In October 2024 as well, the country launched over 180 ballistic missiles. Note that the IRGC insists that this particular attack was launched using hypersonic ballistic missiles.

(2) Military Cooperation with Other Countries

In March 2025, Iran, Russia, and China conducted the joint naval exercise "Maritime Security Belt 2025" in the northern Indian Ocean. This exercise has been held six times since 2019, including when China did not participate, and the number of observer countries increases every year.

Iran also provides drones to Russia, which are used by Russia in the aggression against Ukraine. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that Iran provided ballistic missiles to Russia in 2024, and there are other examples of military cooperation between the two countries deepening as well.

4 Situation in Syria

In Syria, violent conflicts have continued since March 2011 among Syrian government forces supported by Russia and Iran, Syrian opposition groups supported by Türkiye, and other organizations.

Amidst this backdrop, in November 2024, anti-government forces led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which is based in Idlib in northwestern Syria, launched an offensive against the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and seized control of the capital city of Damascus in December of the same year. Then President Assad fled to Russia, and the Assad regime collapsed. On December 10, Ahmed Hussein al-Sharaa, commander of HTS, met with Mohammad Ghazi al-Jalali, prime minister of the Assad regime, and it was agreed that governmental authority would be provisionally transferred to the "Syrian Salvation Government," the de facto autonomous government of northwestern Syria, the base of HTS. After that, Al-Sharaa nominated Mohammed al-Bashir, the prime minister of the "Syrian Salvation Government," as the prime minister of the new "caretaker government," and he then assumed office as the provisional prime minister on the same day. At the same time, several ministers from the "Syrian Salvation Government" were appointed as ministers in the "caretaker government." Furthermore, on January 29, 2025, Al-Sharaa assumed office as the provisional president. On March 13, President Al-Sharaa approved the Interim Constitution of Syria, which will be valid for five years during the transition to the official new government. In addition, on March 29, the formation of the "transitional government," which consists of a total of 23 ministers, was declared. The current plan is to draft a new constitution under the leadership of the cabinet and then hold an election.

5 Situation in Yemen

In Yemen, following anti-government protests that occurred from February 2011 and international pressure afterward, then President Ali Abdullah Saleh agreed to resign. Through the election held in February 2012, then Vice President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi was elected as the new president.

Meanwhile, the conflict between the government and the Houthis, an organization based in northern Yemen, intensified. As the Houthis invaded the Yemeni capital of Sanaa and other locations, the president requested support from Arab countries. In response, in March 2015, coalition forces led by Saudi Arabia began air strikes against the Houthis. In response, the Houthis also launched attacks on the mainland of Saudi Arabia with ballistic missiles, UAVs, cruise missiles,

and other weapons.

In November 2019, the Yemeni government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), a separatist group in southern Yemen, signed the Riyadh Agreement[1]1 in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, and then the new cabinet was established in December 2020. President Hadi newly established the "Presidential Leadership Council," and announced that he would transfer all of his authority in April 2022. The council consists of delegates of all the major political powers in Yemen, except the Houthis, and aims to strengthen the governance of the government and conclude negotiations with the Houthis. In the same month, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen announced that the parties to the armed conflict agreed on a two-month ceasefire throughout Yemen. Although it was announced that the ceasefire agreement had not been renewed in October 2022 after it was first renewed in June and August of the same year, large-scale armed conflicts, aerial bombings by the "coalition of the willing," and cross-border attacks by the Houthis have rarely occurred in Yemen since the ceasefire became effective.

Against this backdrop, an agreement was reached in December 2023 to proceed with the creation of a roadmap for the realization of a ceasefire, but the prospect of the conclusion of a final peace accord remains elusive.

6 Situation in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM) started providing education, training, and advice for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) in the wake of the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which had formerly maintained public security in the country, in December 2014. Meanwhile, the ANDSF faces challenges regarding logistics, morale, air capabilities, and troop-commander leadership, allowing the Taliban to expand their control in Afghanistan.

In February 2020, an agreement was signed between the United States and the Taliban that included the conditional phase-out of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. In March 2020, the United States announced that it had begun the withdrawal of its forces, and this was finished by the end of August 2021. In this situation, the Taliban expanded their ruled area quickly and in August 2021, they brought the capital city Kabul under their control. In September the same year, they announced the establishment of a caretaker cabinet.

In 2024, a suicide bombing in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, resulted in the death of a Taliban-affiliated minister of the country's "temporary government," and Afghanistan and Pakistan have launched repeated attacks against each other's territory. Therefore, both domestic governance by the Taliban and the relationship between the Taliban and other countries will continue to be subjects of attention.

2 Africa

1 Challenges Facing African Countries

Africa has 54 countries, with a population of around 1.4 billion people, representing a young, energetic, and highly potential region that is expected to account for one-quarter of the world's population by 2050. Africa boasts a wealth of mineral resources and a high economic growth rate. The region is therefore important in terms of both the economic security of Japan and securing a value chain, and there is increasing interest from around the world in exploring further investments in Africa. On the other hand, the region faces many security challenges, including armed conflicts, terrorism, political turmoil, and piracy. To achieve peace and stability in Africa, there are UN PKOs underway as well as proactive efforts by the African Union (AU) and other regional institutions.

In Sudan, the national army clashed with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group, in April 2023 over the integration of the RSF into the national army and other issues, leading to an armed conflict. Since May of the same year, there have been efforts by the United States, Saudi Arabia, the AU, and other parties to mediate a ceasefire, but no effective ceasefire has been agreed to, and heavy fighting continues.

South Sudan has experienced large-scale armed conflicts due to political and ethnic conflict and other issues ever since the country declared its independence from Sudan in 2011. However, in September 2018, the involved parties, including President Kiir and then Vice President Machar, signed the "Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)," which presented a roadmap towards the establishment of an official government. In 2020, Sudan established a transitional government, and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has been supporting the implementation of the R-ARCSS. However, the implementation of the R-ARCSS remains limited, and in September 2024, the parties involved in the R-ARCSS agreed to further postpone the general election until December 2026 and extend the reign of the

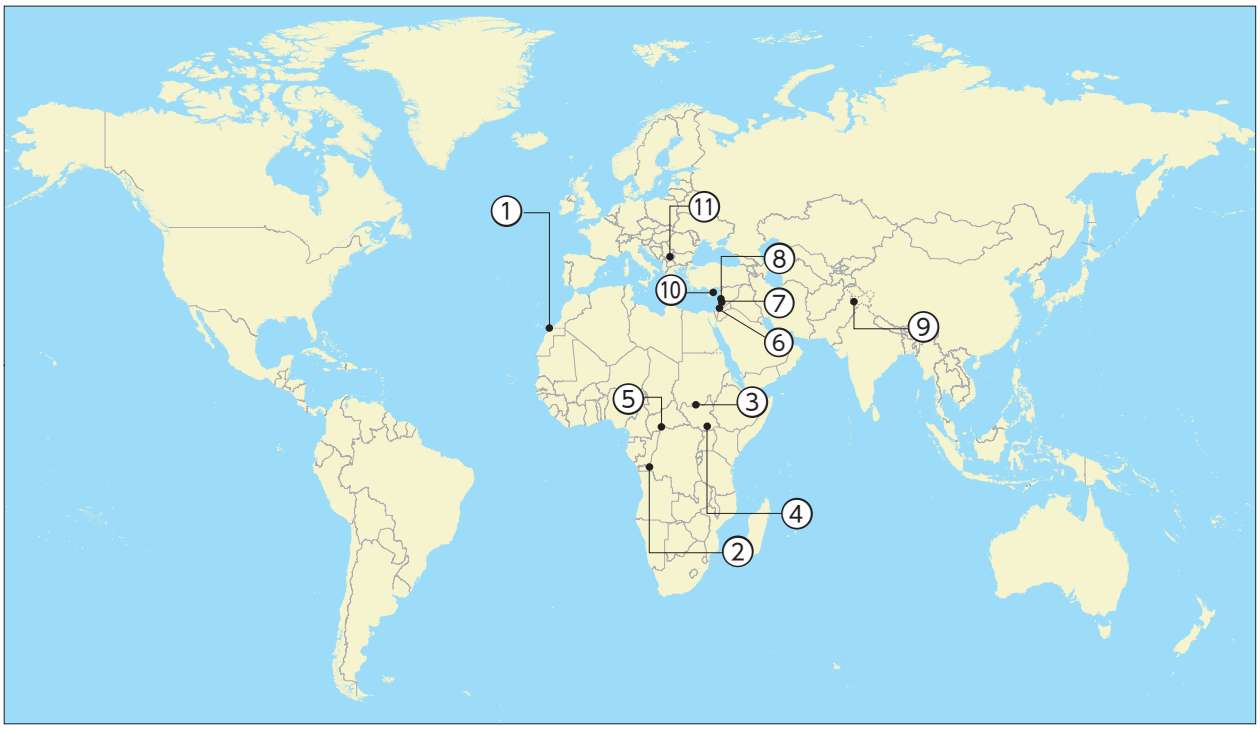
1 As conflicts continued between the Yemeni government and the STC, which seeks autonomy for the southern part of the country, the Riyadh Agreement stipulated the establishment of a new cabinet, including ministers from the STC, to end the conflict between the two sides.

transitional government until February 2027. In March 2025, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF), which support President Kiir, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO), which supports First Vice President Machar, clashed in Upper Nile, and First Vice President Machar was placed under house arrest. As such, South Sudan continues to see political strife and sporadic armed conflicts in local areas and still faces instability.

In recent years, West Africa has seen a series of military takeovers. More specifically, the national armies of various countries have been responsible for such takeovers, including Mali in August 2020 as well as May 2021, Burkina Faso in January and September 2022, and Niger in July 2023. The U.S. Armed Forces, French Armed Forces, and United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) have withdrawn from the region, and deteriorating public security has become serious problem including frequent acts of terrorism and attacks by Islamic extremists and other groups.

See Fig. I-3-10-1 (Current UN Peacekeeping Operations), 3-2 (Trends of Activities in Africa), Chapter 4, Section 5-2-2 (Piracy), Part III, Chapter 3, Section 2-2-2 (UNMISS))

Fig. I-3-10-1 Current UN Peacekeeping Operations



(Note) According to the United Nations (as of the end of March 2025).

Africa

	Mission	Date Established
①	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)	Apr. 1991
②	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Jul. 2010
③	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)	Jun. 2011
④	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)	Jul. 2011
⑤	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)	Apr. 2014

Middle East

	Mission	Date Established
⑥	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)	May 1948
⑦	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)	May 1974
⑧	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Mar. 1978

Asia

	Mission	Date Established
⑨	United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)	Jan. 1949

Europe

	Mission	Date Established
⑩	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)	Mar. 1964
⑪	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)	Jun. 1999

2 Relations between African Countries and Other Countries

In terms of security, African countries have long and deep relationships with the United States, Europe, and Russia. Based on this, the relationship with Russia has been further deepening recently, and Chinese involvement to Africa is prominent.

(1) China and Russia

China has been strengthening its economic ties with African countries for a long time, but in recent years, it has also increased its military involvement in the region. This includes intensive interactions among not only state leaders but also senior military officials as well as active arms exports and exchanges between military forces. China also actively dispatches personnel to undertake UN PKO in Africa. Some suspect that underlying these movements could be China's aim to ensure a stable supply of natural resources and to secure additional overseas bases in the future.

For example, in August 2017, China began to operate its first "support base" to provide logistical support to its military in Djibouti, and in July and October 2024, Chinese troops stationed at the "support base" conducted a joint exercise with the Djibouti Armed Forces troops. There have also been activities in African coastal countries. On the west coast of Africa, from June to July 2023, Chinese naval counter-piracy units visited the Gulf of Guinea countries and conducted joint exercises. On the east coast as well, from July to August 2024, a two-week-long joint exercise was conducted along with Tanzania and Mozambique. In addition, China, Russia, and South Africa conducted trilateral exercises in November 2019 and February 2023.

It has been pointed out that China might be considering the construction of additional Chinese military-related facilities in African coastal countries in particular,[2] and China is expected to continue expanding its military presence in Africa.

In recent years, Russia has actively exported arms to African countries and further enhanced its involvement through the activities of private military companies. Even after the Wagner Group's armed rebellion in 2023 and the death of one of its founders, Prigozhin, Russia is believed to be maintaining significant influence in Africa. Since 2024, there have been reports of activities by the Africa Corps, which was the result of the partial reorganization of the Wagner Group under Russia's Ministry of Defence.

In 2020, the Russian government announced an agreement with the government of Sudan to open a Russian naval base on the Red Sea in Sudan. In February 2025, it was reported that the government of Sudan announced that the two countries had finalized their agreement. If a base of the Russia Navy has been established in Sudan, it is believed that the deployment capabilities of the AFRF will be improved in the direction of the Indian Ocean.

Russia is expected to continue expanding its military presence in Africa, especially in countries where military takeovers have occurred or countries with unstable situations.

(2) The United States and Europe

The United States has pursued military cooperation with African countries through the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) in particular, including multilateral joint exercises, stationing and training missions, the dispatching of personnel for counter-terrorism operations, and arms exports. Under the National Defense Strategy announced by the previous Biden administration in October 2022, the United States stated the following policy for Africa: "We will orient our approach on the continent towards security cooperation; increase coordination with Allies, multilateral organizations, and regional bodies that share these objectives; and support U.S. interagency initiatives in the region, including efforts to disrupt malign PRC and Russian activities on the continent."

Meanwhile, the United State also has concerned about Africa's security environment. In a March 2024 statement,[3] AFRICOM said that "It is sobering to see our international allies downsizing in Africa." In March of the same year, Niger declared that it had revoked its military accord with the United States, so the U.S. Armed Forces withdrew from the country in September. In a strategic document formulated by AFRICOM in August 2024,[4] the harmful influence of Russia, China, and other foreign state actors was included in a list of threats to the security of Africa.

In spite of such concerns, the United States is expected to continue its involvement in African affairs.

Europe has also pursued military cooperation with African countries, including stationing and training missions as well as the dispatching of personnel for counter-terrorism operations. However, in recent years, some suggest that Europe's influence has decreased compared to China and Russia, which are expanding their influence.

In particular, France has an especially deep relationship with African countries for historical reasons and has maintained its influence in former colonies. However, in recent years, the withdrawal of African-based troops has been occurring one after another, against the backdrop of military takeovers, growing anti-French sentiment, and the expanding influence of Russia. Given this situation, France is working on restructuring its military posture and maintaining its partnerships in the African region.

2 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024)
3 According to the "STATEMENT OF GENERAL MICHAEL E. LANGLEY, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS COMMANDER, UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES" (2024).
4 According to "U.S. Africa Command Theater Strategy 2024-2033" (2024).

More recently, in November 2024, Chad, which has a friendly relationship with France, announced the end of its defense cooperation agreement with the country, and in January 2025, the French Armed Forces finished withdrawing from Chad. In addition, in February 2025, the French military base in Côte d'Ivoire was returned, but 80 members of the French Armed Forces are scheduled to remain in the country to continue training Ivorian forces. Furthermore, in March 2025, the French Armed Forces started its withdrawal from Senegal, but there are ongoing talks concerning new security partnerships.

As such, although there are examples of stationed forces being either withdrawn or reduced, Europe is expected to continue its involvement in the region in the interest of pursuing regional stability.

3 Trends in International Terrorism

1 General Situation

There are prominent cases where power vacuums in some countries with weak governance in the Middle East and Africa have become a hotbed for activities of international terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). This kind of terrorist organizations have instigated fighters to conduct terrorist attacks at their home and abroad, and are also spreading violent extremism via Internet or other means. As a result, particularly, terrorist attacks planned and committed by individuals or small groups of people who have no official relations with international terrorist organizations but have become influenced by them in some ways, have occurred in Western and other countries. Moreover, terrorist attacks targeting certain religions or races in a right-wing extremist political context have also occurred in Western countries.

Among international terrorist organizations, ISIL established multiple "provinces" outside of their original base in Iraq and Syria as "Islamic State" territories, and these "provinces" have been conducting terrorist acts in various places. In March 2024, ISIL claimed responsibility for an act of terrorism committed at a concert hall in the suburbs of Moscow, where over 140 people were shot and killed.

As for Al Qaeda, based primarily in Afghanistan, it is believed to have been weakened, as many of the group's senior members were killed through U.S. operations. However, they continue some actions such as issuing statements.

Concerning international counterterrorism measures, international cooperation has grown even more important as terrorism threats have diffused and deepened on the diversification of terrorist attacks and the improvement of terrorist groups' attack capabilities.

2 Trends of Activities in Africa

Organizations related to ISIL and/or Al-Qaeda are active in Africa. For example, in some areas of West Africa, including Mali and other parts of the Sahel region, conflicts between terrorist organizations as well as vigorous terrorist activities are observed. In central and southern Africa, ISIL's "Central Africa Province" had been active since April 2019, mainly in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and northern Mozambique. In May 2022, an armed group in Mozambique that had previously issued a statement of criminal activity under the name of the ISIL's "Central African Province" made a criminal declaration under the name of the ISIL's "Mozambique Province" and began operating as a new branch of ISIL. In eastern Africa, Al-Shabaab continuously hinders political processes in Somalia.

European and other countries have engaged in counter-terrorism operations and training missions aimed at responding to such terrorist organizations' actions. For instance, in the Sahel region, the French military took the lead in conducting counterterrorism operations against Islamic extremists from 2013 to 2022. In Mozambique, neighboring countries have responded to ISIL's Mozambique Province activities by dispatching forces and jointly conducting counter-terrorism operations, while the EU continues to conduct training missions for the Mozambique Defence Armed Forces.

3 Trends in of Activities in the Middle East

Since 2013, ISIL had become powerful by taking advantage of the unstable situation in Iraq and Syria, and unilaterally declared the establishment of the "Islamic State" in 2014. From that year, the U.S. led Coalition forces conducted airstrikes and education/training missions for local groups in Iraq and Syria. In 2019, the United States announced that it and the Coalition forces had liberated 100 percent of ISIL-controlled areas in the two countries. Although the United States announced the death of ISIL's leader in February and November 2022, ISIL announced the appointment of a new leader in March and November 2022 respectively and is believed to still be active in Iraq and Syria. Under these circumstances, the U.S. Forces have been continuously stationed in both countries as part of efforts to prevent the resurgence of ISIL.

In Afghanistan, while the Taliban are expanding their controlled area, ISIL's Khorasan Province has been continuously conducting terrorist attacks mainly in the capital city of Kabul and eastern Afghanistan since 2015. When the Taliban, which is in a cooperative relationship with Al-Qaeda,

took control of Kabul in August 2021, the United States completed the withdrawal of U.S. Forces but declared it would continue counterterrorism operations from afar.

Even after the withdrawal of U.S. Forces, ISIL's Khorosan Province has actively continued terrorist attacks in Kabul and other areas. It also uses its advanced public relations capabilities to spread propaganda in various regions and commit acts of terrorism not only in Afghanistan but also in other regions as well, thereby threatening the international community. The United States announced in August 2022 that it has killed Al Qaeda's leader with a drone attack in Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan.

Perspective

Tensions in the Middle East Situation Caused by Clashes between Israel and Palestinian Militants

YOSHIDA Tomoaki, **Research Fellow, Security and Economy Division, National Institute for Defense Studies**

On October 7, 2023 the Palestinian armed organization Hamas, which effectively controls the Gaza Strip, launched a surprise attack on Israel, and fighting between the two parties has continued since then. Israel, which has military superiority, has advanced an operation to eliminate Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Israel estimates that the death toll for Hamas, which had approximately 30,000 fighters before the surprise attack began, could reach 20,000. Hamas claims that this figure is an exaggeration, but when you add to the death toll the number of fighters who were physically and psychologically disabled enough to be unable to fight, it is fair to say that its military suffered a massive blow. On January 19, 2025, Israel and Hamas entered a six-week ceasefire period, but subsequently the Israeli military resumed ground operations in the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, the Israeli military stopped the delivery of humanitarian aid supplies for over one month, raising concerns that the humanitarian situation may deteriorate further.

Israel has achieved military gains in the Gaza Strip and it has also attacked countries in the Middle East which are bases for the Axis of Resistance, an Iran-led anti-Western group. Since July 2024, Israel has been conducting aerial bombings on regions controlled by the Houthis in Yemen, and in addition in that same month it assassinated Hamas' top leader Ismail Haniyeh, who was staying in the Iranian capital Tehran. Regarding Hezbollah, Iran's most important partner, and Lebanon, the country where Hezbollah is based, Israel had assassinated top leader Hassan Nasrallah and many other leading Hezbollah figures by September and in October it launched a ground invasion of Lebanon. Israel has alleviated its national security threats and the military balance in the Middle East region has shifted even further in its favor through the present conflict.

The blow to the Axis of Resistance has had a large impact on Middle East politics as well. The Assad regime in Syria collapsed in early December 2024 and the weakening of the Axis of Resistance was a large factor in this. In its fight against the rebels, the military of the Assad regime depended on air support from the Russian military and ground support from Hezbollah and other groups. However, Russia was exhausted by the war in Ukraine and the Axis of Resistance no longer had the resources to support the Assad regime.

Apart from the military losses of the Axis of Resistance, changes to the medium to long-term trends surrounding the Middle East peace issue are being seen. In July 2024, Hamas and other Palestinian factions agreed under the mediation of China to establish a national unity government. It remains partially unclear how effectively this agreement will be implemented, but an important point when considering the Middle East peace issue is whether the Palestinian factions, which have been in a divided state since 2007, can use this current conflict as an opportunity to unite.

(Note) This column is an independent analysis from the researcher's academic perspective, and its contents do not represent an official government position.

Chapter 4 Trends and Challenges Facing the International Community Concerning the Space, Cyber, and Electromagnetic Domains and Information Warfare

Risks that hinder free access and usage of cyberspace, the oceans, outer space and the electromagnetic spectrum are becoming increasingly serious. In particular, the threat of cyberattacks has grown rapidly and the theft of sensitive information, etc., has also been taking place on a routine basis, even in the form of state-backed attacks. It is likely that hybrid warfare consisting of both military and non-military measures for the accomplishment of military objectives will be employed in more sophisticated ways through means such as information warfare, including through the dissemination of disinformation prior to armed attacks. These trends pose serious challenges to the international community, including Japan.

Section 1 Trends Concerning Military Science and Technology That Have Expanded to Information Warfare, etc.

1 Science, Technology and Security

The creation of science, technology and innovation is the source of Japan's own economic and social development and the appropriate use of technological capabilities is indispensable not only in national security but also in addressing global issues such as climate change. The nations of the world are focusing their efforts on research, development and military applications of cutting-edge technologies that might be game-changers in that they could change the whole situation of future battles, such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology and next generation information and communication technology.

Our attention needs to be focused on these applications as something that will greatly improve the accuracy and speed of decision making, as information processing, which has so far been limited by the capabilities of human beings and conventional computers, could become faster and automatic. In addition, we need to focus on the fact that high-speed, large-capacity, and safe communication based on these new technologies will greatly contribute to the need for automation and manpower savings in the use of future defense technologies.

Risks in the cyberspace domain and other areas are also becoming more serious. Above all, these new technologies blur the boundary between military and non-military matters, enhancing the so-called gray zone situation. There are many examples in which diverse means that are not limited to purely military ones have been used to create chaos in other countries, such as cyberattacks targeting communication or important infrastructure, or the use of drones. Technological influence in the field of security is becoming greater; for example, the technology known as deepfake with which fake videos are created through the application of AI technology is spreading, while information warfare through the dissemination of disinformation is constantly taking place.

In addition, technology competition among nations becomes apparent, notably in the fields of next generation information communication system (Beyond 5G) and semiconductors. This competition is based on the perception that it is profitable to lead international standardization with superiority in the emerging technologies that are to become important for national economy and security. Moreover, it is commonly getting understood that securing supply chains for critical resources such as semiconductors and rare metals is important from a security standpoint.

In this situation, the concern is that some nations are stealing information related to advanced technologies developed by private companies, universities and other organizations in other countries using cyberspace, corporate acquisitions, corporate activities including investments, academic exchanges and covert operatives and using the information for their own military purposes. For this, each nation takes measures for their "economic security," such as strict export control, reinforcement of screening for investments from foreign countries and higher independence for technological development and production.

2 Trends of Military Cutting-edge Technology

1 Hypersonic Weapons

The United States, China, Russia and others are developing hypersonic weapons, including Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs) that would be mounted on ballistic missiles, maneuvered to glide at hypersonic spee1d (Mach 5 or above) in the atmosphere and hit targets, as well as Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs) using scramjet engines and other technologies that enable hypersonic flights. It is suggested that hypersonic weapons would fly in lower orbits than conventional ballistic missiles at hypersonic speed for a longer period of time and that their high maneuverability would make them difficult to be detected and intercepted.

A senior official in the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) mentioned a development plan for hypersonic weapons in February 2021, revealing that the United States will deploy hypersonic weapons in the early to mid-2020s and build defense capabilities in the mid to late 2020s.[1] In 2021, the U.S. Army received a prototype of the HGV (Hypersonic Glide Vehicle) known as the Long Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW). Test launches were conducted successfully in June and December of 2024, and training for deployment is underway. However, delays in deployment have also been reported. In addition, the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force are developing hypersonic weapons, and the U.S. Navy is aiming to equip their Zumwalt-class destroyers and Virginia-class nuclear-powered submarines with them.

In China, the DF-17 ballistic missile, which is viewed as having the capability to carry HGVs, made its first public appearance during the military parade marking the 70th anniversary of China's founding in October 2019. The U.S. DoD has pointed out that China began operating DF-17 missiles in 2020 and has also stated that the DF-27 ballistic missiles might be equipped with HGVs.[2]

Russia has already deployed the HGV "Avangard" and had plans to deploy the new ICBM "Sarmat," which can carry the Avangard, by the end of 2024. However, it has been pointed out that the launch test in September 2024 might have failed, which implies that development is still in progress. In addition, Russia successfully test-launched the HCM "Zircon" from a submarine in 2021 and sent a Zircon-equipped frigate out on combat patrol missions in 2023. In February 2024, President Putin also stated that the AFRF successfully used Zircon missiles in Ukraine.

North Korea seems to regard the development of hypersonic gliding warheads as one of its priority goals and is promoting related research and development. It has been launching missiles it calls "hypersonic missiles" since 2021.

See Chapter 3, Section 4-1-3 (3) (Missile Forces)

In response to the threat of such hypersonic missiles, the United States is working with Japan to jointly develop glide phase interceptors (GPIs), missiles that intercept hypersonic missiles during their glide phase.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-2-3 (Japan-U.S. BMD Technical Cooperation, etc.)

2 High-power Energy Technology

High-power energy weapons, such as railguns, high-power laser weapons, and high-power microwave weapons, are being developed as a means to counter various airborne threats.

A railgun is a kind of weapon that shoot bullets using a magnetic field generated from electrical energy. Unlike missiles, the bullets used for railguns have no propulsion device. For this reason, the bullets are smaller, cost less, and require less space for storing. Therefore, railguns are said to be capable of coping effectively with attacks involving a large number of missiles.

Laser weapons, which use high-power laser energy to destroy targets, are being developed by the United States, China, Russia and other countries as low-cost, effective means of intercepting a large number of small, unmanned aircraft and small vessels.

The United States is developing several laser weapons. In 2023, the U.S. Army received prototypes of the 50kW class vehicle-mounted laser weapon "DE M-SHORAD (Directed Energy Maneuver-Short Range Air Defense)" and concluded a contract to develop 300kW class laser weapons. The U.S. Navy is also equipped their Arleigh Burke-class missile destroyer USS Preble with the 60kW class laser weapon "HELIOS" (High Energy Laser and Integrated Optical-dazzler with Surveillance) in 2022.

China unveiled the "LW-60," a vehicle-mounted laser weapon with an unknown power output that is designed to counter small drones, at the 2024 China International Aviation & Aerospace Exhibition. There are also indications that China has deployed anti-satellite laser weapons that appear to be designed to interfere with or damage the optical sensors of low-earth orbit satellites and that it is developing laser weapons with even higher power output.

Russia has deployed the 10kW class Peresvet laser weapon system and it is reportedly developing a megawatt-class chemical laser weapon system for attacking satellites.

In 2022, Israel successfully tested the "Iron Beam," a vehicle-mounted air defense laser weapon with a power output of 100kW class, to intercept drones, mortar rounds, and other objects. It has been pointed out that this system

1 According to the website of the U.S. Department of Defense on February 27, 2021.
2 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).

will be operational by the end of 2025.

High power microwave weapons are weapons to destroy or cause malfunction of electronic equipment in UAVs, missiles, and the like. In 2023, the U.S. Air Force used the high-power microwave weapon "Tactical High-power Operational Responder (THOR)" against numerous UAVs simulating a swarm flight, effectively disabling many of them. The U.S. Marine Corps is also assessing the integration of AI-based UAV detection and tracking capabilities with high-power microwave weapons.

3 Trends of Cutting-edge Technology in the Civilian Field

1 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology

AI technology is one of the technological areas where rapid development is taking place, including generative AI, which can generate natural text and images. It has been pointed out that the rapid AI progress has been exerting a great impact on the military field, including the application for unmanned vehicles and the cyber domain as well as supporting for command and decision-making and improving data processing capacity, among other areas.

In terms of utilizing AI, the U.S. Army is currently working on its "Maven Smart System" plan. The system is said to enable rapid assessment of combat spaces, collection of large volumes of data, and analysis of the collected data using AI to identify and attack targets. In May 2024, the U.S. DoD announced a contract with a private company to develop the system.

Meanwhile, China announced in 2020 that an AI Military Simulation Competition was held by the Central Military Commission with the purpose of researching and developing next-generation command information systems. The U.S. DoD has pointed out that China's goal is to pass Western countries in terms of AI research and development by 2025 and to become the world's leader in the AI field by 2030.[3]

Meanwhile, it has also been pointed out that, during its clashes with Palestinian militants in 2023, Israel used the AI system called "Lavender" during the attack-target selection process. Some have also suggested that Israel is using AI to analyze the data from communication apps installed on the smartphones and other devices of Gaza citizens to evaluate whether, for example, the owners of those smartphones have relationships with Hamas, etc. It has also been reported that the Israel Defense Forces have stated that they do not use AI to identify terrorist operatives or to predict whether someone might be an operative.

Different nations are also developing unmanned aerial vehicles equipped with AI.

The United States has been engaged in diverse R&D initiatives, including the automation of air-to-air combat, manned/unmanned aircraft formation flights and demonstrating their capabilities in maritime surveillance missions. In 2023, the U.S. Air Force tested AI-piloted XQ-58A UAVs flying in formation with manned aircraft and in tactical flights intended to handle simulated missions, weapons, and enemies. During the same year, they also announced the "Replicator" initiative, which is aimed at introducing thousands of inexpensive autonomous systems that utilize AI.

China revealed in May 2018 that the China Electronics Technology Group Corporation successfully performed a swarm flight of 200 AI-equipped UAVs. It is assumed that military operations including such swarm flights will become difficult to counter with conventional air defense systems. In 2023, an AI algorithm competition simulating a UAV aerial combat was held in China.

In 2019, Russia conducted a coordinated flight test between the S-70 Okhotnik, which is a heavy unmanned combat aerial vehicle, and the fifth-generation fighter Su-57. The Okhotnik has apparently been actually deployed in aggression against Ukraine since 2023.

It has also been pointed out that the military use of AI may develop into Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and this is being discussed in the international community. In 2023, as part of efforts by like-minded countries, the "Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) Call to Action," which confirmed responsible use in accordance with obligations under international law, as well as the "Political Declaration on Responsible Military Use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy," which confirmed the need to operate AI under a responsible human chain of command and control and to clarify responsibility, were announced. Similarly, in 2024, the "REAIM Blueprint for Action" was announced. Japan expressed its support for all three announcements. The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a resolution underlining the urgency of addressing the challenges posed by LAWS.

2 Quantum Technology

Quantum technology is positioned as an important technology which brings innovation to society by applying quantum mechanics, which operates in the microscopic world of atomic nuclei and electrons. In its National Defense Science and Technology Strategy published in 2023, the United States cited quantum technology as key and declared its intention to strengthen collaboration and technological

3 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).

innovation with its allies. In its 14th Five-Year Plan, which was published in 2021, China stated its intention to accelerate cutting-edge technologies like quantum computers and communications and enhance military-civilian collaborative development in the quantum technology field. In addition, in January 2024, NATO announced its first quantum technology strategy, outlining how quantum technology can be applied to defense and security.

Quantum cryptographic communication, which is considered to be cryptographic communication that cannot be deciphered by a third party, is being studied in many countries. China has built a 4,600 km quantum cryptographic communication network consisting of the quantum cryptographic communication satellite "Mozi" and a ground communication network between Beijing and Shanghai. In 2022, quantum encryption services were provided to the Communist Party and government agencies in Hefei. In addition, in July 2022, China launched its Jinan-1 quantum-secured microsatellite to test quantum key distribution (QKD).

It has been pointed out that in the future, quantum sensors could be used for tracking missiles and aircraft, as well as for more advanced gyros and accelerometers.[4] In 2023, the United States successfully demonstrated magnetic navigation using quantum magnetic sensors as an alternative to the Global Positioning System (GPS) and has also been developing a satellite equipped with quantum gyros to develop inertial navigation using quantum inertial sensors.

Quantum computers are said to be able to calculate problems that would take even a supercomputer an enormous amount of time in a short time and are expected to be applied in fields such as decryption. On the other hand, post-quantum cryptography (PQC), which cannot be decrypted by quantum computers, is being researched in many countries, and the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) announced the first PQC standards in August 2024.

3 Additive Manufacturing Technology

Additive manufacturing technology, as typified by 3D printers, is expected to be applied to each military sector in various countries, due to low manufacturing cost and parts procurement that does not rely on inventory.

The United States, in announcing the "Use of Additive Manufacturing Technology" in 2021, stated that it would enhance the independence and readiness of its military services and has installed 3D printers on some of its surface ships and submarines. China is also utilizing 3D printers to manufacture parts for military aircraft. Ukraine is similarly utilizing 3D printers to manufacture drone parts, etc.

4 Diffusion of Information-related Technology and Information Warfare

As it has been pointed out in the cases of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the 2023 clashes between Israel and the Palestinian militants, and the presidential elections in Taiwan and the United States, concerns over information warfare, including the dissemination of disinformation and the proliferation of information aimed at eroding trust in the target government or dividing society using social media and influencers, have been growing.

It is believed that Russia and China are waging information warfare both domestically and abroad, aiming to build an information environment favorable to them. For example, it has been noted that China is spending billions of dollars to promote propaganda, spread disinformation and conduct censorship by investing in the media of other countries. Similarly, Russia is cooperating with influencers in Africa to spread disinformation and expand the range of its influence operations. There is a concern that China and Russia are cooperating to spread propaganda and disinformation.

Furthermore, advances in AI technology are making deepfakes and generative AI-created videos, images, and documents even more of a serious threat, as they are highly realistic and can be created in a short time with easily accessible tools.

In response to such threats, in November 2023, the U.S. DoD formulated the "2023 Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment" (SOIE), which stated the need for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and regional military forces to collaborate toward the same goal. In Europe, the EU has proposed the concept of **"Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference"** (FIMI) and is working on countermeasures.

In addition, there have been many examples of information warfare targeting Japan, including the spread of malicious narratives, disinformation, and propaganda, such as attempts to alienate Japan from Western countries and cause a loss of trust in the Japanese government, including the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF).

In response to this situation, the Defense Intelligence Headquarters plays a central role in terms of handling information warfare for the Ministry of Defense and the JSDF, and the policy and operational divisions are also working together to accelerate related efforts.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-5-3 (Information-related Functions, including Responses to Integrated Information Warfare)

4 According to the website of the U.S. Department of Defense on February 23, 2021.

KEY WORD

What is "Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference" (FIMI)?

This is a concept that refers to "a series of actions by foreign governments or others that have (or may have) the intention of wielding malign influence over the sense of values, procedures, or political processes" of one's country. EU, NATO and each European country show serious concerns about the spread of FIMI in the world. FIMI is often carried out legally, deliberately and systematically by foreign countries, non-state actors, or affiliated organizations, to wield influence on public opinion of one's country or disrupt democratic processes such as presidential elections. This kind of information manipulation operation disables not only each individual but society as a whole from making its own decisions. This is one of the major threats to a democratic society based on free and open information.

5 Trends Concerning Defense Production and Technology Bases

Advanced technologies based on significant technological advances in the civilian field have so much power that they can completely change the way battles happen. Relative merits in industry and technology greatly influence national security. Under these circumstances, many countries are taking on a variety of initiatives in order to maintain and enhance their national defense production and technological bases.

First of all, each country enhances investments to defense research and development to ensure technological superiority. For example, about half of the nearly 19 trillion yen invested in the government research expenditure of the United States is paid out by the DoD.

The United States also offers large-scale funds to research conducted by companies and universities. For example, DARPA, an internal organization of the DoD, has requested a budget of US$4,370 million for FY2025 to continue active investments in innovative research at companies and universities, with the aim of maintaining the U.S. Forces' technological superiority. In addition, the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) mediates between companies owning innovative technology and the DoD to make the most of cutting-edge technologies from the civilian field in the resolution of challenges in the security sector. The DIU has produced contracts with over 450 companies mainly in six fields, including AI, autonomous technology, and the cyber field. In FY2023, the DIU moved 10 consumer solutions suggested by companies from the prototype stage to the production stage.

China is promoting Civil-Military Fusion (CMF) as a national strategy. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated in his report to the 20th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in October 2022 that China would build up a series of new growth engines such as next-generation information technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, new energy, new materials and such through promoting integrated development of strategic emerging industries and clustered development.

In response to the recent utilization of dual-use technologies in defense equipment development, the governments of the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as NATO, have been funding innovative research and development in the private sector to acquire advanced civilian technologies. The United Kingdom is strengthening its investment in the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA), which invests in innovations boosting security in industry and academia. It also established the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) in January 2023 with the aim of investing in groundbreaking research with the potential to have a significant impact on society. In Australia, an organization called the Advanced Strategic Capabilities Accelerator (ASCA) was established in July 2023 to replace the existing Defense Innovation Hub and the Next Generation Technologies Fund. The ASCA aims to collaborate with Australian industry and research institutions to rapidly provide the capabilities needed by the Australian military. Meanwhile, NATO established the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) in April 2022 with the aim of enabling member states to work with the private sector and academia to make advanced new technologies available for Western security.

Furthermore, the foreign countries recognize the defense industrial base as an essential element of the national defense and organize the systems to implement their policies through the publication of policy documents and the establishment of organizations in charge of the defense industry. They also take on a variety of initiatives such as supporting the participation of domestic companies in government programs and promoting exports to sustain and strengthen their defense production base.

In the National Defense Industrial Strategy (NDIS), which was announced in January 2024, the United States set out four long-term strategic priorities to build a strong defense industrial base fit for the times: resilient supply chains,

workforce readiness, flexible acquisition, and economic deterrence. The United States also outlined its intention to promote various initiatives to achieve these priorities, such as strengthening cooperation with allies and friendly nations, providing financial support to companies, and improving procurement methods. In addition, in October 2024, to achieve the NDIS, the United States announced its Implementation Plan, which includes six initiatives, such as enhancing the deterrence through investment in the Indo-Pacific region.

The United Kingdom published the Defence Supply Chain Strategy in 2022 and stated its aim of building up robust defense supply chains to enable the military to respond to the current severe security environment. In addition, in December 2024, the United Kingdom announced its intention to release a new Defence Industrial Strategy in 2025, which will incorporate preferential treatment for the nation's defense industry, thereby confirming the fact that the government considers the imperatives of national security and a high-growth economy are aligned.

Australia created a new office of Minister for Defence Industry in 2016. Australia also created Office of Defence Industry Support in 2021 as a One-Stop organization, which supports small and medium sized enterprises participating in the defense industry and provides them with financial supports. Furthermore, in its Defence Industry Development Strategy (DIDS) announced in February 2024, Australia outlined seven Sovereign Defence Industrial Priorities (SDIPs) and in order to realize these SDIPs, they set out the programs to strengthen cooperation between the government and the defense industry, for example by providing vocational training and subsidies to businesses, as well as promoting public-private personnel exchanges.

In March 2024, the EU announced its first European Defence Industry Strategy (EDIS), which sets numerical targets for defense-related trade within the EU and the proportion of joint procurement and presents a series of actions, including financial support and strengthening relationships with other countries, to enhance the competitiveness and readiness of the European defense industry.

The Republic of Korea (ROK) aims an improvement of capabilities and higher self-containment of domestic defense industry through their Defense Industry Development Act and their Defense Science and Technology Innovation Promotion Act enforced in 2021. Furthermore, the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) announced a policy to procure equipment taking into consideration the ripple effects for domestic industries, and a policy to promote cooperation between foreign companies and domestic companies as well as the use of domestic products by foreign companies.[5]

Each country exports equipment strategically because trading equipment strengthens the relationship between two trading countries as well as the base for defense technology and the defense industry. For example, the United Kingdom announced in its Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS) that it would support exporting with cross-ministerial effort from different government offices, such as the Department for International Trade and the Home Office. The United States, Russia, Europe and China are still the top four in terms of export value of military equipment, while Australia formulated its export strategy.[6] The ROK established an export support organization,[7] and financially supports research and development for export. Various countries proactively promote military equipment export using a variety of measures.

See Fig. I-4-1-1 (Top Ranking Countries in Major Conventional Arms Export (2020-2024)), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 1 (Reinforcing Defense Production Base), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 2 (Reinforcing Defense Technology Base)

Fig. I-4-1-1 Top Ranking Countries in Major Conventional Arms Export (2020-2024)

Rank	Country or region	Shares in the total global exports of defense equipment (%) 2020-2024	Comparison with 2015-2019 (%)
1	The United States	43	21
2	France	10	11
3	Russia	8	-64
4	China	6	-5
5	Germany	6	-3
6	Italy	5	138
7	The United Kingdom	4	-1
8	Israel	3	-2
9	Spain	3	29
10	ROK	2	5

(Note) Created based on "SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Mar. 2025" Only the top 10 countries by export share for 2020 to 2024 are indicated (figures are rounded to the nearest whole number).

5 The ROK announced the introduction of the Korea Defense Capability policy in 2021, which includes these policies.
6 Australia announced the Defence Export Strategy in 2018.
7 The Defense Export Promotion Center was established in 2018.

Section 2 Trends in Space Domain

1 Space Domain and Security

There is no concept of national borders in space, meaning that the utilization of satellites enables the observation of communication with and positioning over any area on Earth.

Thus, major countries make efforts to enhance the capabilities of a variety of satellites and launch them for the purpose of enhancing C4ISR (command, control, communication, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) functions. Such satellites include information collecting satellites that collect various activities as images and radio waves, early warning satellites for detecting the launch of ballistic missiles, positioning satellites for enhancing the precision of weapons systems, communication satellites relays communication and the like.

On the other hand, anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons to hinder the utilization of space by other countries are also under development.

Regarding destructive Direct-Ascent Anti-SATellite (DA-ASAT) missiles, China and Russia conducted tests targeting their own satellites in 2007 and 2021, respectively. As a result, a large amount of space debris has been generated, raising concerns about the risk of such debris colliding with satellites and other space assets of various countries.

Regarding China, it has been pointed out that the robot arm technologies being developed by China to inspect and repair in-orbit satellites can be repurposed as ASATs such as satellite-attack satellites (so-called "killer satellites"). As for Russia, it has been pointed out that the ejection of an object from its satellite against a nearby satellite was an ASAT experiment.[1]

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that China and Russia are developing jammers for interfering with communications between target satellites and ground stations, as well as high energy technology such as laser weapons designed to degrade or damage satellites. In addition, a Russian cyberattack on a satellite communication provider in 2022 disrupted satellite communications services, raising concerns about cyberattacks on space systems.

As threats in space continue to rise, many countries are increasingly positioning space as a "warfighting domain" or "operational domain." These countries are working on space domain awareness (SDA) to monitor threats to their space assets.

Against this backdrop, existing international agreements do not have direct provisions on prohibiting the destruction of space assets or avoiding actions triggering space debris. Accordingly, with peaceful usage and the need to prevent an arms race in mind, the United Nations is debating this issue in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

In addition, like-minded countries are participating in the "Combined Space Operations (CSpO) Initiative." This is a multilateral framework that holds various discussions on policy, operational, systematic, legal, and other issues necessary for space security. There are currently 10 participating countries, including Japan.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-4 (Responses in the Space Domain), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-4-1 (Space Domain)

2 Various Countries' Outer Space Initiatives

1 The United States

The United States is the world greatest space power that has been promoting a variety of space activities in military, science, resource mapping and other domains. The launch of the first reconnaissance satellite in the world and the first landing on the Moon are also among its great achievements. The U.S. Forces clearly recognize the importance of outer space and are actively utilizing it.

In 2023, the United States demonstrated an accelerated process from satellite payload loading to operation to improve the readiness of its satellite launch capabilities. The United States is also launching numerous satellites to build a satellite constellation called "Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture (PWSA)" that detects and tracks missile threats, including hypersonic weapons, from space.

On the policy front, the United States states, in its National Defense Strategy, that the space domain will improve the capabilities of monitoring and decision-making systems to achieve combat objectives, regardless of enemy interference or deception, while the National Defense Space Strategy states that the country's goals are to ensure superiority in space, provide space-based support for national operations as well as joint and combined operations, and ensure stability in space.

In April 2024, the U.S. DoD announced a strategic

1 According to "Challenges to Security in Space," the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) (2022).

document titled the "Commercial Space Integration Strategy," which is aimed at enhancing space mission assurance across the spectrum of conflict by taking advantage of contracts and other approaches to integrate government systems with commercial space solutions[2] in the space domain prior to crisis, provide support to develop new commercial space solutions, and pursue other priorities. In addition, the United States will take security measures necessary to integrate commercial space solutions by preventing violations of its national security interests in space, including the use of military force to protect commercial assets if necessary.[3] In January 2025, President Trump issued an executive order to build an "Iron Dome for America." This executive order requires that all related government agencies submit reports on the building of a missile defense system that utilizes space assets as well as designs and plans aimed at achieving this.

As for organizations, the United States inaugurated the U.S. Space Command as a new regional unified combatant command based on the Strategic Command's component in charge of space missions in 2019. The United States created the Space Force under the Department of the Air Force as the sixth military branch, with approximately 16,000 personnel. In addition, to promote the use of commercial services, the United States established a department to coordinate their use in the Space Command and a department to support industry-government-academia collaboration in the Space Force.

In December 2023, the United States declared that the U.S. Space Command had achieved full operational capability. In October 2024, the DoD announced that the following responsibilities had been added to the role of the U.S. Space Command Commander: synchronizing and deconflicting offensive and defensive space operations in coordination with other unified combatant commands, government departments and agencies, military services, allied nations, and other entities, in accordance with joint campaign objectives.[4]

See Chapter 3, Section 1-2 (Military Posture)

2 China

China has been promoting space development since the 1950s and has been further intensifying its space activities in recent years, including completing the space station "Tiangong" and advancing plans for a lunar base. In 2024, China accelerated its efforts to build a Spacesail Constellation for rapid information gathering and communication, including starting to launch "Qianfan," the low-Earth orbit Internet satellite group. Furthermore, efforts in lunar exploration are advancing. In June of the same year, the unmanned lunar probe Chang'e 6 successfully completed the first-ever sample collection and return mission from the far side of the moon.

While traditionally emphasizing international cooperation and the peaceful use of space, it is pointed out that China proactively used space for military purposes, including information collection, communications and positioning through satellites. For example, the possibility of military use has been pointed out for "BeiDou" for aircraft and vessel navigation and guidance of missiles, and for "Yaogon" for electronic and image reconnaissance.

It is pointed out that China recognizes counter space operations as a means to deter and confront the United States's intervention to regional conflicts[5] and carries out ASAT development and the like. In addition to the satellite destruction test in 2007 mentioned above and the "non-destructive" test of an ASAT missile in July 2014, it has also been pointed out that China continues to acquire and develop various ASAT capabilities and related technologies, such as ground-based lasers and orbital space robots.[6]

China is thus expected to continue focusing on space development. The United States has concluded that China is pursuing space capabilities at the same or a higher level than those of the United States.[7] It has also been pointed out that China has more military satellites in operation than the United States.[8]

In terms of policy, China insists that space is key to international strategic competition and that the safety of space is a strategic safeguard for nation building and social development. It also reveals the principle that it accelerates development of the aerospace domain. In 2024, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, China National Space Administration, and China Manned Space Engineering Office announced the "National Medium and Long-term Development Plan for Space Science (2024-2050)," which outlines a roadmap for China to achieve its policy of leading the world in the space domain through the implementation of three phases, set for 2027, 2035, and 2050.

As part of organizational reforms, it was noted that the former Strategic Support Force was disbanded in 2024 and its subordinate units were reorganized into military space and cyber forces. Prior to 2024, the Strategic Support Forces was said to have been tasked with space, cyber, and electronic warfare.

2 This refers to "systems, capabilities, and services provided by the commercial sector."
3 "Commercial Space Integration Strategy," U.S. DoD
4 U.S. DoD Directive 3100.10
5 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
6 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
7 According to "The Worldwide Threat Assessment," the U.S. Director of National Intelligence (2023).
8 According to "The Military Balance 2023," U.K. International Institute for Strategic Studies.

3 Russia

While Russian space activity has been reduced since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has continued to be active in space in recent years, even after its aggression against Ukraine. For example, Russia continues to launch a large number of various types of satellites, including the "Kosmos" series, and sends "Progress" series cargo aircraft to the International Space Station (ISS). Furthermore, Russia has revealed a development plan for its own space station, with each module scheduled to be launched between 2028 and 2033.

Note that, in terms of ASATs, the U.S. government has concluded that the "Cosmos 2576" satellite launched by Russia in 2024 is in fact a counter-space weapon with the capability to attack other satellites. There have also been claims that Russia is planning to deploy a nuclear-armed anti-satellite system in space. However, the Russian government has denied these allegations.

In regard to Russian policies, Russia released in 2016 the Federal Space Program for 2016-2025 as a specific future guideline for space activities, including the development and deployment of domestic space satellites and crewed flight programs. In 2023, the Russian government announced the "Strategy for the Development of the Communications Industry until 2035," which specifies a goal of building a satellite constellation for Internet communication by 2030.

From an organizational perspective, ROSCOSMOS , one of the Russian state-owned enterprises, is in charge of space activities related to Russia's scientific and economic areas, while the Russian Ministry of Defence is involved in space activities for security purposes. The Russian Aerospace Forces, into which the Air Force and the Aerospace Defence Forces were integrated in August 2015, conduct actual space activities for military purposes and manage facilities for launching satellites.

4 North Korea

In 2023, North Korea claimed to have successfully launched and put into operation "Malligyong-1," which is purported to be a reconnaissance satellite. In addition, North Korea stated that it had a goal of launching three additional satellites in 2024, however, a launch conducted in May of that year, which used ballistic missile technology for the purpose of putting a satellite into orbit, is believed to have failed, and no further launches have been confirmed since.

In terms of organization, in 2023, North Korea reorganized the National Aerospace Development Administration, which had been in charge of rocket and satellite development, into the National Aerospace Technology Administration. The Reconnaissance Satellite Operation Office, a military intelligence organization, reportedly exists within the National Aerospace Technology Administration's Pyongyang General Control Center and reports information obtained by reconnaissance satellites to the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party (CMC) and, in accordance with the CMC's instructions, provides the information to key military units and the Reconnaissance General Bureau.

5 Republic of Korea (ROK)

The ROK's space development is promoted based on the Fourth Basic Space Development Promotion Plan announced in December 2022 under the Space Development Promotion Act implemented in 2005. The plan mainly aims to double the space-related budget, promote the space industry, etc.

The ROK's Ministry of National Defense has stated that it will acquire military reconnaissance satellites to enhance its Korean Peninsula monitoring capabilities.[9] In December 2023, the ROK Forces launched their first military reconnaissance satellite in the United States. They also announced that they successfully launched their second satellite in April 2024 and their third in December 2024. In 2025, the ROK launched two more satellites in line with the country's goal of having a total of five operational military reconnaissance satellites.

In terms of organization, the ROK established the Korea AeroSpace Administration (KASA) in 2024 due to the expansion of space policy and business fields as well as increased commercial use of space. KASA's responsibilities include formulating aerospace-related policies and handling public-private coordination. Meanwhile, to systematically and comprehensively handle outer space-related security at the state level, the ROK's National Intelligence Service runs the National Space Security Center. In addition, in June 2024, the "Space Operations Battalion" was expanded to become the "Space Operations Squadron." This squadron is under the command of the ROK Air Force and is responsible for analyzing space objects and satellites active around the Korean Peninsula as well as protecting the country's space assets.

6 India

India operates its regional satellite navigation system "NavIC" (Navigation with Indian Constellation), designed for positioning services for locations surrounding the country. In addition, in 2023, India completed the "Chandrayaan-3" mission by becoming the first country to successfully land unmanned lunar probes near the lunar south pole, which indicates the country's advanced technological capabilities.

In addition, India seems to be promoting further space development, including the country's "Chandrayaan-4" plan to send a new unmanned lunar exploration vessel to the Moon to collect a lunar sample and return it to Earth as well

9 According to the ROK Defense "2022 Defense White Paper" (2023).

as India's plan to build its own space station.

In October 2024, India also approved the third phase of its "SBS" (Space Based Surveillance) project, under which the country plans to launch at least 52 low-Earth-orbit and geostationary-orbit satellites within the next 10 years. Furthermore, in November of the same year, India conducted the space exercise "Antariksha Abhyas," organized by the Defence Space Agency, demonstrating its continued efforts to integrate space capabilities into national defense.

India is also promoting bilateral cooperation in the space domain. In addition to efforts to enhance its relationship with the United States, India has welcomed increased bilateral cooperation with Russia in areas such as manned spaceflight programs, satellite navigation, and planetary exploration, as stated in the joint statement issued following the India-Russia Summit held in July 2024.

7 Europe

The EU allocated 14.88 billion euros to its space policy in its medium-term budget plan from 2021 through 2027. To promote the space industry and strengthen security, the EU is advancing initiatives aimed at the sustainable use of advanced and resilient Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT) capabilities, precise Earth observation, enhanced space surveillance and tracking capabilities, and secure satellite communication services. In 2023, the EU published its Space Security and Defense Strategy, which stated that it would strengthen the use of space capabilities in security and defense, and it plans to develop new Earth observation services and provide initial SDA services.

NATO indicated its recognition that space is the fifth operational domain alongside land, sea, air and cyberspace and that armed attacks in space could trigger NATO's right to collective self-defense. In its new strategic concept published in 2022, NATO stated that it would strengthen its ability to operate effectively in the space and cyber domains. In October 2024, some NATO members agreed to the promotion of the "NORTHLINK initiative," which is a plan to build a military-satellite communication network in the Arctic, as well as the start of the "STARLIFT initiative," which is a plan to secure rocket launch capabilities.

The United Kingdom, in its Defence Space Strategy announced in 2022, stated that it will invest 1.4 billion pounds over the next 10 years in areas such as ISR and satellite communications. In addition, U.K. Space Command, which was officially established in 2021, successfully launched "Tyche," its first information gathering satellite, in 2024.

France announced its National Defense Space Strategy in 2019, stating that it aims to establish a space command and strengthen its threat recognition and space situation monitoring capabilities. In the same year, France established a space command under the Air Force. In 2020, the Air Force was renamed the Air and Space Force, adding activities to ensure free access to space and freedom of action in space to its duties. In addition, in the "Military Programming Act 2024-2030" enacted in 2023, France stated that it aims to establish a command, control, communications, and computing center for space operations and introduce patrol satellites.

Pyongyang General Control Center of the National Aerospace Technology Administration [Korean Central News Agency = Jiji]

Section 3 Trends in Cyber Domain

1 Cyberspace and Security

Cyberspace, starting with the Internet, is becoming increasingly important as a new social domain with various services and communities being formed. Therefore, cyberattacks that compromise information assets and networks in cyberspace are real threats to security because they can have serious impacts on society.

Additionally, cyberattacks include unauthorized access; information leakage and functional impairment by malware (unauthorized programs); information falsification and theft; DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks which impair networks by transmitting large amounts of data simultaneously; and the failure or takeover of critical infrastructure, such as electric power systems and medical systems, due to the use of ransomware. In addition, the methods of attack are becoming increasingly sophisticated; for example, it is pointed out that the use of AI for cyberattacks is possible.

For military forces also as well, cyberspace forms the foundation of command and control, which extends from central command to ground-level forces. In this regard, the dependence of military forces on cyberspace is further increasing. Since it is not easy to identify the attackers and ascertain the damage, cyberattacks are recognized as an asymmetrical means to impede military activities of adversaries at low cost. It is believed that many foreign armed forces are establishing or enhancing their cyberattack capabilities.

2 Threat Trend in Cyberspace

Cyberattacks have frequently been carried out against not only government organizations and military forces but also business corporations and academic organizations in various countries, targeting their critical technology, confidential information and personal data. In addition, advanced persistent threats (APT), which refers to relentless cyberattacks on specific organizations, is also considered to be an organized activity because it requires abundant resources, arrangements, and capabilities for long-term activities. Amid this situation, the United Kingdom has also identified cyberattacks by China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran as "real and enduring threats."[1]

1 China

In China, it was once believed that units responsible for cyber warfare were organized under the Strategic Support Force, but it has been pointed out that the Strategic Support Force was dissolved in 2024 and that its subordinate Cyberspace Force was elevated to a service arm. Taiwan has pointed out that China's Cyberspace Force has gradually and continuously attempted to infiltrate Taiwan's core infrastructure networks;[2] and that, in the event of a contingency, the Chinese military possesses the capability to launch cyberattacks to support operations against Taiwan by destroying Taiwan's core infrastructure and affecting the operation of military equipment systems.[3] China's 2019 defense white paper, released in July 2019 and titled "China's National Defense in the New Era," stated that China's armed forces are accelerating the building of their cyberspace capabilities. China is thus believed to have been enhancing its military's cyber warfare capabilities.

China is suspected of routinely stealing technologies and conducting surveillance of foreign adversaries in cyberspace.[4] In recent years, China's involvement in the following incidents was noted:

See Chapter 3, Section 2-2-5 (Military Posture)

- In May 2023, the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries announced that "Volt Typhoon," a cyber actor backed by the Chinese government, had infiltrated critical infrastructure in the United States. It was pointed out that, to avoid leaving traces, Volt Typhoon had used existing tools in the infiltration-target environment, thereby avoiding detection.
- In February 2024, the United States, United Kingdom, and other countries issued a warning that "Volt Typhoon" has been setting up preparations in IT networks to carry out cyberattacks that could potentially destroy U.S. critical infrastructure in the event of a major crisis or conflict involving the United States.
- In March 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice indicted seven members of the hacking group "APT31," which is supposedly run by the Chinese Ministry of State Security, for repeated crimes that included unauthorized computer intrusions and wire fraud committed against politicians

1 According to "NCSC Annual Review 2024," U.K. National Cyber Security Centre (2024).
2 According to "Analysis on China's Cyberattack Techniques in 2024," National Security Bureau.
3 According to Taiwan's National Defense Report (2023).
4 According to "North Korea Military Power," U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (2021).

critical of China's regime, other critics, etc.
- In November 2024, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) issued a joint statement, according to which PRC-affiliated actors attacked multiple types of U.S. telecommunications infrastructure to steal the private communications data of individuals involved in the U.S. government and political activities.
- In January 2025, the U.S. Treasury Department reported that "Salt Typhoon," which is apparently backed by China, gained unauthorized access to the network infrastructure of multiple major U.S. telecommunications companies and Internet service providers.
- In January 2025, the National Police Agency and National center of Incident readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC) announced that the Chinese APT group "MirrorFace" had launched cyberattacks targeting Japanese organizations, individuals, etc.

2 North Korea

North Korea has four major intelligence agencies and external intelligence agencies: the Reconnaissance General Bureau (RGB), the Ministry of State Security, the United Front Department of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Cultural Exchange Bureau. It is pointed out that their main targets are the ROK, the United States and Japan.[5] Moreover, it is pointed out that their personnel are trained by these agencies. This is led by the RGB of Korean People's Army and has intensively built-up cyber units, operating some 6,800 people.[6] It also is said that North Korea, which is under sanctions of various kinds, uses cyberattacks to acquire foreign currency by taking advantage of sanction loopholes.[7] It also steals foreign military secret intelligence and develops capabilities to attack the critical infrastructure of other countries. The United Nations Security Council Expert Panel 2023 Final Report issued in 2024 alleged that 58 cyber-attacks against cryptocurrency-related companies suspected of North Korean involvement from 2017 to 2023 amounted to approximately $3 billion in damages and that North Korea is earning approximately 50% of its foreign currency income through cyber-attacks and using it for its weapons of mass destruction programs. In 2024, North Korea's involvement was mainly pointed out in the following cases:
- In March 2024, the ROK's National Intelligence Service announced that North Korean hackers had launched cyberattacks against ROK-based semiconductor companies and had stolen product designs, etc.
- In April 2024, the ROK's National Police Agency announced that the North Korean cyber actors "Lazarus," "Andariel," and "Kimsuky" had spent at least a year and a half launching cyberattacks targeting around ten ROK defense industry companies in order to steal technological data.
- In December 2024, the U.S. FBI and Department of Defense Cyber Crime Center as well as Japan's National Police Agency jointly announced that the cyberattack group "Trader Traitor," which is supposedly backed by North Korea, had stolen approximately 48.2 billion yen in cryptocurrency from the Japanese cryptocurrency company "DMM Bitcoin."
- In January 2025, the National Police Agency and NICS announced that the Chinese APT group "MirrorFace" had launched cyberattacks targeting Japanese organizations, individuals, etc.

3 Russia

It has been pointed out that in the case of Russia, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces (GRU), the Federal Security Service (FSB), and the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) have been involved in cyberattacks, and it has become clear that Russia's armed forces have a cyber command unit.[8] The cyber command unit is believed to be responsible for conducting offensive cyber activities, including inserting malware into command and control systems of adversaries,[9] and is said to have approximately 1,000 personnel.

Moreover, Russia revealed, in its National Security Strategy released in July 2021, its perception that space and information space are under active development as a new domain for military action and declared to reinforce its sovereignty in the information space as a national priority.

Russia is said to be improving its espionage, influence and attack capabilities[10] and is suspected of being involved in the following incidents in 2024:
- In March 2024, a U.S. IT firm announced that the cyber actor "Midnight Blizzard," which is supposedly backed by Russia, stole the firm's source code and gained unauthorized access to internal systems.[11]
- In May 2024, Poland reported that the cyber actor "APT28," which apparently has a relationship with the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces

5 According to the ROK Defense "2016 Defense White Paper" (2017).
6 According to the ROK Defense "2022 Defense White Paper" (2023).
7 According to "North Korea Military Power," U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (2021).
8 According to a statement made by then Russian Minister of Defence Shoigu, in an information session for Duma, the lower house, in February 2017. He said that the Russian military has a cyber command for countering political propaganda in the context of Russia's ongoing information war with Western countries. However, the former minister did not name the command.
9 According to then the U.S. Director of National Intelligence Clapper's written testimony on "Worldwide Cyber Threats" at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in September 2015.
10 According to "Cyber Strategy 2023," the U.S. DoD (2023).
11 According to a Microsoft Corporation announcement on March 8, 2024.

of the Russian Federation (GRU), sent phishing emails to multiple Polish government agencies intended to get them to download malware.

- In September 2024, the U.S. FBI, CISA, and National Security Agency (NSA) issued a warning that cyber actors affiliated with GRU Unit 29155 have been engaging in computer network activities aimed at various global targets for the purpose of espionage, sabotage, and inflicting reputational harm.
- In October 2024, the Computer Emergency Response Team of Ukraine (CERT-UA) announced that a large number of malicious emails were being distributed to government agencies, companies, and military entities and that these attacks might be the work of the cyber actor "APT29," which is backed by the Russian government.

4 Trends Concerning Other Threats

In recent years, supply chain attacks that involve embedding products with deliberately and fraudulently altered parts and software during the supply process, cyberattacks on critical infrastructure and other industrial control systems, and increased cyber threats that utilize generative AI have attracted attention.

In terms of supply chain attacks, in March 2024, the U.S. CISA issued a warning that versions 5.6.0 and 5.6.1 of the data compression software "XZ Utils" had been embedded with malicious code enabling unauthorized access. In terms of cyberattacks targeting industrial control systems, in March 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and NSA issued a warning that hacker groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as well as "Volt Typhoon" had launched malicious attacks targeting critical infrastructure in the United States that included its drinking water systems.

There are also concerns that generative AI tools, which enable even threat actors with poor technical capabilities to quickly create malicious programs, will be used to launch cyberattacks. There have even been reports that approximately 40% of messages used for BEC (business email compromise) are created using generative AI.[12]

3 Initiatives against Cyberspace Threats

Given these growing threats in cyberspace, various initiatives are under way.

It is believed that the international community has diverging views on fundamental matters related to cyberspace, including how international law should be applied. For instance, the United States, Europe and Japan have called for maintaining a free cyberspace, while Russia, China and most emerging countries have sought to strengthen state control of cyberspace. The United Nations held an open-ended working group meeting from 2021 to 2025 to discuss a wide-ranging issue on threat perceptions, norms and the application of international law in cyberspace.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-5 (Responses in the Cyber Domain), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-4-2 (Cyber Domain)

1 The United States

In the United States, the Department of Homeland Security is responsible for protecting federal government networks and critical infrastructure against cyberattacks, and CISA works to protect the networks of government agencies. In addition, to help prevent the leakage of sensitive information related to critical infrastructure, etc., in September 2023, the United States proposed new regulations to ban the importing of connected cars[13] designed, developed, manufactured, or sold by companies affiliated with China or Russia.

The U.S. government has announced a National Cybersecurity Strategy, setting out the need to focus on protecting critical infrastructure and preventing and dismantling threat actors. The government has also announced a "Zero Trust[14] Strategy" to strengthen cybersecurity at federal agencies, calling on each ministry and agency to implement security measures based on the Zero Trust model. In addition, the government has announced a National Cyber Workforce and Education Strategy to secure cyber workforce, which sets out its intention to address the long-term issue of acquiring basic cyber skills for the public and reforming cyber education.

Regarding national security, the U.S. government's National Security Strategy states that it will respond decisively to hostile actions in cyberspace with the aim of deterring cyber-attacks. Meanwhile, the National Defense Strategy prioritizes building resilience in the cyber domain

12 According to a VIPRE Security Group, Inc. announcement on July 31, 2024.
13 Refers to automobiles that function as ICT terminals. These vehicles use sensors to acquire various kinds of data, including information on vehicle conditions and surrounding road environments. This data is then collected and analyzed through a network. According to the U.S. government, while connected cars offer advantages that include the promotion of vehicle stability and driver navigation support, they also pose risks that include the misuse of collected geographic information or sensitive information related to critical infrastructure as well as interference with vehicle operation.
14 This concept is based on the view that human nature is fundamentally evil, with the principle of "Do not trust even insiders and be suspicious of both outsiders and insiders without distinction." Users, equipment such as terminal units, or even access rights arouse suspicion, and if there is a high possibility of spoofing etc., the right to access is immediately suspended. The main targets of this defense are assets such as data or equipment.

and cites offensive cyber defenses as a means of direct deterrence. Furthermore, the Department of Defense's Cyber Strategy 2023 stated that the department would track the organizations, capabilities and intentions of attackers, disrupt and degrade malicious cyber activities and defend against them, as well as support the Unified Combatant Command's operations in the cyber domain and cooperate with allies and related countries to defend against them.

At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting in 2019, the two countries agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of cyberspace, affirming that international law applies in cyberspace and that a cyber-attack could, in certain circumstances, constitute an armed attack for the purposes of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

The U.S. Forces include Cyber Command, which was elevated to a unified combatant command in May 2018 to control cyberspace operations. The U.S. Cyber Command, with 6,200 personnel, comprises teams that protect the Department of Defense's information networks, monitor and defend against adversary cyber activities and support the Unified Combatant Commands' operations. The U.S. military also conducts operations to defend against and disrupt malicious cyber activities on critical networks in partner nations such as Latvia and Lithuania.

2 Republic of Korea

The ROK has announced a new "National Cyber Security Strategy" in February 2024, which aims to develop offensive cyber defenses and ensure resilience in response to cyber threats from North Korea and other nations, as well as the evolving cyber landscape. In September 2024, the ROK formulated its subordinate document "National Cybersecurity Basic Plan," detailing specific policies for achieving the country's goals.

In terms of national defense, the ROK's military has established a structure to perform cyber operations led by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2019, while developing a collaborative system among the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Cyber Operations Command and each military branch in enhancing its cyber operations preparedness and ensuring effective response to threats in cyberspace. In addition, during the Ulchi exercise in August 2024, government, military, and civilian participants engaged in the first integrated field training aimed at achieving cyber resilience.[15]

3 Australia

In its Defence Cyber Security Strategy released in 2022, Australia stated that it would achieve mission-focused and state-of-the-art cybersecurity adapted to the cyber threat environment through best practices and partnerships and set action goals such as operational model implementation and capability acquisition. In addition, the "2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy," published in 2023, established a roadmap for Australia to become a global cybersecurity leader by 2030.

In November 2024, Australia established the Cyber Security Act, the first law of its kind in the country. The aims of this act are to mandate both ransomware reporting and smart-device security standards while also introducing a framework for managing significant cyber incidents.

On the organizational front, cybersecurity capabilities across the government have been centralized through the establishment of the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), which addresses major cybersecurity issues related to government agencies and critical infrastructure. In addition, in 2023, Australia established the National Office of Cyber Security (NOCS) under the jurisdiction of the Australian Department of Home Affairs to handle responsibilities that include the coordination of cyber policy.

The Australian Defence Force created the Information Warfare Division under the Joint Capabilities Group in 2017 and established the Defence Signals Intelligence and Cyber Command (DSCC) under the division in 2018. In 2019, the Royal Australian Air Force offered to recruit cyber skills officers to protect networks, data and information systems.

4 Europe

The EU announced "EU's Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade" in 2020, which set goals such as revising regulations for resilient infrastructure and essential services and establishing a joint cyber unit across the civilian, diplomatic, police and defense sectors. In addition, the EU announced its Cyber Defense Policy in 2022 to strengthen the EU's ability to protect its citizens and infrastructure. In 2024, the EU enforced the Cyber Resilience Act to safeguard consumers and businesses by imposing cybersecurity requirements on all products that are directly or indirectly connected to either other devices or networks.

At the NATO Summit in 2014, an agreement was reached indicating that NATO's collective defense applies to cyberattacks against member states. In addition, at the NATO Summit in 2024, an agreement was reached to establish the new NATO Integrated Cyber Defence Centre (NICC). The purpose of the new center is to attempt to integrate various existing cyber-related functions, thereby increasing situational awareness and enhancing collective resilience and defense in cyberspace.

Furthermore, in 2008, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) was authorized to serve as a research and training institution. The CCDCOE published the Tallinn Manual 2.0 on international law

15 The ability to respond flexibly and restore operations in cases where command-and-control systems or information-communication networks are partially compromised due to cyberattacks.

applicable to cyber operations in 2017 and an initiative to revise the manual to version 3.0 is ongoing. In 2024, the CCDCOE held the cyber defense exercise "Locked Shields," and NATO held the cyber defense exercise "Cyber Coalition," in which NATO member states as well as Japan participated.

In its National Cyber Strategy published in 2021, the United Kingdom set out strategic objectives such as detection, disruption and deterrence of adversaries. In addition, the "National Cyber Force: Responsible Cyber Warfare Practices," published in 2023, stated that it would disrupt terrorist activities, counter APT threats and mitigate election interference and would pursue efforts to enhance the National Cyber Force's scale, capabilities and functional integration going forward.

In its National Digital Security Strategy published in 2015, France stated that it would protect its fundamental interests in cyberspace and strengthen its response to cybercrimes. In addition, in its "Strategic Review of Cyber Defense" in 2018, it clarified its cyber crisis management process.

Cyber exercise "Cyber Coalition 2024," organized by NATO [NATO website]

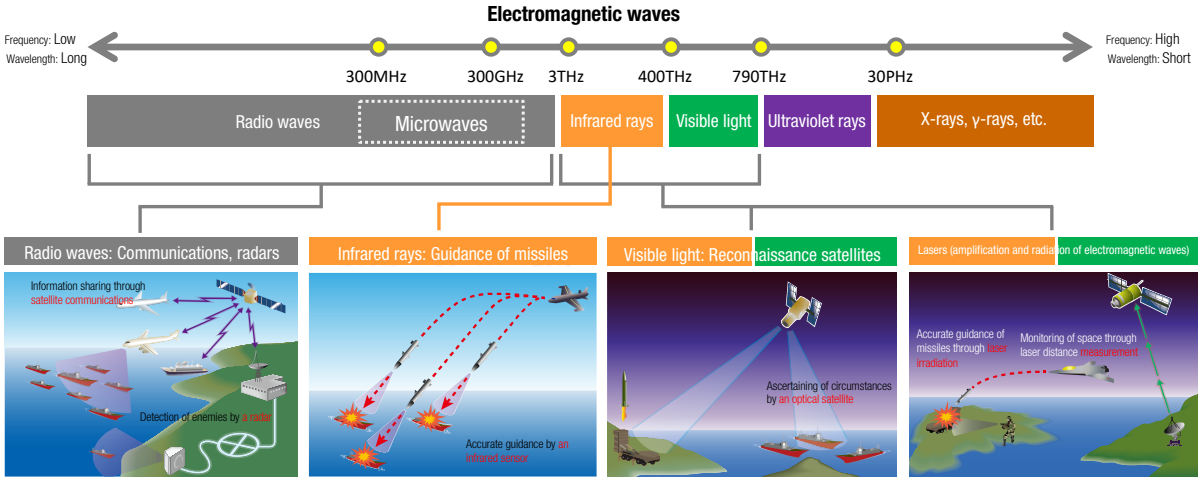
Section 4 Trends in Electromagnetic Domain

1 Electromagnetic Domain and Security

Electromagnetic spectrum is used in various everyday applications, including televisions, mobile communications and global positioning systems (GPS). In the military field, electromagnetic spectrum is used for command-and-control communications equipment, radar systems for detecting enemies, missile guidance systems and other equipment. Securing superiority in the electromagnetic domain is indispensable for modern operations. Activities using the electromagnetic domain include "electronic warfare" and "electromagnetic spectrum management." Electronic warfare means or approaches are generally classified into three categories - electronic attack, electronic protection and electronic warfare support.

See Fig. I-4-4-1 (How to Use the Electromagnetic Domain in the Defense Field)

Fig. I-4-4-1 How to Use the Electromagnetic Domain in the Defense Field



"Electronic attack" involves jamming electromagnetic waves emitted from the adversary's communication equipment or radar by emitting strong electromagnetic waves or fake electromagnetic waves mimicking those emitted by the adversary, thereby reducing or disabling the adversary's communications and search capabilities. Electronic jamming include electromagnetic interference (jamming), electromagnetic wave deception and physical destruction using high-power electromagnetic waves (such as lasers and microwaves).

See Section 1-2-2 (High-power Energy Technology)

"Electronic protection" is to make it difficult to be detected by adversaries and to reduce or neutralize adversary electronic jamming on communications and radar equipment by changing electromagnetic wave frequency for use or increasing its power.

"Electronic warfare support" consists of activities designed to collect information relating to electromagnetic waves used by adversaries. To effectively conduct electronic jamming and electronic protection, it is necessary to continuously monitor and analyze what kind of electromagnetic waves are used and how by the adversary's communications equipment, radar and electronic jamming aircraft.

"Electromagnetic wave management" is to grasp how electromagnetic waves are used in the battle area and to appropriately adjust frequencies, directions and durations of electromagnetic waves used by friendly forces and equipment to avoid electromagnetic wave interference.

Major countries recognize electronic attacks as an asymmetric means of attack similar to cyber attacks that effectively prevent adversaries from demonstrating their military capabilities. They are also placing importance on and enhancing their electronic warfare capabilities, including the ability to launch electronic attacks.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-1-6 (Responses in the Electromagnetic Spectrum Domain), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-4-3 (Electromagnetic spectrum Domain)

2 Each Country's Electronic Warfare Initiatives

1 The United States and Europe

In its "Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority Strategy" announced in 2020, the United States states that ensuring freedom of action in the electromagnetic spectrum, at the time, place and parameters of its choosing, is a prerequisite for successful operations across all domains. In 2021, an implementation plan for the strategy was approved, which - the United States says - paves the way for initiatives such as establishing procedures to develop, integrate and strengthen integrated electromagnetic spectrum operations and develop guidance for acquiring electromagnetic spectrum capabilities.

In 2021, the U.S. Army deployed a multidomain unit having space, cyberspace and electronic warfare functions in Germany. Furthermore, the U.S. Air Force newly established the 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing to operate and maintain electronic warfare. In 2023, the Strategic Command officially opened the "Joint Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations Center," which is intended to serve as the center of the U.S. military's electromagnetic spectrum operations, including force management, planning and situational monitoring. It conducts a space electronic warfare exercise called "Black Skies," and a command-and-control exercise under electromagnetic interference called "Heavy Rain."

In 2023, the EU announced the "2023 EU Capability Development Priorities," which laid out the policy for developing defense capabilities and cited the superiority of electromagnetic spectrum operations as strategic enablers and the importance of the ability to plan and coordinate electromagnetic spectrum operations.

At NATO, the NATO Electronic Warfare Advisory Committee (NEWAC) fulfills the role of the principal forum for consultation and coordination of electromagnetic warfare, providing advice and recommendations to the NATO Military Committee. At the NATO plenary meeting held in November 2024, the importance of achieving "electromagnetic superiority" in modern warfare was emphasized, recognizing that the widespread use of electromagnetic warfare in Ukraine and in the Middle East demonstrates that it has become a crucial domain in modern warfare.

In 2024, NATO also conducted electronic warfare exercises such as the "Dynamic Guard" naval exercise and the "Ramstein Guard" air exercise.

2 China

The Chinese military considers electronic warfare to be an essential element of modern warfare. It appears that the Chinese military seeks to achieve information dominance in a conflict by aligning electronic warfare and cyberspace to protect its own information networks and prevent the enemy from using the electromagnetic domain.[1]

The Chinese military's electronic warfare strategy is reportedly focused on suppressing, degrading, disrupting and deceiving enemy electronic equipment. Its electronic warfare units are said to be routinely training to conduct jamming and anti-jamming operations against multiple communication and radar systems and GPS receivers during exercises, which are believed to evaluate operational units' proficiency in electronic warfare weapons and other aspects.[2]

On the organizational front, the Strategic Support Force, which is considered to have been responsible for electronic warfare, was dissolved in April 2024, and its subordinate Aerospace Force and Cyberspace Force were reportedly elevated to service arms. The Cyberspace Force now appears to be responsible for electronic warfare.[3]

China has allegedly deployed radio wave jamming equipment on Mischief Reef in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.[4]

Around Japan, flights of Y-8 and Y-9 electronic warfare aircraft and other aircraft have been confirmed.

3 Russia

Russia, in its Military Doctrine, places electronic warfare equipment as one of the critical equipment in modern military conflicts. Moreover, according to a Russian military organ's contributed article of April 2021, Russia will ensure superiority in weapon guidance as well as force command by improving electronic warfare technology and expanding equipment, in response to the technological superiority of developed countries that have advanced information and communication technology.

In the Russian Forces, there are reportedly five electronic warfare brigades.[5] They mainly consist of the Land Forces and possess multiple types of electronic warfare equipment. Furthermore, Russia is further developing and deploying electronic warfare (EW) systems equipped with artificial intelligence (AI) such as the EW system Bylina that controls many EW equipment in an integrated manner and the EW system Palantin that reportedly can interfere with radio communications and electronic reconnaissance systems within a radius of 1,000 km.

During the aggression against Ukraine, Russia's electronic

1 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
2 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
3 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
4 According to "An Accounting of China's Deployments to the Spratly Islands," Center for Strategic and International Studies (May 2018).
5 According to "All quiet on the eastern front: EW in Russia's new-generation warfare," Jane's International Defence Review (April 2018).

warfare equipment appears to have been effective in interfering with the navigation of Ukrainian drones[6] and degrading the guidance accuracy of GPS-guided missiles from Ukraine. In addition, to protect against Ukrainian drones, Russia is installing jammers on armored vehicles and taking measures to suppress drones' communications.

AI-controlled XQ-58A UAV flying in formation with manned aircraft
[Photo courtesy of U.S. DoD]

6 According to "Meatgrinder: Russian Tactics in the Second Year of Its Invasion of Ukraine" (2023), Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies.

Section 5 Maritime Trends

Japan is a maritime nation surrounded by sea and depends on maritime transportation for importing energy resources. In this sense, securing maritime traffic safety is vital for the nation's existence. At the same time, ensuring the stable use of the maritime domain as infrastructure supporting international logistics is recognized as a primary concern for the international community.

Nevertheless, some countries unilaterally claim their rights or take action based on their own assertions that are incompatible with the existing international order, creating situations where the principle of the freedom of the high seas is unjustly violated. Attacks on ships in the Middle East and piracy seen at various locations have become a threat to maritime traffic. In addition, in recent years, new maritime challenges have emerged, including increasing military activities in the Arctic as well as incidents involving damage to submarine cables in the Baltic Sea and the waters surrounding Taiwan.

1 Trends Related to the "Principle of the Freedom of the High Seas" etc.

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea[1] (UNCLOS) provides for the principles of freedom of navigation in the high seas and freedom of overflight. Nevertheless, in the waters and airspace surrounding Japan, especially in the East and South China Seas, it has become increasingly common for China to unilaterally assert its rights or take action based on assertions that are incompatible with the existing international order, creating situations where these principles are unjustly violated. In addition, North Korea's repeated launches of ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan and the Pacific Ocean as well as launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch, not only violate related United Nations Security Council resolutions but are also problematic from the perspective of ensuring the safety of aircraft and ships. They also threaten the peace and security of Japan, the surrounding region, and the international community.

See Chapter 3, Section 2-2-6 (Maritime and Airspace Activities), Chapter 3, Section 4-1-3 (WMD and Missiles)

Despite these numerous acts that could pose risks to securing the stable use of oceans and airspace, in recent years progress has been made in efforts to avert and prevent unintended consequences in the seas and skies.

As for multilateral initiatives, navies of countries participating in the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) adopted the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES).[2] CUES sets forth a code of conduct, such as procedures and communication methods, for ensuring safety in the event of unexpected encounters by vessels or aircraft of the navies of these countries. In addition, ASEAN and China are continuing to hold official talks aimed at formulating the Code of the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (COC).

It is strongly hoped that these initiatives designed to avert and prevent unintended consequences in the seas and skies will supplement the existing international order and that the countries concerned, including China, refrain from unilateral actions that add to tension and act on the basis of the principle of the rule of law.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-15 (China)

2 National Maritime Security Initiatives

1 Maritime Security in the Middle East

Since May 2019, sporadic events affecting the navigation safety of civilian vessels have occurred in the waters of the Middle East.

Given this situation, countries continue to carry out efforts to safeguard maritime security in the region. For example, in July 2019, the United States proposed the Maritime Security Initiative and established the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC). The IMSC has 12 member states, including the United States (as of March 2025).

After the clashes between Israel and Palestinian militants started in October 2023, the Houthis, claiming that they were acting in solidarity with the people of Gaza, started attacking civilian ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and these attacks have been ongoing since November 2023. On November 19, a Japanese ship was also seized. Note that

1 The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was adopted as a comprehensive treaty on the law and order of the seas in 1982 and entered into force in 1994 (Japan signed it in 1996).
2 This code is not legally binding and does not supersede the annexes of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and other international treaties.

the members of this ship's crew were released in January 2025.

In response to such events, in December 2023, the United States announced the launch of Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPG) to conduct patrols in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. OPG is a multinational security operation under Combined Task Force 153, the mission of which is to conduct maritime security and capacity building activities from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. In addition, in February 2024, the EU launched Operation Aspides, a defensive maritime security operation aimed at protecting ships from being attacked.

Furthermore, on January 12, 2024, U.S. and British forces, supported by Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, and Bahrain, attacked Houthi military bases. In addition, Israel, which is involved in a conflict with the Houthis, is conducting sporadic airstrikes against Houthi bases.

Attacks by the Houthis are still continuing, and Japan needs to continue to pay close attention to trends surrounding the situation in the Middle East.

2 Piracy

Piracy seen at various locations has become a threat to maritime traffic. The number of piracy and armed robbery incidents at sea (hereinafter "piracy incidents") around the world[3] has declined in recent years after peaking at 445 incidents in 2010 (there were 116 incidents in 2024).

The decline has depended heavily on the fall in the number of piracy incidents in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. The number of piracy incidents in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden rose rapidly from 2008 to 237 incidents in 2011, accounting for more than half of the total number of piracy incidents worldwide and attracting great international concern as a threat to safe navigation. In recent years, the number of piracy incidents in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has remained low as a result of various initiatives taken by the international community, including Japan. However, according to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), one hijacking incident occurred in December 2023, the first since 2017. Three more hijacking incidents occurred in 2024, and the situation remains unpredictable. The root causes of piracy, such as Somalia's unstable internal security and poverty, remain unresolved, and the threat posed by piracy still exists. Given the current situation, unless the international community further strengthens its ongoing efforts, there is a risk that acts of piracy will intensify even more. (For details on Japan's initiatives, see Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-7 "Efforts to Ensure the Stable Use of Sea Lanes.")

International counter-piracy initiatives in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden include counter-piracy operations by Combined Task Force 151 (CTF151), a multinational force that was created by the U.S. Force-led Combined Maritime Force (CMF)[4] based in Bahrain, such as zone defense operations to counter piracy. The EU for its part has conducted Operation Atalanta to counter piracy since December 2008. During this operation, naval vessels and aircraft dispatched by EU member countries escort ships and monitor the waters off the coast of Somalia. It has been decided that the operation will continue until the end of February 2027.

Meanwhile, in Africa, piracy incidents occurred in the Gulf of Guinea (the number of incidents was 18 in 2024). The international community has continued counter-piracy initiatives in Africa.

The number of piracy incidents in Southeast Asian waters came to 70 in 2024. In particular, piracy incidents in the Singapore Strait have been increasing since 2019, with 43 incidents having occurred in 2024. Although many of these incidents are minor, such as theft of equipment, they account for nearly one-third of all piracy incidents reported worldwide.

3 Trends in the Arctic Ocean

In recent years, moves towards the utilization of trans-Arctic navigation routes and the development of natural resources in the Arctic Ocean have gained momentum in line with a decline in sea ice. The eight arctic circle nations consisting of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States established the Arctic Council

3 The numbers of piracy incidents cited in the main text are based on a report by the International Maritime Bureau of the International Chamber of Commerce. The number includes attempted cases.

4 The CMF is a multinational force that operates for the purpose of promoting maritime security, stability, and prosperity under the U.S. Central Command. Forces from 46 countries participate in the CMF (as of March 2025), and the Commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet concurrently serves as the CMF Commander. The CMF is comprised of five combined task forces: the Combined Task Force 150 which is tasked with maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Oman, the Combined Task Force 151 which is tasked with counter-piracy operations, the Combined Task Force 152 which is tasked with maritime security operations in the Persian Gulf, and the Combined Task Force 153 which is tasked with maritime security and capacity building operations from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, and the Combined Task Force 154 which is tasked with education and training for maritime security (established in May 2023). An JSDF unit participated in the Combined Task Force 151.

in 1996 to promote cooperation for common challenges such as sustainable development and environment protection.[5]

From the perspective of security, the Arctic Ocean has traditionally been used for the deployment of strategic nuclear forces and as their transit route. With the decrease in sea ice in recent years, ships have been able to navigate for a longer period of time and more extensively than before. It has therefore been considered that the region could be used for deploying maritime forces or maneuvering military forces using military maritime transport capabilities in future. In this situation, moves to deploy new military capabilities in the ocean are seen.

Russia's maritime doctrine, announced in July 2022, positioned the Arctic Ocean as an area of vital importance. Russia is promoting efforts to establish a system to protect its national interests in the Arctic region. Its various policy documents clearly state Russia's interests and the role of the Russian military in the Arctic. Furthermore, Russia is proceeding to develop a radar surveillance network as well as reconstructing airfields and deploying surface-to-air and surface-to-ship missiles along the Arctic coast.[6]

See Chapter 3, Section 5-3-5 (Trends Related to the AFRF (General))

Moving on to the United States, under the country's 2024 Arctic Strategy, which was announced in July 2024, the United States, in cooperation with its allies and partners, will pursue an end state that preserves the Arctic as a stable region in which the U.S. homeland remains secure and vital national interests are safeguarded. In terms of activities, in March 2024, the United States conducted Operation Ice Camp 2024 (formerly called "ICEX"), an exercise related to the operation of submarines in the Arctic, which included participation by the Royal Canadian Navy and Air Force, the French Navy, the U.K. Royal Navy, and the Royal Australian Navy. The United States also has a base in Greenland called "Pituffik Space Base" (called "Thule Air Base" until April 2023).

Aside from coastal states in the Arctic Ocean, 13 countries including Japan, China, the ROK, the United Kingdom, Germany and France, have observer status in the Arctic Council. China shows a stance to be proactively involved in the Arctic Sea. It is pointed out that China could take advantage of scientific survey and commercial activities to increase its presence including military activities in the Arctic Sea.[7]

In addition, cooperation between China and Russia in the Arctic Ocean is increasing. According to a joint statement issued following a China-Russia summit meeting in May 2024, the two countries intend to deepen their cooperation related to Arctic Ocean sea routes. Later, in July 2024, four Chinese and Russian bombers participated in a joint flight over the Chukchi Sea, the Bering Sea, and the northern Pacific Ocean. In addition, from September to October 2024, the China Coast Guard and the Border Service of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation deployed ships on joint navigations from the Sea of Japan to the Arctic Ocean. According to the 2024 Arctic Strategy announced by the U.S. DoD, by promoting cooperation with Russia, China could open the door for further its presence in the Arctic. In addition, while significant areas of disagreement between China and Russia remain, their growing alignment in the region is of concern, and military cooperation between them, including joint exercises in the Arctic, continues to increase.

4 Trends in Undersea Infrastructure

In recent years, new maritime challenges have emerged, including incidents involving damage to submarine cables in the Baltic Sea and the waters surrounding Taiwan.

For example, in February 2023, submarine cables connecting the Matsu Islands to mainland Taiwan were cut, and Taiwanese authorities announced that it was believed to have been done by a Chinese fishing boat and cargo ship. In January 2025, four submarine cables for international communication in the waters north of Taiwan were damaged, and Taiwanese authorities announced that they were investigating the incident, including whether this was intentionally done by a cargo ship. Meanwhile, in the Baltic Sea as well, a number of critical submarine cables have been damaged since November 2024 in particular. To enhance maritime presence and monitoring, NATO hosted a Summit of Baltic Sea Allies in January 2025, where the launch of a new military activity called "Baltic Sentry" was announced.

Given that submarine cables are essential infrastructure for people's lives and economic activities, Japan must closely monitor any incidents related to submarine cables getting damaged.

See Chapter 3, Section 2-2-6 (Maritime and Airspace Activities)

5 Russia was supposed to be the chair country of the Arctic Council for two years from May 2021. However, in March 2022, the remaining seven Arctic region countries stated that they would stop participating in all the meetings of the Council with Russia as the chair country because of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Norway assumed the chairmanship in May 2023, and an agreement was reached to restart the working group.

6 According to the 2024 Arctic Strategy announced by the U.S. DoD, Russia is said to have the most developed military presence among Arctic nations. The strategy points out that Russia has a clear avenue of approach to the U.S. homeland through the Arctic and could use its Arctic-based capabilities to threaten the United States' ability to project power to both Europe and the Indo-Pacific region, thereby constraining its ability to respond to crises.

7 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2019).

Section 6 Transfer and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

The transfer and proliferation of WMDs such as nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, as well as ballistic missiles that deliver such weapons, have been recognized as a significant threat since the end of the Cold War. In addition, as competition and confrontation among states have been sharpened and the international security environment has become complex and severe in recent years, there are concerns that the international community is presented with greater difficulties to rally together in taking on common challenges such as arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

1 Nuclear Weapons

During the period when the risk of a full-scale nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Union, including the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), was widely recognized, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) went into effect in 1970. The treaty prohibited manufacture and acquisition of nuclear weapons by countries other than those that had exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device in or before 1966 (the United States, the former Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, and China). It was agreed that negotiations would be held in good faith regarding effective measures to reduce nuclear arsenals.

While the NPT has been concluded by a total of 191 countries and regions as of January 2025, some countries such as India, Israel, and Pakistan still refuse to participate as non-nuclear countries. In addition, North Korea, which has repeatedly conducted nuclear tests and declared its development and possession of nuclear weapons, added a provision to its constitution stating that it would "develop more advanced nuclear weapons" in September 2023. North Korea claims that it made the development and possession of nuclear capability a fundamental part of its national system.

Regarding nuclear capabilities of the United States and Russia, the two countries agreed on a five-year extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) in January 2021. However, as Russia continued its aggression against Ukraine while repeating words and actions that could be interpreted as threats to use nuclear weapons, talks between the two countries under the framework of the treaty in November 2022 was postponed, and Russia announced that it would suspend the treaty's implementation in February 2023.

Although the United States expresses its intention to pursue a framework of arms control with China included, China repeatedly rejects to be involved in the framework

Fig. I-4-6-1 Number of Nuclear Warheads Arsenals and Their Major Means of Delivery by Country

		The United States	Russia	The United Kingdom	France	China
Missiles	ICBM (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles)	400 Minuteman III 400	324 SS-18 40 SS-19 10 SS-27 (single-warhead) 78 SS-27 (multi-warhead) 124 SS-27 (Yars-S, multi-warhead) 72	—	—	148 DF-5 (CSS-4) 18 DF-31 (CSS-10) 86 DF-41 44
	IRBM MRBM	—	SS-28 some	—	—	322 DF-26 250 DF-21A/E (CSS-5) 24 DF-17 (CSS-22) 48
	SLBM (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles)	280 Trident D-5 280	192 SS-N-23 96 SS-N-32 96	48 Trident D-5 48	64 M-51 64	72 JL-2 (CSS-N-14)/ JL-3 (CSS-N-20) 72
Ballistic Missile Submarine Nuclear-Powered		14	12	4	4	6
Aircraft		65 B-2 19 B-52 46	71 Tu-95 (Bear) 58 Tu-160 (Blackjack) 13	—	40 Rafale 40	122 H-6K 110 H-6N 12+
Number of warheads		3,708	4,380 (including 1,558 tactical nuclear warheads)	225	290	500

(Notes) 1 Data is based on "The Military Balance 2025," the SIPRI Yearbook 2024, etc.
2 The SIPRI Yearbook 2024 said that, as of January 2024, the United States deployed 1,770 nuclear warheads (including 100 tactical ones) and Russia deployed 1,710 warheads.
3 The Integrated Review by the UK in March 2022 stipulated that the UK will move to an overall nuclear weapon stockpile of no more than 260 warheads.
4 According to the SIPRI Yearbook 2024, the nuclear warhead inventories of India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea are 172, 170, 90, and around 50, respectively. Among others, North Korea retains fissionable materials enough to produce up to 90 warheads as a whole.

between the United States and Russia. Meanwhile China is said to continuously enhance its nuclear capability, and it has been pointed out that the number of operational nuclear warheads it possesses could exceed 1,000 by 2030 and continue to increase until 2035.[1]

As the post-Cold War international order has been seriously challenged amidst historical changes in the balance of power and intensifying geopolitical competitions, it is necessary to closely monitor relevant trends to see if an effective framework of nuclear arms control and disarmament will be established in the future.

See Fig. I-4-6-1 (Number of Nuclear Warheads Arsenals and Their Major Means of Delivery by Country)

2 Biological and Chemical Weapons

Biological and chemical weapons are relatively inexpensive and easy to produce and disguise because many of the resources and technologies needed in their production are dual-use items. Therefore, development and/or acquisition by nations or terrorists seeking asymmetrical means for attack[2] is especially concerning. Furthermore, if those seeking biological and chemical weapons utilize emerging technologies such as big data and artificial Intelligence (AI), their ability to develop weapons will further increase.

Biological weapons have the following characteristics: (1) easy and inexpensive to produce; (2) there is usually an incubation period of a few days between exposure and onset of the symptom; (3) hard to detect their use; (4) even the threat of use can create great psychological effects; and (5) they can cause mass casualties and injuries depending on the circumstances of use and the type of weapon.

With regard to biological weapons, there has been speculation that North Korea and Russia have plans for offensive biological weapons that violate their obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).[3] In addition, it has been pointed out that in China, military medical institutions conducted toxin and biotechnology research and with potential biological weapons applications.[4]

Chemical weapons were used in such incidents as the sarin attack in the subway in Japan in 1995, which demonstrated the threat of terrorism using weapons of mass destruction in cities. Recent examples include the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime in Syria and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as well as the attempted poisoning of Russian opposition leaders in which Novichok, a drug developed by Russia, was allegedly used. There have also been allegations that the Russian military used riot control agents during the fighting in Ukraine.

In addition, it has been pointed out that China is conducting research on substances such as agents which have utility for chemical weapons application, raising concerns about China's possible nonfulfillment of its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).[5] Moreover, North Korea has not ratified the CWC and is said to still possess chemical weapons.

3 Ballistic Missiles and Other Missiles

Ballistic missiles are propelled by rockets for parabolic flights and are capable of attacking distant targets. They can be used as a means of delivering WMDs. As they fall at a steep angle and high speed, highly accurate systems are required for intercepting them effectively. Moreover, technologies related to ballistic missiles have been changing and developing quickly in recent years. For example, ballistic missiles flying at lower altitudes than typical ballistic missiles while following an irregular trajectory by controlling wings emerged and makes early detection and interception difficult.

See Fig. I-4-6-2 (Classification of Ballistic Missiles)

The deployment of ballistic missiles in areas with continuous armed conflicts is dangerous because it can intensify existing tensions and make the area unstable. Furthermore, ballistic missiles are used as a means of attacking from a distance or threatening another country that has superior conventional forces.

Along with the threat of ballistic missiles, the threat of cruise missiles is also pointed out as a weapon which is comparatively easy to acquire for non-state actors, and has the potential for proliferation. Because cruise missiles are cheaper to produce compared to ballistic missiles as well

1 According to the annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024).
2 They refer to means of attack to strike an adversary's vulnerable points and are not conventional means. They include WMDs, ballistic missiles, terrorist attacks, and cyber attacks.
3 According to the "Biodefense Posture Review," U.S. DoD (2023).
4 According to "Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments," U.S. DoS (2024).
5 According to "Annual Report on Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," U.S. DoD (2024); "Condition (10) (C) Annual Report on Compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)," U.S. DoS (2024).

as easy to maintain and train with, many countries either produce or modify cruise missiles. Moreover, some cruise missiles have relatively higher target accuracy, are difficult to detect while cruising, and are able to approach the targets while concealed on a ship, therefore they will pose a serious threat when carrying WMDs with them.

Fig. I-4-6-2 Classification of Ballistic Missiles

Category	Range
Short-Range Ballistic Missile, SRBM	Under approx. 1,000 km or less
Medium-Range Ballistic Missile, MRBM	Approx. 1,000 to under approx. 3,000 km
Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile, IRBM	Approx. 3,000 to under approx. 5,500 km
Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, ICBM	Approx. 5,500 km or more

(Note) Ballistic missiles launched from submarines are collectively referred to as submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), while a ballistic missile that has a precision guidance system on its warhead necessary to attack aircraft carriers and other vessels is called an anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM).

4 Growing Concerns about Transfer and Proliferation of WMDs and Other Technologies

Even weapons that were purchased or developed for self-defense purposes could easily be exported or transferred once domestic manufacturing becomes successful. Some of these states that seek WMDs do not hesitate to put their land and people at risk, and furthermore, due to their weak governance, terrorist organizations are active in their territories. Therefore, it is conceivable that in general, the possibility of actual use of WMDs would increase.

The proliferation of WMDs and other related technologies has been noted in numerous instances. For example, it came to light in February 2004 that nuclear-related technologies, mainly uranium enrichment technology, had been transferred to North Korea, Iran, and Libya by Dr. A.Q. Khan and other scientists in Pakistan.

There has been significant transfer and proliferation of ballistic missiles that serve as means of weapon delivery as well. The former Soviet Union and other countries exported Scud-B to many countries and regions, including Iraq, North Korea, and Afghanistan. China and North Korea also exported DF-3 (CSS-2) and Scud missiles, respectively. As a result, a considerable number of countries and other actors now possess ballistic missiles.

North Korea is believed to have advanced its ballistic missile development with almost no test launches using various resources and technologies transferred from outside during the 1980s and 1990s. On the other hand, it is believed that North Korea continuously proliferates technologies, conventional weapons, and items used in the supply chains of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) to acquire foreign currencies and maintain foreign relations. For example, North Korea is reportedly cooperating with Iran, Syria, Myanmar, Russia, and other countries in areas such as arms trading and weapon technology transfers.

It has been pointed out that, in recent years, states of particular concern have sustained their external transfer while skillfully averting international monitoring by falsifying documentation and diversifying transport routes to illicitly export WMDs. Another concern has arisen that these states are also conducting intangible technology transfers. Specifically, these states have obtained advanced technologies that could be adapted for the development and manufacturing of WMDs and other technologies through their researchers and students dispatched to major companies and academic institutions in developed countries.

Part II

Japan's Security and Defense Policy

Chapter 1 Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense

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

Chapter 3 Defense Buildup and the Budget

Chapter 4 Organizations Responsible for Japan's Security and Defense

Chapter 5 Framework for the JSDF Activities

Chapter 1 Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense

Section 1 Measures to Ensure Security

The independent state of a nation must be protected in order for it to determine its own direction in politics, economy, and society, as well as maintaining its culture, tradition, and sense of values. In addition, peace and security are essential for the people to live with a sense of safety and for Japan to continue to prosper. However, Japan's sovereignty and independence can only be maintained through its own proactive and autonomous efforts.

The first priority in protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people of Japan should be the development of active diplomacy. It is essential to cooperate with like-minded countries and promote multilateral cooperation based on the Japan-U.S. Alliance[1] with the United States, which shares fundamental values and interests with Japan while emphasizing universal values and principles such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

At the same time, defense capabilities are required to back up diplomacy. As its strategic approach, Japan will develop 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.

Meanwhile, it is now not possible for a single country to ensure its security on its own. Therefore, cooperation and collaboration with allies, like-minded countries, and the like is essential.

From the perspective of creating the ideal security environment for Japan and preventing the emergence of threats, the importance of the role played by defense capabilities is increasing in cooperative efforts as a member of the Indo-Pacific region and the international community.

Upon recognizing the role of defense capabilities, Japan aims to ensure national security, as well as bring peace and security to the Indo-Pacific region, and eventually to the entire world, by exerting its utmost efforts in a variety of fields, including diplomacy and economics.

See Fig. III-3-1 (MOD's Approach Under the Vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) (image)), Chapter 2, Section 2 [Commentary] (Counterstrike Capabilities)

KEY WORD **FOIP**

A vision for improving connectivity between Asia and Africa through a Free and Open Indo-Pacific and thus fostering the stability and prosperity of the whole region. This vision was put forward by then Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in August 2016.

Section 2 The Constitution and the Basis of Defense Policy

1 The Constitution and the Right of Self-Defense

After the end of World War II, Japan determined not to repeat horrors of war and has worked hard to build a peace-loving nation. The Japanese people desire peace for all time, and the principle of pacifism is enshrined in the Constitution, Article 9, which prescribes the renunciation of war, the prohibition of war potential, and the denial of the right of belligerency of the state. Since Japan is an independent nation, it goes without saying that these provisions do not deny Japan's inherent right of self-defense as a sovereign state. Thus, the Japanese Government interprets it as a constitutional right to possess the minimum armed forces needed to exercise that right.

Therefore, Japan, under the Constitution, maintains the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) as an armed organization, holding its exclusively defense-oriented policy as its basic strategy of defense, and continues to keep it equipped and ready for operations.

1 In general, this refers to the relationship, based on the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, whereby both nations, as countries sharing fundamental values and interests, coordinate and cooperate closely in a range of areas in security, politics, and economics.

2 The Government's View on Article 9 of the Constitution

1 Permitted Self-Defense Capability

Under the Constitution, Japan is permitted to possess the minimum required self-defense capability. The specific limit is subject to change according to the prevailing international situation, the level of military technologies, and various other factors, and it is discussed and decided through annual budget and other deliberations by the Diet on behalf of the people. Whether its capability constitutes a war potential that Japan is prohibited to possess by Article 9, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution must be considered within the context of Japan's overall military strength. Therefore, whether the JSDF should be allowed to possess certain armaments depends on whether such a possession would cause its total military strength to exceed the constitutional limit.

The possession of so-called "offensive weapons," which are designed to be used only for the mass destruction of another country, is not permissible under any circumstance as it would directly exceed the definition of the minimum necessary level for self-defense. For example, the JSDF is not allowed to possess intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), long-range strategic bombers, or attack aircraft carriers.

2 Measures for Self-Defense Permitted under Article 9 of the Constitution

It has been concluded in the Cabinet's decision made on July 1, 2014, "Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect its People," that the use of force should be interpreted to be permitted under the Constitution as measures for self-defense when the following three conditions (Three Conditions for the "Use of force") are met:

(1) When an armed attack against Japan has occurred, or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness;

(2) When there is no appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protect its people;

(3) Use of force to the minimum extent necessary.

See Reference 4 (Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect its People)

3 Geographic Boundaries within Which the Right of Self-Defense May Be Exercised

The use of the minimum necessary force to defend Japan under the right of self-defense is not necessarily confined to the geographic boundaries of Japanese territory, territorial waters, and airspace. However, it is difficult to give a general definition of the actual extent to which it may be used, as this would vary with the situation.

Nevertheless, the Government interprets that, as a general rule, the Constitution does not permit armed troops to be dispatched to the land, sea, or airspace of other countries with the aim of using force; such overseas deployment of troops would exceed the definition of the minimum necessary level for self-defense.

4 Right of Belligerency

Article 9, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution prescribes that "the right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized." However, the "right of belligerency" does not mean the right to engage in battle; rather, it is a general term for various rights that a belligerent nation has under international law, including inflicting and damage upon the enemy's military force and occupying enemy territory.

On the other hand, it is recognized as a matter of course for Japan to be able to use the minimum necessary level of force to defend itself under its right of self-defense. For example, the act of Japan inflicting casualties and damage upon an enemy's military force under its right of self-defense constitutes a different concept from doing so under the exercise of the right of belligerency. Occupation of enemy territory, however, is not permissible because it would exceed the minimum necessary level for self-defense.

3 Basic Policy

Under the Constitution, Japan has efficiently built a highly effective and joint defense force in line with the basic policies of maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries, while firmly maintaining the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, adhering to the principle of civilian control of the military, and observing the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.

1 Exclusively Defense-Oriented Policy

The exclusively defense-oriented policy means that defensive force is used only in the event of an attack, that the extent of the use of defensive force is kept to the minimum necessary for self-defense, and that the defense capabilities to be possessed and maintained by Japan are limited to the minimum necessary for self-defense. The policy including these matters refers to the posture of a passive defense strategy in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution.

2 Not Becoming a Military Power

There is no established definition for the concept of a military power. For Japan, however, not becoming a military power that could threaten other countries means that Japan will not possess and maintain a military capability strong enough to pose a threat to other countries, beyond the minimum necessary for self-defense.

3 Non-Nuclear Principles

The Three Non-Nuclear Principles refers to those of not possessing nuclear weapons, not producing them, and not allowing them to be brought into Japan. Japan adheres to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles as a fixed line of national policy.

Japan is also prohibited from manufacturing and possessing nuclear weapons under the Atomic Energy Basic Law.[2] In addition, Japan ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and as a non-nuclear weapons state, has an obligation not to manufacture and acquire nuclear weapons.[3]

4 Securing Civilian Control

Civilian control refers to the priority of politics to the military in a democratic state or democratic political control of military strength. Japan, sincerely reflecting on the course of events until the end of World War II, has adopted the following strict civilian control system that is entirely different from the one under the former Constitution.[4] It aims to ensure that the JSDF is maintained and operated in accordance with the will of the people.

The Diet, which represents Japanese nationals, makes legislative and budgetary decisions on matters such as the allotted number of the JSDF personnel and main organizations of the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/JSDF. It also issues approval for defense operations of the JSDF. The function of national defense entirely falls under the executive power of the Cabinet as a general administrative function. The Constitution requires that the Prime Minister and other Ministers of State who constitute the Cabinet to be civilians. The Prime Minister, on behalf of the whole Cabinet, holds the authority of supreme command and supervision of the JSDF. The Defense Minister, who is exclusively in charge of national defense, exercises general control and supervises over the JSDF duties. In addition, the National Security Council of Japan under the Cabinet deliberates important matters on national security.

At the MOD, the Defense Minister takes charge of and manages the matters concerning national defense, and as the competent minister also manages and operates the JSDF. The Defense Minister is assisted in policy planning and political affairs by the State Defense Minister, the Parliamentary Vice-Ministers of Defense (two) and the Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister.

In addition, the Special Adviser to the Defense Minister provides the Defense Minister with advice on important affairs under the jurisdiction of the MOD based on their expertise and experience. The Defense Council consisting of political appointees, civilian officials and uniformed JSDF personnel deliberates on basic principles concerning affairs under the Ministry's jurisdiction. These measures are implemented for further ensuring civilian control.

As mentioned above, the civilian control system is well established, but for the fruitful outcome of this system, it is necessary to continue making practical efforts in both political and administrative aspects, along with people having deep interest in national defense.

See Chapter 4, Section 1 (National Security Council), Chapter 2, Section 2 (Organization of the MOD/JSDF)

Defense Minister Nakatani receiving the special guard of honor at his inauguration (October 2024)

2 Article 2 of the Atomic Energy Basic Law states that "utilization of atomic energy shall be limited to peaceful purposes, aimed at ensuring safety and performed independently under democratic management."

3 Article 2 of the NPT states that "Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes...not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices..."

4 The supreme command authority was independent, and a broad range of matters related to military operations were recognized as the subject beyond control of the Cabinet and the Diet. In addition, except for a brief period, the ministers of the army and navy had to be active-duty military personnel. That made formulation of a cabinet that does not comply with the military's intentions difficult. As a result, the military exerted undue influence over national politics.

Section 3 Security Policy Framework

Japan has three main documents pertaining to its national security policy: the National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS),[5] the National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS),[6] and the Defense Buildup Program (DBP).[7]

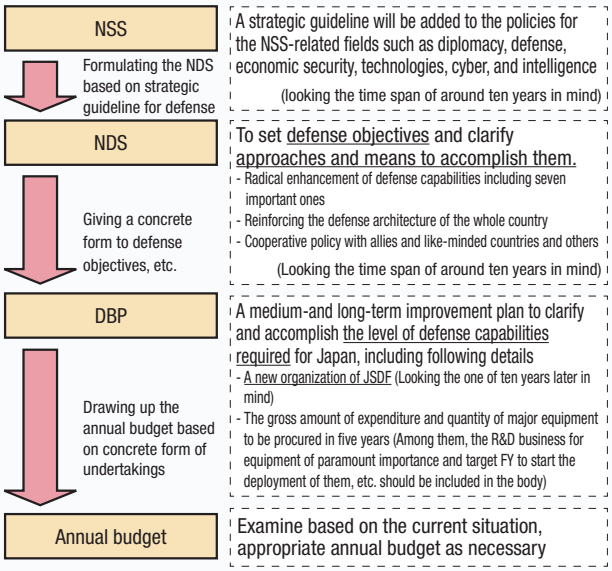
The NSS was formulated in 2013 as Japan's first-ever basic policy on national security with a focus on diplomatic affairs and defense policy. In 2022, in response to Japan facing the most severe and complex security environment since the start of the postwar period, a new NSS was formulated to provide strategic guidance for security policies in a wide range of areas, including not only the traditional areas of diplomacy and defense, but also the economy, technology, and intelligence.

Based on the new NSS, the NDS was formulated for the first time in the same year as a statement of the objectives of Japan's national defense as well as the approaches and means to achieve these objectives. The NDS replaces the National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), which have served as Japan's basic guidelines for the development, sustainment, and operation of the defense capability of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and have been formulated six times since 1976. The NSS and NDS are mainly designed for the next decade or so.

The first-ever DBP was formulated in 2022 in accordance with the NDS as a medium- to long-term plan that establishes the level of Japan's defense capabilities, the JSDF's structure which is based on the capability level roughly a decade into the future, and the total expenditures and the quantity of major equipment to be acquired over a five-year period. The future level of Japan's defense capabilities had been previously established in the NDPG, while the total expenditures for the buildup of defense capability over a five-year period were set forth in the MTDP, which was in turn based on the NDPG. However, the level of Japan's defense capabilities as well as the total expenditures over a five-year period have now been integrated into a single, unified defense buildup program.

See Fig. II-1-3-1 (Relationship among the NSS, the NDS, the DBP, the Fiscal Year Budget), Chapter 2 (The Three Documents, including the National Security Strategy of Japan), Reference 1 (National Security Strategy of Japan), Reference 2 (National Defense Strategy), Reference 3 (Defense Buildup Program)

Fig. II-1-3-1 Relationship among the NSS, the NDS, the DBP, the Fiscal Year Budget



REFERENCE: "National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS)," "National Defense Strategy (NDS)," "Defense Buildup Program (DBP)"

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/guideline/index.html

5 The National Security Strategy, approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 16, 2022
6 The National Defense Strategy of Japan, approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 16, 2022
7 The Defense Buildup Program, approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 16, 2022

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

Section 1 Outline of the National Security Strategy (NSS)

The National Security Strategy (NSS) is Japan's supreme national security policy document. We live in the world of a historical inflection point and in the face of the most severe and complex security environment since the end of WWII. To protect our national interests in such an environment, Japan needs to carry out vigorous diplomacy. Japan must also possess defense capabilities that bolster the solid footing of such diplomacy. To achieve these objectives, the new NSS was formulated in 2022 from the perspective that Japan needs a strategy that integrates its national responses at a higher level. This strategy takes a panoramic view of the diverse dimensions of international relations as a whole, where confrontation and cooperation are intricately intertwined, and takes full advantage of comprehensive national power, including diplomatic, defense, economic, technological, and intelligence capabilities.

The strategic guidance and policies under the NSS will dramatically transform Japan's national security policy after the end of WWII from the aspect of its execution.

The NSS lays out Japan's national interests, basic principles concerning the national security, and the country's security challenges. On this basis, it sets out national security objectives and identifies strategic approaches to achieving them.

See Fig. II-2-1-1 (Outline of the NSS (Structure and Main Components)), Reference 1 (National Security Strategy of Japan)

Fig. II-2-1-1 Outline of the NSS (Structure and Main Components)

I Purpose

II Japan's National Interests

III Fundamental Principles Concerning Japan's National Security

IV Security Environment Surrounding Japan and Japan's National Security Challenges

V National Security Objectives of Japan

- Japan will continue to be a nation capable of protecting its sovereignty and independence, autonomously determining its domestic and foreign policies, and defending its territory and the safety of life, person, and the properties of its nationals. Japan will deter contingencies and the like. If by any chance a threat should reach Japan, Japan will defeat the threat and minimize the damage caused, and bring it to an end on a favorable term.
- Japan will proactively ensure, through its security policy, an international environment in which its own economy can grow. Japan will work to achieve a virtuous cycle of security and economic growth.
- Japan will ensure the self-reliance, advantages, and indispensability of its economy.

Japan will achieve a new balance in international relations, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. Japan will prevent the emergence of situations conducive to unilaterally changing the status quo, and redouble efforts to secure a stable, predictable, free and open international order based on the rule of law.

- Japan will generate an environment in which the international community can coexist and co-prosper through multilateral cooperation.

VI Strategic Approaches Prioritized by Japan (Implementing strategic approaches by harnessing Japan's comprehensive national power, including diplomatic, defense, economic, technological, and intelligence capabilities)

1. Developing Efforts Centered on Diplomacy to Prevent Crises, Proactively Creating a Peaceful and Stable International Environment, and Strengthening a Free and Open International Order

2. Strengthening Japan's Defense Architecture
- Fundamentally Reinforcing Defense Capabilities as the Last Guarantee of National Security
- Reinforcing the comprehensive defense architecture
- Reconsidering the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, its Implementation Guidelines, and other systems for possible revisions
- Reinforcing the defense production and technology bases and solidifying the human resource base, among other measures, etc.

3. Deepening Security Cooperation with the United States

4. Strengthening Efforts to Seamlessly Protect Japan in All Directions

5. Promoting economic security policies

6. Maintaining and Strengthening International Economic Order based on Free, Fair, and Equitable Rules

7. Global Efforts for Coexistence and Coprosperity in the International Community

VII Domestic Base that should be Strengthened to Support Japan's National Security

VIII Duration, Evaluation, and Revision of the Strategy

IX Conclusion

Section 2 Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS)

The NDS was newly formulated in December 2022 to comprehensively present Japan's defense objectives, approaches, and means by which Japan accomplishes those objectives, in light of the most severe security environment since the end of World War II. It replaces the National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), which served as Japan's basic guidelines for development, sustainment, and operation of defense capability of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and were formulated six times since 1976.

1 Transition from the NDPG to the NDS

1 1976 NDPG

The 1976 NDPG[1] was formulated against the backdrop of détente[2] in the 1970s based on the recognition that (i) there was generally a low likelihood of an all-out military conflict between the Eastern and Western Blocs, and (ii) with regard to the area surrounding Japan, the stable balance of power between the United States, China, and the Soviet Union as well as the existence of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty would continue to play a major role in preventing full-scale aggression against Japan.

Moreover, the 1976 NDPG introduced the "Basic Defense Force Concept" of maintaining a minimum-necessary defense force as an independent nation in order to prevent a power vacuum that destabilizes the surrounding area of Japan, rather than directly coping with a military threat to Japan.

2 1995 NDPG

The 1995 NDPG[3] was formulated in consideration of the end of the Cold War and other major changes to the international situation, as well as the heightened expectations for the JSDF, including its role in UN peacekeeping operations and its response to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.

The 1995 NDPG determined that Japan's buildup of defense capability had until then been conducted based on the "Basic Defense Force Concept."

On the other hand, the details of Japan's defense capabilities as set forth in the 1995 NDPG were notable for the fact that in addition to reviewing the scale and functions of defense capabilities, they also emphasized a greater utilization of the JSDF's capabilities not only for the defense of the nation, but also in various other areas, including dealing with various contingencies such as major disasters and contributing to building a more stable security environment.

3 2004 NDPG

The 2004 NDPG[4] was formulated based on the determination that it was necessary to provide new guidelines for Japan's approach to its national security and defense capabilities in response to new threats and diverse contingencies, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, as well as the activities of international terrorist organizations.

The 2004 NDPG stated that with regard to Japan's approach to its defense capabilities, while retaining the effective parts of the "Basic Defense Force Concept," it was necessary to have multifunctional, flexible, and effective defense capabilities to enable effective responses to new threats, including activities by international terrorist organizations, and to a variety of situations that may affect peace and security, as well as to independently and actively engage in international peace cooperation activities.

4 2010 NDPG

The 2010 NDPG[5] was formulated based on the facts that (i) large-scale military forces, including nuclear forces, had continued to exist in the area surrounding Japan, and many states were modernizing their military capabilities and intensifying their various activities; (ii) the period of time from the emergence of signs of a threat to the actual occurrence of a situation had tended to be shorter with the rapid development of military science and technology, and there was a need to respond seamlessly to such situations; and (iii) given that many security issues transcend national borders, ongoing coordination and cooperation between different countries had become increasingly vital, with the roles of military forces diversifying as well, making it more common for military forces to be operating continuously at all times.

2010 NDPG stated that Japan's future defense capabilities should be "dynamic in form" and focused on the "operation

1 "The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY1977 and Beyond" (approved by the National Defense Council and the Cabinet on October 29, 1976)
2 This refers to the easing of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, which were engaged at the time in a conflict known as the Cold War, following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Détente ended with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.
3 The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY1996 and Beyond (approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on November 28, 1995)
4 The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2005 and Beyond (approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 10, 2004)
5 The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2011 and Beyond (approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 17, 2010)

of defense capabilities" as well as the ability to actively carry out various activities to effectively fulfill the assigned roles of such capabilities without being bound by the existing "Basic Defense Force Concept," which only emphasized the "existence of defense capabilities." To this end, it was determined that a "Dynamic Defense Force" equipped with the qualities of readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility would be built and supported by advanced technological and intelligence capabilities that took into account trends in the levels of military technologies.

5 2013 NDPG

The 2013 NDPG[6] was formulated against the backdrop of an increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan in which the defense capabilities that underpinned the various activities of the JSDF could no longer be guaranteed to be adequate in "quality" and "quantity" in view of the increasing number and longer duration of situations that required a response by the JSDF, including so-called "gray-zone" situations.

The 2013 NDPG stipulated the enhancement of Japan's deterrence and response capabilities by placing greater emphasis on joint operations, improving the operational level of equipment and its employment, and by ensuring that the defense capabilities that underpinned various activities would be adequate both in "quality" and "quantity." To this end, it was determined that capability assessments would be conducted from the viewpoint of joint operations with a focus on the functions and capabilities of the JSDF as a whole, in order to identify the functions and capabilities that should be of particular focus from a comprehensive perspective. Harnessing the results of these capability assessments would allow Japan to efficiently develop its defense capabilities. In addition, its logistical support base would be extensively reinforced to establish a posture that ensures its most effective operation.

In the above ways, 2013 NDPG sought to develop a "Dynamic Joint Defense Force," a more effective defense force capable of conducting a variety of activities in a timely and flexible manner.

6 2018 NDPG

The 2018 NDPG[7] was formulated with the aim of building a truly effective defense force by further deepening the approach of a "Dynamic Joint Defense Force" in view of the remarkably fast pace at which the security environment surrounding Japan had become increasingly challenging and uncertain.

Specifically, Japan would build a "Multi-Domain Defense Force" as a truly effective defense force that was capable of (i) carrying out cross-domain operations that organically would integrate capabilities in all domains, generating synergy and amplifying overall capabilities; (ii) enabling the sustained conduct of flexible and strategic activities during all phases from peacetime to contingencies; and (iii) strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and promoting security cooperation. Specifically, Japan would also focus on enhancing capabilities in new domains such as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum; capabilities to effectively counter attacks by aircraft, ships, and missiles in combination therewith; and the sustainability and resiliency of its defense capabilities, including logistical support.

See Fig. II-2-2-1 (Changes in the Roles of Defense Capabilities)

6 The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2014 and Beyond (approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 17, 2013)
7 The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2019 and Beyond (approved by the National Security Council and the Cabinet on December 18, 2018)

Fig. II-2-2-1 Changes in the Roles of Defense Capabilities

	[Background]	[The Role of Defense Capabilities]
1976 NDPG (October 29, 1976, the National Defense Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○Détente and Cold War coexisting in global community ○Balanced relationship among the United States, China, and the Soviet Union in the vicinity of Japan ○Need to show the target of defense force buildup	•Basic Defense Force Concept •Maintain a minimum-necessary defense force as an independent nation preventing a power vacuum that destabilizes the region, rather than coping with a direct military threat to Japan
19 years		
1995 NDPG (November 28, 1995, the Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○The end of Cold War ○International situation with unpredictability and uncertainty ○National expectations to international contribution	•Basically follow 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"
9 years		
2004 NDPG (December 10, 2004, the Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○New threats such as international terrorism and ballistic missile attacks ○Direct connection between world peace and Japan's peace ○Necessity to convert the policy from putting weight on deterrence to handling the situation	•Capability to work independently and proactively on implementing international peace cooperation activities, as well as dealing effectively with new threats and diverse contingencies •Succeeding the effective parts of the Basic Defense Force Concept
6 years		
2010 NDPG (December 17, 2010, the Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○Change in global power balance ○Complex military situation surrounding Japan ○Diversification of the military role in global society	•Development of a Dynamic Defense Force (Not bound by the Basic Defense Force Concept) •Facilitating effective deterrence of and responses to various contingencies, and making it possible to proactively conduct activities to further stabilize the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and improve the global security environment in a dynamic manner
3 years		
2013 NDPG (December 17, 2013, the National Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○Security situation surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe ○U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region ○Lessons learned from the Self-Defense Forces experience of the Great East Japan Earthquake	•Development of a Dynamic Joint Defense Force •Defense force to be more thorough with the concept of joint operation, which enables the JSDF to respond swiftly to the increasingly severe security environment and carry out various activities, such as achieving maritime supremacy and air superiority, seamlessly and flexibly
5 years		
2018 NDPG (December 18, 2018, the National Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○Security situation surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe and uncertain at extremely high speeds ○Rapid expansion in the use of new domains, which are space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum ○Clear trends observed in further military build-up and increase in military activities	•Development of 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, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum
5 years		
NDS (December 16 2022, the National Security Council/Cabinet Meeting)	○Japan is currently faced with the most challenging and complex security environment since the end of WWⅡ. ○Japan is on the front line of activated military actions of neighboring countries enhancing their military powers. ○Whether Japan will be able to adapt to these emerging new ways of warfare is a challenge when developing its future defense capabilities.	•Development of defense capabilities with attention to the opponents capabilities and new ways of warfare •Development of defense capabilities to forbid unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts as well as deter invasion to Japan by radical enhancement of multi-domain defense force; and if the worst comes to the worst and the deterrence does not work, to be able to disrupt and defeat the invasion by our own initiative

2 Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS)

The NDS comprehensively presents Japan's defense objectives and approaches and the means by which Japan accomplishes those objectives. The outline is as follows.

The most important responsibility of the Government of Japan is to resolutely defend to the end the lives of Japanese nationals and their peaceful livelihood, as well as Japan's territorial land, airspace, and waters, which constitute the foundation of Japan's national security. The international community, of which Japan is a member, is facing serious challenges, and has entered into a new era of crisis. One cannot rule out the possibility of serious events taking place in the future in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly in East Asia, that might shake the foundation of the stable post-war international order. Amid the most challenging and complex security environment since the start of the postwar period, Japan needs to directly face up to the grim reality and fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities, with a focus on the capabilities of its opponents and **new ways of warfare**, to protect the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese nationals.

The military background for Russia's aggression against Ukraine was that Ukraine did not possess sufficient capabilities to deter Russian aggression. There has also been a renewed recognition that no nation can possibly safeguard its security on its own and that cooperation with allies who possess the will and capability to jointly counter invasions is integral. Another point worth noting in this case is that a

KEY WORD

New Ways of Warfare

In addition to the traditional forms of invasion through air, sea, and land, new ways of warfare have emerged with the combination of massive strikes by missiles with enhanced precision strike capabilities, hybrid warfare including information warfare, asymmetric attacks leveraging the domains of space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum and with unmanned assets, and public remarks that could be interpreted as threat using nuclear weapons. Whether or not to be able to respond to these new ways of warfare is a major challenge in building future defense capabilities.

nation with powerful military capabilities had developed the intention to launch aggression at some point in time. While threats materialize through a combination of capability and intention, it is difficult to accurately ascertain another party's intention from the outside. If a state's decision-making process is opaque, there will always exist conditions under which threats may materialize. To protect one's nation from such states, it is necessary to possess deterrence capabilities that alert others to the difficulty of making unilateral changes to the status quo by force, as well as to develop defense capabilities that are focused on the capabilities of opponents.

1 Japan's Basic Defense Policy

Defense capabilities are the foundation of the defense of Japan and the ultimate guarantor of Japan's national security. They serve to deter threats to Japan and should a threat to Japan arise, to block and eliminate the threat, thereby demonstrating Japan's will and ability to defend itself to the end. With regard to future defense capabilities, Japan must fundamentally reinforce its capabilities to defend itself more than ever before by focusing on opponents' capabilities and ways of warfare, promote efforts to respond to new forms of warfare, and clearly demonstrate its resolve that it will never tolerate unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force and such attempts in any situation.

Japan has the following three defense objectives.

(i) To shape a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force

(ii) To deter, through cooperation and collaboration with our ally, like-minded countries and others, unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts and to bring the situation under control at an early stage

(iii) To take primary responsibility to deal with invasion of Japan, if any, and to disrupt and defeat it, while receiving support from the ally and others

In dealing with the threat of nuclear weapons, U.S. extended deterrence, with nuclear deterrence at its core, is essential. Japan will defend itself to the end in all situations through the combination of its own efforts to achieve the three defense objectives and extended deterrence and the like provided by the United States.

The three approaches to achieving these defense objectives, as well as the basic ideas behind them, are as follows.

(i) To fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities, which constitute the core of national defense, and reinforce the defense architecture of the whole country in an effort of strengthening of Japan's own architecture for national defense

(ii) To further reinforce joint deterrence and response capability of the Japan-U.S. Alliance by further strengthening cooperation with the United States, our ally

(iii) To reinforce collaboration with like-minded countries and others with whom Japan cooperate to uphold and reinforce a free and open international order

(1) First Approach: Strengthening Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

a. Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities

With a fundamentally reinforced defense capability, Japan should be able to take primary responsibility to disrupt and defeat invasion against Japan. This means that Japan will possess a capability that makes the opponent realize that the goal of invasion of Japan is not achievable by military means, and that the damage the opponent will incur makes the invasion not worth the cost. If Japan possesses such defense capability, this capability, coupled with that of the United States, will be able to deter not only an invasion against Japan, but also deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts in the Indo-Pacific region. This will help foster a security environment where such forcible actions are not tolerated. This is why Japan will fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities.

In addition, Japan's fundamentally reinforced defense capabilities must be able to respond to new ways of warfare. As for the functions and capabilities required, Japan will first reinforce its (i) stand-off defense capabilities and (ii) integrated air and missile defense capabilities, in order to disrupt and defeat invading forces from a long distance, thereby deterring invasion against Japan itself. Should deterrence fail and invasion of Japan occur, Japan will leverage, in addition to capabilities (i) and (ii), manned and unmanned assets, acquire superiority in cross-domain operations, and preserve its asymmetric edge. To this end, Japan will reinforce its (iii) unmanned defense capabilities, (iv) cross-domain operation capabilities, and (v) command and control and intelligence-related functions. Furthermore, to continue operating swiftly and tenaciously to dissuade the opponent from invasion, Japan will also reinforce its (vi) mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, as well as its (vii) sustainability and resiliency.

Japan will need to promptly realize the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities as when and how unilateral changes to the status quo occur is hard to predict. First, by FY2027, five years after the formulation of the NDS, Japan will strengthen its defense capability to the point where Japan is able to take primary responsibility for dealing with invasions against this nation, and disrupt and defeat such threats with the support of its ally and others. The top priorities for this period are twofold: first, to maximize effective use of its existing equipment, Japan will increase the number of operationally available equipment, secure sufficient ammunition and fuel, and accelerate investment in improving the resiliency of key defense facilities; and second, Japan will strengthen its core capabilities for future operations. Further efforts will be made approximately 10 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.

A key to deterring invasion against Japan is counterstrike

capabilities that leverage stand-off defense capabilities and other capabilities. In recent years, in Japan's surroundings, there have been significant improvement of missile forces in both quality and quantity, and missiles themselves have been repeatedly launched. Missile attacks have become a palpable threat. Amidst this, Japan will continue its efforts to constantly reinforce existing missile defense capabilities in both quality and quantity. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fully address missile threats with the existing missile defense network alone. For this reason, Japan needs counterstrike capabilities: capabilities which enable Japan to mount effective counterstrikes against the opponent to prevent further attacks while defending against incoming missiles by means of its missile defense network.

Counterstrike capabilities are the JSDF's capabilities that leverage stand-off defense capabilities and other capabilities. In cases where armed attack against Japan has occurred, and as part of that attack ballistic missiles and other means have been used, counterstrike capabilities enable Japan to mount effective counterstrikes against the opponent's territory in accordance with the Three Conditions for the "use of force" as a minimum necessary self-defense measure that cannot be avoided to prevent such an attack. Having such counterstrike capabilities will deter armed attack itself. If an opponent ever launches missiles, it will be able to prevent the opponent's further armed attacks by counterstrike capabilities, while protecting itself against incoming missiles by the missile defense network, thereby defending the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese nationals.

As counterstrike capabilities fall within the purview of Japan's Constitution and international law, they do not change Japan's exclusively defense-oriented policy, and they can be exercised only when the Three Conditions for the "use of force" are fulfilled. Needless to say, preemptive strikes, namely striking first at a stage when no armed attack has occurred, remain impermissible. While the basic division of roles between Japan and the United States will remain unchanged, as Japan will now possess counterstrike capabilities, the two nations will cooperate in counterstrikes.

b. Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country

The JSDF must be strong in order to protect Japan, but national defense cannot be achieved without a whole-of-country approach. For this reason, besides the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities, Japan will develop a defense architecture for the whole country by integrating its national power, which includes its diplomatic, intelligence, economic, and technological capabilities, and systematically combining various policy means. To strengthen such whole-of-government efforts, it is essential to break down sectionalism within the Government. To this end, Japan will reinforce the comprehensive defense architecture that mobilizes its national power, an undertaking that is integral to supplementing the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities. The national government will also promote cooperation with local governments and private entities.

(2) Second Approach: Joint Deterrence and Response by the Japan-U.S. Alliance

The second approach is to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance. The Alliance with the United States is a key pillar of Japan's security, and fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities will lead to more effective employment of U.S. capabilities and will further strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. By demonstrating such joint resolve and capability, Japan and the United States will deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts. In addition, if an invasion of Japan occurs, a Japan-U.S. joint response will disrupt the invasion.

The first measure to this end is to strengthen Japan-U.S. joint deterrence and response capabilities. Japan's NDS and the United States' National Defense Strategy are well aligned in prioritizing the prevention of unilateral changes to the status quo by force by integrating various approaches and means. Accordingly, Japan will further deepen discussions with the United States on their respective roles, missions, and capabilities, and further reinforce Japan-U.S. joint deterrence capabilities in an integrated manner from the perspectives of enhancing readiness and resiliency, imposing a cost on opponents, and deterring invasion against Japan.

The next is to reinforce alliance coordination functions. To conduct aligned joint responses of Japan and the United States, Japan will further upgrade the overall coordination functions centered on the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM). In addition, in order to enhance collaboration with like-minded countries and others centered around the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Japan will promote closer operational coordination by leveraging the ACM and others.

Furthermore, Japan will reinforce the foundational elements that support effective allied response in all phases, including information security, cybersecurity, and defense equipment and technology cooperation.

The last is measures to support the stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan. Japan will promote various measures to provide stable support for the stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan, such as steady implementation of the realignment of the U.S. Forces in Japan and the initiatives to reinforce the readiness and resiliency of the U.S. Forces in Japan, while optimizing the bilateral joint posture to respond to the severe security environment.

(3) Third Approach: Collaboration with Like-minded Countries and Others

In order to respond to unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts and to ensure Japan's security, it is extremely important to reinforce collaboration with not only our ally but also as many countries as possible. From such a perspective, Japan will promote efforts that contribute to realizing the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).

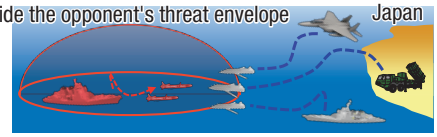
Moreover, Japan will proactively promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges, taking into account regional characteristics and situations of various countries. While promoting collaboration with like-minded countries and others, Japan will pay attention to communication with China and Russia.

2 Key Capabilities for Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities (Seven Priority Areas)

The NDS lays out the basic concepts and contents of the seven functions and capabilities necessary for the defense of Japan, which are derived from the basic policies and the comprehensive operation concept in line with them. The seven functions and capabilities are (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 and intelligence-related functions, (vi) mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, and (vii) sustainability and resiliency.

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

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

(1) Stand-off Defense Capabilities	•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	•Strengthening our capabilities to respond to increasingly diverse and complex airborne threats such as missiles	Shipbuilding of Aegis System-Equipped Vessel (Note)
(3) Unmanned Defense Capabilities	•Strengthening our capabilities, e.g., via intelligence gathering and combat support with unmanned assets	Preparation of UAV for reconnaissance (for mid-range) (Note)
(4) Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities	•Strengthening space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, land, sea and air capabilities necessary for combat by fusing all capabilities	Development of Stand-off Electronic Warfare Aircraft (Note)
(5) Command and Control and Intelligence-related Functions	•Strengthening command and intelligence-related functions to accelerate and refine decision-making	Acquisition of Signals Intelligence Aircraft (RC-2)
(6) Mobile Deployment Capabilities/ Civil Protection	•Strengthening maritime and air transport capabilities to quickly maneuver and deploy the necessary forces •Implementing civil protection by utilizing the above capabilities	Acquisition of transport vessels
(7) Sustainability and Resiliency	•Preparation of necessary and sufficient ammunition, guided missiles and fuel from an early stage •Securing expenditures for acquiring equipment parts, equipment repairing and improving the resiliency of facilities	Securing the ammunition storage facilities (Note)

The (note) in the figure is an image.

3 Future of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF)

The NDS lays out basic concepts with regard to a number of aspects, including the roles of each service of the JSDF in the seven priority areas of key capabilities for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, the joint operations system based on these roles, and the development of the architecture of each service of the JSDF. Given the need for strategic and agile defense policy planning and making, the NDS states that the JSDF will fundamentally reinforce its functions concerned.

See Fig. II-2-2-3 (Concept for Developing the JSDF's Architecture)

Fig. II-2-2-3 Concept for Developing the JSDF's Architecture

Strengthening the joint operations system	• Reorganizing the existing structure and establishing a permanent Joint Headquarters • Considering defense equipment systems that contribute to joint operations
Ground Self- Defense Force (GSDF)	• Developing a system that places importance on stand-off defense capabilities, rapid maneuver and disperse deployment capabilities, and command and control and intelligence-related functions • Contributing to cross-domain operations mainly in the cyber domain
Maritime Self- Defense Force (MSDF)	• Reinforcing air defense capabilities, information warfare capabilities, stand-off defense capabilities, etc. • Promoting labor-saving and automation measures • Developing a system that will allow acquiring and sustaining superiority in underwater
Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF)	• Reinforcing mobile and dispersed operations and stand-off defense and other capabilities • Renewing the ASDF as the Air and Space Self Defense Force, thereby developing a system to ensure superiority in use of space
Defense Intelligence Headquarters	• Assuming the central role of responding to Integrated Information Warfare • Fundamentally reinforcing capabilities to grasp military activities of other countries and analyzing and disseminating them

(Note) The JSDF as a whole will reinforce its capabilities to contribute to the reinforcement of cybersecurity of the entire country.

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

The NDS lays out basic concepts of measures for protection of the life, person, and property of Japanese nationals; measures for international security cooperation; and the reinforcement both of defense production and the technology base as a virtually integral part of defense capability itself and of the human resource base for JSDF personnel, the core element of defense capability, to demonstrate their abilities.

See Fig. II-2-2-4 (Measures, etc. for Protection of the Life, Person, and Property of Japanese Nationals), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3-7 (Response to Large-Scale Disasters, etc.), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3-8 (Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas), Part IV (Reinforcing Foundation for JSDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities), Part V, Chapter 1 (Reinforcing Defense Production and Technological Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capacity itself)

Fig. II-2-2-4 Measures, etc. for Protection of the Life, Person, and Property of Japanese Nationals

Protection of Life, Person and Property of Japanese Nationals and Measures for International Security Cooperation
Measures for protection of life, person and property of Japanese nationals • Not only an invasion of Japan, but also large-scale terrorist attacks, attacks on critical infrastructure including nuclear power plants, large-scale disasters, and infectious disease crises are serious threats, and Japan will respond to them with its utmost efforts.
Measures for security cooperation against global challenges • For the peace and security of Japan, and from the perspective of proactive contribution to peace, Japan will make efforts toward resolving conflicts and confrontations around the world, provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the event of large-scale international disasters caused by climate change, and proactively respond to global challenges such as non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
Defense Production and Technological Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capabilities
• Defense production and technology bases constitute an indispensable foundation for securing the stable research, development, production, and procurement of equipment in Japan and for incorporating cutting-edge technologies necessary for new ways of warfare into defense equipment. These bases are virtually defense capabilities themselves, and their reinforcement is essential. • Japan will promote initiatives such as building a strong and sustainable defense industry necessary for a new way of warfighting, dealing with various risks, and expanding sales channels.
Strengthening the Foundation for Uniformed JSDF Personnel, the Core of Japan's Defense Capabilities, to Demonstrate Their Abilities
Reinforcing the human resource base • The MOD/JSDF will secure necessary uniformed JSDF personnel, the core of Japan's defense capabilities, and create an environment that enables them all to demonstrate their own abilities to their fullest while maintaining high morale and pride.
Transforming the medical function • The MOD/JSDF will transform the JSDF medical force—which has been placing importance on sustaining the health of uniformed JSDF personnel—into an organization that saves the lives of uniformed JSDF personnel who carry out their missions in a contingency in spite of danger.

Commentary

Counterstrike Capabilities

Q. What are counterstrike capabilities? Why are they necessary?

Counterstrike capabilities are the JSDF's capabilities that leverage stand-off defense capabilities and other capabilities. In cases where an armed attack against Japan has occurred and ballistic missiles, etc., have been used as the means of such an attack, counterstrike capabilities enable Japan to mount effective counterstrikes against the opponent's territory in accordance with the Three Conditions for the "use of force" as a minimum necessary self-defense measure that cannot be avoided to prevent such an attack.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic improvement in missile-related technologies such as hypersonic weapons and practical missile operational capabilities such as saturation attacks in the area surrounding Japan. As the quality and quantity of missile forces are being significantly enhanced, and missiles are being launched repeatedly, missile attacks on Japan have become a real threat, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to respond to them fully with the existing missile defense network alone. For this reason, it is necessary for Japan to possess counterstrike capabilities in order to prevent further armed attacks by the opponent by means of its counterstrike capabilities while defending against incoming missiles with its missile defense network.

Having the counterstrike capabilities will deter armed attacks themselves. Moreover, should missiles be launched by an opponent, Japan will be able to prevent further armed attacks by the opponent by means of its counterstrike capabilities, thereby protecting the lives and peaceful livelihood of Japanese nationals.

Q. Don't counterstrike capabilities go against the exclusively defense-oriented policy?

The exclusively defense-oriented policy means a passive defense strategy in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution in which defensive force is used only in the event of an attack, that the extent of the use of defensive force is kept to the minimum necessary for self-defense, and that the defense capabilities to be possessed and maintained by Japan are limited to the minimum necessary for self-defense. It is Japan's basic strategy of defense.

Japan's counterstrike capabilities are exercised in cases where an armed attack involving ballistic missiles and the like has occurred against Japan. They are exercised in accordance with the Three Conditions for the "use of force" as a minimum necessary self-defense measure that cannot be avoided to prevent such an attack.

The exclusively defense oriented policy and Japan's counterstrike capabilities are logically consistent in that both allow for a minimum necessary measure for self-defense to be taken in the event of an armed attack. The Japanese Government intends to remain committed to the exclusively defense-oriented policy as Japan's basic strategy of defense.

Q. Doesn't the use of counterstrike capabilities constitute a preemptive strike?

Counterstrike capabilities can be exercised only when the Three Conditions for "use of force" are fulfilled, within the scope of the Constitution, international law and domestic law. Needless to say, preemptive strikes, namely striking first at a stage when no armed attack has occurred, remain impermissible, and Japan will not do so.

Q. Can counterstrike capabilities be used in a Survival-Threatening Situations?

A situation will not be unconditionally confirmed as Survival-Threatening Situations whenever an armed attack on another country having a close relationship with Japan occurs. It will be confirmed as such when such an attack threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger in terms of fundamentally overturning people's right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. Japan is allowed to use force if there are no other appropriate means available to repel the attack, ensure Japan's survival, and protect its people and if such a use of force is limited to the minimum extent necessary as a measure for self-defense.

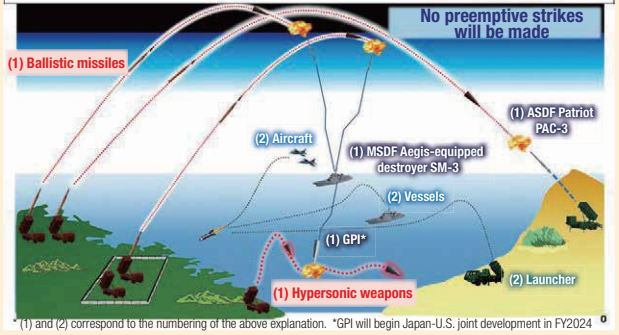
If a survival-threatening situation is confirmed, the Japanese Government will decide on the use of counterstrike capabilities on a case-by-case basis. Such a decision will be made in view of the actual situation, in accordance with the Three Conditions for the "use of force," and from the perspective of what measures to be taken as long as they are the absolute minimum measures that are unavoidably necessary to prevent attacks by guided missiles, etc. if no other means are available.

(Reference) Unified opinion of the Japanese Government (answer read by Defense Agency Director General FUNADA Naka on behalf of Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro (February 29, 1956))

If Japan were in imminent danger of an illegal invasion, and the method of invasion were a missile attack against Japan's national territory, I simply cannot believe that the spirit of the Constitution requires that we merely sit and wait to die. In such a case, I believe that we should take the absolute minimum measures that are unavoidably necessary to defend against such an attack, so that in defending against a missile attack, for example, if no other suitable means are available, striking the missile base should be legally acceptable and falls within the range of self-defense.

Counterstrike capabilities (image)

(1) In case where armed attack against Japan has occurred, and as part of that attack ballistic missiles and other means have been used, Japan will protect itself against incoming missiles by the missile defense network.
(2) At the same time, an effective counterstrike against the opponent will be made from Japan to prevent the opponent's further armed attacks as an minimum necessary measure for self-defense in accordance with the Three Conditions for the "use of force."
By possessing such capabilities to mount effective counterstrikes, Japan will deter armed attacks itself.



* (1) and (2) correspond to the numbering of the above explanation. *GPI will begin Japan-U.S. joint development in FY2024

Perspective

Significance of Deterrence

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The importance of deterrence in security policy lies in the ability to prevent undesirable actions by adversaries without engaging in actual armed conflict. Conceptually, the types of utilization of military force are classified along two axes: whether it involves actual use of the force or leverages the threat of its use, and whether it is intended to maintain or change the status quo. Whereas defense aims to preserve the status quo by repelling aggression from adversaries through actual use of military force, deterrence seeks to attain the same objective by leveraging the threat of the use of military force, which prevents aggression and the ensuing armed conflict from occurring in the first place.

The concept of deterrence tends to be associated with nuclear weapons, but actually it can be based on wider means. Deterrence based on the threat of inflicting "unacceptable" damage on an adversary is called deterrence by punishment, which is compatible with means that are highly destructive and not easy to defend against, such as nuclear weapons. Another form of deterrence is called deterrence by denial, which discourages an adversary from aggression by demonstrating that the deterrer has sufficient defense capabilities to deny the adversary its objectives of the aggression. This type of deterrence is mainly based on non-nuclear conventional weapons.

Punitive deterrence leveraging the threat of the nuclear use is powerful. However, when both of the adversaries possess nuclear weapons, implementing the threat could be suicidal. For that reason, its effectiveness has certain limitations under mutual nuclear deterrence, particularly in deterring non-nuclear aggression. Hence, even if a country has a robust nuclear capability to enact punitive deterrence, it also has to maintain decent conventional defense capabilities to sustain deterrence by denial at the same time, and to organically link the two deterrence approaches.

The difficulty of deterrence lies in that its success or failure is not determined solely by the deterrer's capabilities. Whether or not aggression is deterred ultimately depends on how a potential aggressor perceives the deterrer's willingness to carry out its deterrent threats. Therefore, both in the case of deterrence by punishment and denial, it is necessary to ensure that the potential aggressor is properly aware of the fact that the deterrer has the will and capability to carry out its threats. This is particularly important in the case of extended deterrence, which attempts to deter aggression against the deterring country's ally. Namely, it is required to send an appropriate message to the effect that an attack on any of their allies will surely trigger a collective response from the alliance.

(Note) This column is an independent analysis from the researcher's academic perspective, and its contents do not represent an official government position.

Section 3 Outline of the Defense Buildup Program

The Defense Buildup Program (DBP) sets out, among other things, the level of defense capability Japan should possess to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities under the National Defense Strategy (NDS), as well as the total expenditures and the quantity of major equipment needed to achieve that level. The summary of the NDP is as follows.

See Reference 3 (Defense Buildup Program)

1 Program Guidelines

In accordance with the NDS, by FY2027, five years after the formulation of the DBP, Japan will strengthen its defense capabilities to a point where it 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 10 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.

The MOD/JSDF will efficiently and effectively build, maintain, and operate the defense capabilities based on a plan with the following as essential parts.

As for the functions and capabilities required for its national defense, Japan will first reinforce its (i) stand-off defense capabilities and (ii) integrated air and missile defense capabilities, in order to disrupt and defeat invading forces from a long distance, thereby deterring invasion against Japan itself. Should deterrence fail and invasion of Japan occur, Japan would need to ensure asymmetric advantage by leveraging, in addition to these capabilities, manned as well as unmanned assets and gain superiority across domains such as underwater, surface, and air, and to this end, Japan will reinforce (iii) unmanned defense capabilities, (iv) cross-domain operation capabilities, and (v) command and control/intelligence related functions. Furthermore, to operate in a prompt as well as persistent manner so as to force the opponent to give up invasion, Japan will reinforce (vi) mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection and (vii) sustainability and resiliency. Additionally, Japan will focus on its defense production and technology bases as a virtually integral part of defense capability itself, as well as areas such as the human resource base that supports its defense capabilities.

Next, in equipment acquisition, Japan will ensure the necessary quantity and quality for its defense capabilities by appropriately combining the introduction of new, high-performance equipment with the life extension and improvement of existing equipment. In doing so, it will strive to reduce costs and improve cost-effectiveness by enhancing project management throughout the life cycle of equipment. In addition, Japan will steadily work towards the early deployment of programs that are particularly urgent and significant from a policy perspective in areas that could directly affect the JSDF's current and future ways of warfare by leveraging cutting-edge civilian technologies, etc.

At the same time, Japan will comprehensively promote various measures to reinforce its human resource base, such as strengthening recruitment efforts, leveraging JSDF Reserve Personnel and others, promoting the active participation of women, effectively utilizing diverse and high-quality talents, improving living and work environments, developing human resources, and improving treatment, etc.

Moreover, to further reinforce the joint deterrence capabilities of Japan and the United States in an integrated manner, Japan will promote cooperation, improved interoperability, etc. related to cross-domain operations. In order to reinforce the infrastructure to support effective joint response capabilities, Japan will also reinforce efforts related to information security and cybersecurity, as well as equipment and technology cooperation. In addition, measures to support the stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan will be steadily implemented. Furthermore, in order to actively promote multi-faceted and multi-layered defense cooperation and exchanges in line with the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), Japan will further promote the development of institutional frameworks for various agreements, while also promoting initiatives including bilateral training and exercises as well as defense equipment and technology cooperation.

Lastly, in fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities, Japan will, while adhering to the scrap-and-build approach, optimize the JSDF's organization and authorized strength as well as equipment. We will also further our ongoing efforts toward more efficient procurement, which have achieved significant cost reductions. In addition, to account for Japan's aging population with a declining birth rate, Japan will robustly promote automation, labor-saving and optimization.

2 Organizations of Self-Defense Forces

Based on the DBP's guidelines, each JSDF service is structured mainly as follows.

1 Joint Operation System

A permanent Joint Headquarters will be expeditiously established to build a system that is capable of seamless cross-domain operations at all phases from peacetime to contingencies, with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations for each JSDF service. In addition, current approaches to the organization of each JSDF service, including joint units, will be reviewed.

For further improvement of capabilities in the cyber domain, including constant and continuous monitoring of the MOD/JSDF's network and systems as well as the capability to disrupt an opponent's use of cyberspace for an attack against Japan, the JSDF will possess a cyber defense unit as a joint unit, in order to fundamentally reinforce cyber defense capability.

In addition, a new maritime transport unit will be established as a joint unit to improve the mobile deployment capabilities to the southwestern region.

2 Japan Ground Self-Defense Force

The 15th Brigade, which oversees Okinawa, will be reorganized into a division to reinforce the defense architecture in the southwestern region of Japan. Additionally, in order to strengthen stand-off defense capabilities, surface-to-ship missile units equipped with Upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship missile will be retained. Furthermore, units equipped with Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile for the defense of remote islands, and a long-range guided missile unit equipped with upgraded Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile for the defense of remote islands and hypersonic missiles will be newly established. In order to secure the increased personnel necessary to strengthen stand-off defense capabilities, cyber capabilities, etc., the MOD/JSDF will abolish units mainly composed of the JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel, and allocate the regular uniformed JSDF personnel belonging to the units to fulfill the personnel requirements. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will manage JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel as replacements.

3 Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force

The MSDF will maintain its surface ship units which have been reinforced through the introduction of patrol vessels and the like, in order to respond to the ever-increasing volume of operations, including maintaining a persistent and multi-layered information gathering and monitoring and surveillance posture, ensuring the security of maritime traffic, and conducting overseas deployment for security cooperation with other countries. In addition, the MSDF will procure Aegis System Equipped Vessels that will primarily conduct BMD operations.

Furthermore, for comprehensive information warfare, the MSDF Information Warfare Major Unit will be newly established by reorganizing and consolidating units with functions and capabilities in areas such as intelligence, cyber, communications, and meteorology/oceanography.

Under the joint operations system, the MSDF will also implement revisions to core units and necessary reorganizations to build a structure capable of sustaining operations of units that require high speed and activity volume.

4 Japan Air Self-Defense Force

The ASDF will maintain fighter units that are greatly refined and reinforced in both qualitative and quantitative terms in order to have a comprehensive posture with air defense that brings together fighters and their relevant support functions. The ASDF will also build a structure to carry out mobile and dispersed operations in order to continue to battle tenaciously.

In addition, to reinforce space operation capabilities, the ASDF will make steady progress in developing a Space Domain Awareness (SDA) posture. The Space Domain Mission Units led by a general-level commander will be newly established, and the ASDF will be renamed the Air and Space Self-Defense Force (tentative name).

5 Optimizing Organizational Capacity

The target number of uniformed JSDF personnel for the end of FY2027 is the level at the end of FY2022. The number of uniformed personnel in the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF, respectively, will be reviewed as necessary to optimize organizational capacity. In addition, the capacity necessary to strengthen the joint operation structure will be adjusted between the JSDF services, and the GSDF personnel will be transferred to the MSDF and the ASDF to meet their increased personnel requirements. To this end, approximately 2,000 GSDF uniformed personnel will be transferred to joint units, the MSDF, and the ASDF, respectively.

3 Quantities of Major Procurement

Appendix Table 1 shows the targets for fundamentally reinforced defense capabilities to be achieved in FY2027 and in approximately 10 years after the DBP's formulation. The details of the quantities of major defense equipment procured are as shown in Annex Table 2. In addition, the DBP defines each JSDF service's formulation and equipment quantities in approximately 10 years after the DBP's formulation as shown in Appendix Table 3.

See Fig. II-2-3-1 (Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 1 (Targets for Fundamentally Reinforced Defense Capabilities and Timeline for Achievement)), Fig. II-2-3-2 (Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 2 (Procurement Quantities of Major Defense Equipment)), Fig. II-2-3-3 (Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 3 (Each JSDF Service's Formation and Equipment Quantities in Approximately Ten Years)), Fig. II-2-3-4 (The NDPG's Annex Tables and the DBP's Appendix Table 3)

Fig. II-2-3-1 Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 1 (Targets for Fundamentally Reinforced Defense Capabilities and Timeline for Achievement)

Fields	By 5 years until FY 2027 (*)	Approx. 10 Years Later
	If an invasion of Japan occurs, Japan will respond with primary responsibility and buildup defense capabilities to disrupt and defeat the invasion while gaining support from its ally and others	Further efforts to ensure the defense concept described on the left (buildup defense capabilities to disrupt or to defeat invasion at an earlier and more distant location)
Stand-Off Defense Capabilities	● Acquire practical capability to operate stand-off missiles	● Acquire capabilities to operate more advanced stand-off missiles ● Secure required sufficient quantities
Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities	● Reinforce capability to respond to Hypersonic Weapons ● Reinforce capability to respond to miniature Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)	● Reinforce wide-area air defense capabilities ● More efficient and effective UAV countermeasures
Unmanned Defense Capabilities	● Expand the use of UAV to strengthen capabilities to practically operate	● Reinforce capability to control multiple unmanned assets simultaneously, etc.
Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities	● Reinforce Space Domain Awareness (SDA), cybersecurity capabilities, and electromagnetic domain capabilities, etc. ● Reinforce ground, sea, and air domain capabilities that become basis of cross-domain operations	● Further reinforce space operation capability ● Reinforce supports in terms of cybersecurity for entities other than JSDF ● Strengthen ground, maritime, and air capabilities to work with UAV
Command and Control/Intelligence-related Functions	● Accelerate decision-making through the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), etc., while strengthening the resiliency of the network ● Strengthen information acquisition and analysis in both strategic and tactic information, including responses in the cognitive dimension	● Reinforce persistent information gathering and sharing postures, while enhancing information gathering and analysis capabilities by application of AI, etc.
Mobile Deployment Capabilities	● Reinforce the JSDF's transportation and supply capabilities (deployment/civil protection), including enhancement of the JSDF's transportation assets and use of PFI vessels, etc.	● Further enhancements of transportation capability ● Accelerate transportation and supply capabilities by improving supply centers, etc.
Sustainability and Resiliency	● Increase quantity of ammunitions and missiles ● Ensure maximum operational availability of equipment except those under maintenance ● Improve the resiliency of defense facilities for contingencies ● Secure required ammunition depots, etc.	● Maintain and ensure adequate inventory of ammunitions and missiles ● Maintain the operational rates ● Further improve the resiliency of defense facilities ● Further secure ammunition depots and other facilities commensurate with ammunition requirements
Defense Production and Technology Bases	● Establish strong defense production base through measures to strengthen the supply chain, etc. ● Focused investment in equipment areas directly linked to future warfare, and a significant reduction in research and development periods	● Maintain robust defense production base capable for realizing innovative equipment ● Acquire technologies for securing technological superiority in the future
Human Resource Base	● Secure the necessary number of high-quality human resources from a wide range of sources, including the private sector, by strengthening recruitment capabilities and establishing a new JSDF personnel system ● Reinforce education and research (cyber and other domains, joint operations, medical) ● Improvement of living and working environments and treatment by taking necessary measures against aging barracks and housing and eliminating equipment shortages	● Even amid a declining population eligible for recruitment, continuously and stably secure the necessary human resources, including those with specialized knowledge and skills ● Further strengthen education and research ● Foster an organizational environment in which all members can demonstrate their individual abilities while maintaining high morale

* Accelerate investment in improving operational availability, securing ammunition, and fortifying key defense facilities to maximize the use of existing equipment, while focusing on fundamentally strengthening core areas of future defense capabilities, such as stand-off defense and unmanned asset defense capabilities.

Fig. II-2-3-2 Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 2 (Procurement Quantities of Major Defense Equipment)

Classification	Equipment Type	Procurement Quantity
(1) Stand-off Defense Capabilities	Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surface-, ship-, and air-launched variants)	Surface-type 11 Units
	Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile (HVGP)	—
	Hypersonic Missile	—
	Tomahawk	—
(2) Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities	Upgraded Type 03 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (modified)	14 Units
	Aegis System-Equipped Vessels	2 ships
	Airborne Early Warning Aircraft (E-2D)	5 aircraft
	Interceptor Missiles for Ballistic Missile Defense (SM-3 Block IIA)	—
	Interceptor Missiles with Upgraded Capabilities (PAC-3MSE)	—
	Long-Range Ship-to-Air Missiles SM-6	—
(3) Unmanned Defense Capabilities	Various UAVs	—
	USV	—
	UGV	—
	UUV	—
(4) Cross-Domain Capabilities	Destroyer	12 ships
	Submarine	5 ships
	Patrol Vessel	10 ships
	Fixed-wing Patrol Aircraft (P-1)	19 aircraft
	Fighter (F-35A)	40 aircraft
	Fighter (F-35B)	25 aircraft
	Fighter Upgrade (F-15)	54 aircraft
	Stand-off Electronic Warfare Aircraft	1 aircraft
	Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS)	2 sets
(5) Command and Control/Intelligence-related Functions	Signals Intelligence Aircraft (RC-2)	3 aircraft
(6) Mobile Deployment Capabilities and Civil Protection	Transport Vessels	8 ships
	Transport Aircraft (C-2)	6 aircraft
	Aerial Refueling and Transport Aircraft (KC-46A, etc.)	13 aircraft

Fig. II-2-3-3 Defense Buildup Program Appendix Table 3 (Each JSDF Service's Formation and Equipment Quantities in Approximately Ten Years)

Classification	Future Posture		
Joint Units	Cyber Defense Units Maritime Transport Units		1 squadron 1 group
Ground Self-Defense Force	Active-Duty Personnel		149,000 people
	Major Unit	Basic Operational Units	9 divisions 5 brigades 1 armored division
		Airborne Units Amphibious Units Air Transport Units	1 airborne brigade 1 amphibious rapid deployment brigade 1 helicopter brigade
		Stand-off Missile Units	7 surface-to-ship guided missile regiments
			2 battalions (hyper velocity gliding projectile intended for the defense of remote islands)
			2 long-range guided missile units
		Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units	8 anti-aircraft artillery groups
		Electronic Warfare Units (incl. anti-aircraft electronic warfare units)	1 electronic warfare operations unit (incl. anti-aircraft electronic warfare unit)
		Unmanned Vehicle Units	1 multi-purpose unmanned aerial vehicle unit
		Information Warfare Units	1 unit
Maritime Self-Defense Force	Major Units	Surface Vessels Units (Destroyers and Minesweeper vessels) Submarine Units Patrol aircraft Units (Fixed-wing Patrol aircraft Units) Unmanned Vehicle Units Information Warfare Units	6 groups (21 divisions) 6 divisions 9 divisions (4 divisions) 2 divisions 1 unit
	Major Equipment	Destroyers (Aegis-Equipped Destroyers) Aegis System Equipped Vessels Patrol Vessels Submarines Combat Aircraft	54 (10) 2 12 22 Approx. 170
Air Self-Defense Force	Major Units	Air Warning & Control Units Fighter Aircraft Units Aerial Refueling/Transport Units Air Transport Units Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units Space Domain Mission Units Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Units Operational Intelligence Units	4 Aircraft Control & Warning Wings 1 AEW wing (3 squadrons) 13 squadrons 2 squadrons 3 squadrons 4 air defense missile groups (24 fire squadrons) 1 squadron 1 squadron 1 squadron
	Major Equipment	Combat Aircraft (Fighters)	Approx. 430 (Approx. 320)

Note 1: 14 out of the 15 divisions/brigades are operated on the basis of rapid deployment.
Note 2: Regarding the number of fighter aircraft units and fighters, necessary studies will be conducted by FY 2027 and necessary measures will be taken in order to further advance the quantitative enhancement of air capability. In this regard, the possibility of utilizing unmanned aerial vehicles will be studied.

Fig. II-2-3-4 The NDPG's Annex Tables and the DBP's Appendix Table 3

	Category		1976 NDPG	1995 NDPG	2004 NDPG	2010 NDPG	2013 NDPG	2018 NDPG	DBP
Cooperative Units	Cyber Defense Units							1 squadron	1 squadron
	Maritime Transport Units							1 group	1 group
Ground Self-Defense Force	Authorized Number of Personnel (Note 1)		180,000	160,000	155,000	154,000	159,000	159,000	
	Active-Duty Personnel			145,000	148,000	147,000	151,000	151,000	149,000
	Ready Reserve Personnel (Note 1)			15,000	7,000	7,000	8,000	8,000	
	Major Units	Basic Operational Units (Note 2)	12 divisions 2 combined brigades 1 armored division	8 divisions 6 brigades 1 armored division	8 divisions 6 brigades 1 armored division	8 divisions 6 brigades 1 armored division	5 divisions 2 brigades 1 armored division	5 divisions 2 brigades 1 armored division	9 divisions 5 brigades 1 armored division
		Airborne unit (Note 3)	1 airborne brigade	1 airborne brigade			1 airborne brigade	1 airborne brigade	1 airborne brigade
		Amphibious rapid deployment unit (Note3)					1 amphibious rapid deployment brigade	1 amphibious rapid deployment brigade	1 amphibious rapid deployment brigade
		Airborne rapid deployment unit (Note 3)	1 helicopter brigade	1 helicopter brigade			1 helicopter brigade	1 helicopter brigade	1 helicopter brigade
		Rapid Deployment Units (Note 4)	1 training group		Central Readiness Force	Central Readiness Force	3 rapid deployment divisions	3 rapid deployment divisions	
			1 artillery brigade				4 rapid deployment brigades	4 rapid deployment brigades	
		Stand-off Missile Units (Note 5)					5 surface-to-ship guided missile regiments	5 surface-to-ship guided missile regiments	7 surface-to-ship guided missile regiments
								2 battalions	2 hyper velocity gliding projectile battalions intended for the defense of remote islands
									2 long range guided missile units
		Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units	8 anti-aircraft artillery groups	8 anti-aircraft artillery groups	8 anti-aircraft artillery groups	7 anti-aircraft artillery groups/regiments	7 anti-aircraft artillery groups/regiments	7 anti-aircraft artillery groups/regiments	8 anti-aircraft artillery groups
		Electronic Warfare Unit (Anti-air Electronic Warfare Unit)							1 electronic warfare operations unit (1 anti-air electronic warfare unit)
		Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Units							1 utility unmanned aerial vehicle unit
		Information Warfare Unit							1 unit
		Ballistic Missile Defense Units						2 squadrons (Note 11)	
	Major Equipment	Tanks (Note 6)	(approx. 1,200)	approx. 900	approx. 600	approx. 400	(approx. 300)	(approx. 300)	
		Artillery (Main artillery) (Note 6)	(approx. 1,000/vehicle)	(approx. 900/vehicle)	(approx. 600/vehicle)	approx. 400/vehicle	(approx. 300/vehicle)	(approx. 300/vehicle)	
Maritime Self-Defense Force	Major Units	Surface Ship Units (Destroyers Units, Mine Sweeper Units)				4 flotillas (8 divisions) 4 flotillas	4 flotillas (8 divisions) 6 flotillas	4 flotillas (8 divisions)	6 groups (21 divisions)
		Destroyer and minesweeper vessels (Note 7)						2 groups (13 divisions)	
		For mobile operations (Note 7)	4 flotillas	4 flotillas	4 groups (8 divisions)				
		Regional deployment (Note 7)	(Regional units) 10 units	(Regional units) 7 units	5 divisions				
		Submarine Units	6 divisions	6 divisions	4 divisions	6 divisions	6 divisions	6 divisions	6 divisions
		Patrol Aircraft Units (Fixed-wing Patrol Aircraft Units)	(Land-based) 16	(Land-based) 13	9 squadrons	9 squadrons	9 squadrons	9 squadrons	9 squadrons (4 divisions)
		Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Units							2 divisions
		Information Warfare Unit							1 unit
		Minesweeper Units (Note 7)	2 flotillas	1 flotilla	1 flotilla	1 flotilla	1 flotilla		
	Major Equipment	Destroyers (Aegis-equipped Destroyers)	approx. 60	approx. 50	47	48	54	54	54 (10)
		Aegis System Equipped Vessel							2
		Patrol Vessels						12	12
		Submarines	16	16	16	22	22	22	22
		Combat aircraft	approx. 220	approx. 170	approx. 150	approx. 150	approx. 170	approx. 190	approx. 170
Air Self-Defense Force	Major Units	Air Warning & Control Units	28 warning groups	8 warning groups 20 warning squadrons	8 warning groups 20 warning squadrons	4 warning groups 24 warning squadrons	28 warning groups	28 warning groups	4 aircraft control and warning wings
			1 squadron	1 squadron	1 AEW group (2 squadrons)	1 AEW group (2 squadrons)	1 AEW group (3 squadrons)	1 AEW group (3 squadrons)	1 AEW group (3 squadrons)
		Fighter Units			12 squadrons	12 squadrons	13 squadrons	13 squadrons	(Note 12) 13 squadrons
		Fighter-Interceptor Units	10 squadrons	9 squadrons					
		Support Fighter Units	3 squadrons	3 squadrons					
		Air Reconnaissance Units	1 squadron	1 squadron	1 squadron	1 squadron			
		Aerial Refueling/Transport Units			1 squadron	1 squadron	2 squadrons	2 squadrons	2 squadrons
		Air Transport Units	3 squadrons	3 squadrons	3 squadrons	3 squadrons	3 squadrons	3 squadrons	3 squadrons
		Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units	6 air defense missile groups	6 air defense missile groups	6 air defense missile groups	6 air defense missile groups	6 air defense missile groups	4 air defense missile groups (24 fire squadrons)	4 air defense missile groups (24 fire squadrons)
		Space Domain Mission Units						1 squadron	1 squadron
		Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Units						1 squadron	1 squadron
		Operation Intelligence Units							1 squadron
	Major Equipment	Combat aircraft	approx. 430	approx. 400	approx. 350	approx. 340	approx. 360	approx. 370	approx. 430
		(Fighters)	(Note 9) (approx. 350)	approx. 300	approx. 260	approx. 260	approx. 280	approx. 290	(Note 12) approx. 320
Major Equipment/ Units that may also serve for BMD missions (Note 8)		Aegis-equipped Destroyers			4	(Note 10) 6 ships	8	8	
		Air Warning & Control Units			7 warning groups 4 warning squadrons	11 warning groups/units			
		Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units			3 air defense missile groups	6 air defense missile groups			

(Notes) 1 Not included in DBP Appendix Tables but shown here for comparisons with Appendix Tables of NDPGs from 1995 to 2018.
2 The Basic Operational Units were units designated as the "units deployed in peacetime" in up to 2010 NDPG, as the "Basic Operational Units" in up to 2018 NDPG (excepting 1 armored division which was defined as "Rapid Deployment Unit"), and as the "Rapid Deployment Units" in DBP.
3 The units that are designated as "Rapid Deployment Units" in up to 2018 NDPG.
4 Not included in DBP Appendix Tables but shown here for comparisons with Appendix Tables of NDPGs from 1995 to 2018.
5 In Stand-off Missile Units, Surface-to-ship Missile Regiments were called "Surface-to-ship Guided Missile Units" and Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile Units Intended for the Defense of Remote Islands were called "Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile Units," respectively in NDPGs up to 2018.
6 Not included in 1976 NDPG, 2013 NDPG, 2018 NDPG, and DBP Appendix Tables, but shown here for comparisons with Appendix Tables of NDPGs from 1995 to 2010.
7 Not included in DBP but shown here for comparisons with DBP Appendix Tables. Destroyers Units were expressed as Anti-submarine Surface Units (for mobile operations) and Anti-submarine Surface Units (regional units) in 1976 NDPG, as Destroyers Units (for mobile operations) and Destroyers Units (regional units) in the 1995 NDPG, and as Destroyers Units (for mobile operations) and Destroyers Units (regional deployment) in 2004 NDPG.
8 Major equipment/units that may also serve for BMD missions were included in the MSDF's major equipment or the ASDF's major units in 2004 and 2010 NDPGs, but those newly procured are included in the categories of Aegis-equipped destroyers, Air Warning & Control Units, and Surface-to-Air Guided Missile Units in 2013 and 2018 NDPGs. In addition, this is not included in DBP Appendix Tables but shown here for comparisons with Appendix Tables of NDPGs from 1995 to 2018.
9 Not included in Appendix Tables of the 1995 NDPG but shown here for comparisons with 2007 NDPG to DBP Appendix Tables.
10 In the 2010 NDPG, Aegis-equipped destroyers with BMD functions are allowed to be additionally procured within the limited number of destroyers above, when separately determined in light of the progress in BMD technologies and financial circumstances.
11 With the deployment of two land-based Aegis systems (Aegis Ashore), two ballistic missile defense units were to be added, but the Cabinet decided in December 2020 to replace the land-based Aegis System (Aegis Ashore) with two Aegis system-equipped vessels, which will be maintained by the MSDF. The two are mentioned as a part of major equipment of the MSDF in DBP Appendix Tables.
12 The number of fighter units and fighter jets will be adjusted so as to further enhance the quantitative strengthening of air forces based on the required investigation conducted by FY2027. It will also investigate the possibility of utilizing unmanned aerial vehicles (UVA).

4 Expenditures

The expenditure target for the buildup of defense capability required under the implementation of the DBP for the five years from FY2023 through FY2027 amount to approximately 43 trillion yen. The annual defense budgets for FY2023 to FY2027 under the DBP amount to approximately 40.5 trillion yen in total (approximately 8.9 trillion yen in FY2027), on the assumption that a number of additional measures will be taken. These measures include further accelerating the improvement of JSDF facilities in an agile and flexible manner in view of the progress of each project, utilizing the settlement surplus in the general account when the surplus is larger than the expected settlement surplus, and thoroughly implementing further optimization and rationalization of buildup of defense capabilities.

The expenses based on contracts (material expenses) to be newly concluded to implement the DBP amount to approximately 43.5000 trillion yen (excluding the amount corresponding to payments for the period outside of the Program that contribute to improving project efficiency, such as maintenance).

Finally, to secure financial resources for the stable sustainment of defense capabilities after FY2027 as well as for covering the DBP from FY2023 to FY2027, necessary measures will be implemented in both expenditure and revenue areas, such as the reform in government expenditure, using the settlement surplus, creation of defense buildup funds utilizing non-tax revenues, and tax measures.

See Fig. II-2-3-5 (Structure of Expenditures for the DBP), Fig. II-2-3-6 (Five-Year Cost Breakdown Starting from Plan Formulation), Chapter 3, Section 2-6 (Secure Financial Resources for Reinforcing Defense Capabilities)

Fig. II-2-3-5 Structure of Expenditures for the DBP

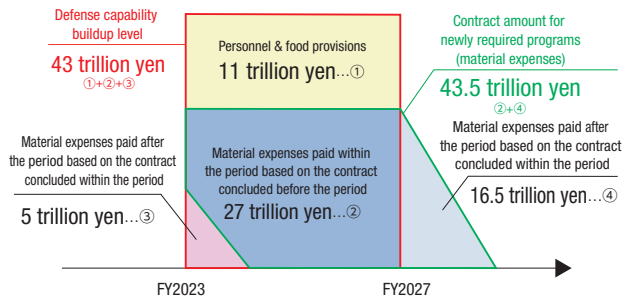


Fig. II-2-3-6 Five-Year Cost Breakdown Starting from Plan Formulation

Field		Defense Buildup Program (FY2023 - FY2027)	Reference: Previous plans (FY2019 - FY2023)
Stand-Off Defense Capabilities		Approx. 5 trillion yen	Approx. 0.2 trillion yen
Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities		Approx. 3 trillion yen	Approx. 1 trillion yen
Unmanned Defense Capabilities		Approx. 1 trillion yen	Approx. 0.1 trillion yen
Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities (Space, Cyber, JSDF equipment)		Approx. 8 trillion yen	Approx. 3 trillion yen
Command and Control/Intelligence-related Functions		Approx. 1 trillion yen	Approx. 0.3 trillion yen
Mobile Deployment Capabilities/Civil Protection		Approx. 2 trillion yen	Approx. 0.3 trillion yen
Sustainability and Resilience	Ammunitions and Missiles	Approx. 2 trillion yen (Approx. 5 trillion yen incl. other fields)	Approx. 1 trillion yen
	Sustainment and Maintenance for Equipment, and Securing Operational Availability	Approx. 9 trillion yen (Approx. 10 trillion yen incl. other fields)	Approx. 4 trillion yen
	Improving the Resiliency of Facilities	Approx. 4 trillion yen	Approx. 1 trillion yen
Reinforcing Defense Production Base		Approx. 0.4 trillion yen (Approx. 1 trillion yen incl. other fields)	Approx. 1 trillion yen
Research and Development		Approx. 1 trillion yen (Approx. 3.5 trillion yen incl. other fields)	
Other (education and training, fuel, etc.)		Approx. 6.6 trillion yen	Approx. 4.4 trillion yen
		Expenses required over the next 5 years Approx. 43.5 trillion yen (contract amount)	FY2019-FY2023 planned amount Approx. 17.2 trillion yen (contract amount)

Chapter 3 Defense Buildup and the Budget

Section 1 Basic Concept of the FY2025 Buildup of Defense Capability

With the basic understanding that Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, the MOD/JSDF has continued to allocate the necessary and sufficient budget for the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities under the Defense Buildup Program (DBP) in FY2025, the third year of the DBP.

The MOD/JSDF promotes seven priority fields, including fields that constitute the core of Japan's future defense capabilities, such as reinforcing stand-off defense capabilities through the development of satellite constellations.

In particular, given the current severe recruitment environment for JSDF personnel, the Government of Japan will swiftly implement measures to strengthen the human resource base, based on the basic policy formulated by the Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel, which was established in October 2024. The Government will also work to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa period, so that people can feel a sense of pride and honor in serving or having served as JSDF personnel.

In addition, the MOD/JSDF will work to increase the number of operationally available equipment, secure ammunition, and enhance defense production and technology bases. Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF prioritizes improving the resiliency of defense facilities, while also promoting measures for communities around bases and steadily implementing the U.S. Forces realignment measures.

For details of the necessary defense-related expenditures, see the next section.

See Fig. II-3-1-1 (Major Programs for the Buildup of Defense Capability in FY2025 (Seven Areas to be Focused on in the Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities)), Part IV (Reinforcing Foundation for JSDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities)

REFERENCE: Why is the Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities Necessary?
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/guideline_whynow/index.html

Fig. II-3-1-1 Major Programs for the Buildup of Defense Capability in FY2025 (Seven Areas to be Focused on in the Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities)

Stand-off defense capability

- ○Development of Upgraded Type12 SSM (surface-, ship-, and air-launched variants) and mass-production (ground-launched and ship-launched variants)
- ○Development and mass-production of Submarine launched missiles
- ○Development and mass-production of hyper velocity gliding projectile intended for the defense of remote islands
- ○Development and mass-production of hyper velocity gliding projectile (upgraded) intended for the defense of remote islands
- ○Enhancement of the development and production framework for hypersonic weapons
- ○Acquisition of JSM and JASSM
- ○Satellite constellation construction and others

Upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship missile models (image)

Hyper velocity gliding projectile (image)

Hypersonic weapons (image)

JASSM (image)

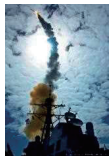
Submarine Launched Missiles

*All are images.

Integrated air and missile defense capabilities

- ○Development of upgraded type-03 medium-range surface-to-air missile (modified)
- ○Acquisition of SM-3 Block IIA and SM-6
- ○Procurement of PAC-3MSE missiles
- ○Improvement of capabilities of FPS-5 and FPS-7 and JADGE
- ○Acquisition of TPS-102 mobile warning and control radars
- ○Procurement of the next-generation JADGE
- ○Procurement of FC networks and others

SM-3 Block IIA (image)


SM-6 long range ship-to-air missile

FPS-7

Unmanned defense capabilities

- ○Acquisition of enhanced functions type UAV (medium-range)
- ○Acquisition of UAV (short-range)
- ○Acquisition of miniature attack UAV
- ○Acquisition of the MQ-9B SeaGuardian long-endurance UAV
- ○Acquisition of six small shipborne UAVs
- ○Research on UGV systems and other related areas

Long-endurance UAV

UAV (mid-range), high-performance type

Small shipborne UAVs

Cross-domain operation capabilities

- ○Development of the Next-Generation Defense Communications Satellite
- ○Development of the demonstration satellite for the next-generation defense technologies
- ○Establishment of the fielding satellite interference detection systems
- ○Implementation of the Risk Management Framework (RMF)
- ○Construction of the MOD Cloud (tentative name)
- ○Development of Decision-Making Support System (DSS) in the cyber domain
- ○Acquisition of Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS) (x 1 set)
- ○Acquisition of Type-24 Counter Air Electronic Warfare System (x 2 sets)
- ○Research on ship-board laser systems
- ○Acquisition of signals intelligence aircraft (RC-2) (x 1)
- ○Acquisition of AMV (armored personnel carrier) (x 28)
- ○Acquisition of six Common Tactical Wheeled Vehicles (Reconnaissance Combat Variant)
- ○Acquisition of fixed-wing patrol aircraft (P-1) (x 2)
- ○Acquisition of patrol helicopter (SH-60L) (x 2)
- ○Procurement of US-2 search and rescue amphibious aircraft (×1)
- ○Construction of destroyers (×3) and a submarine
- ○Acquisition of eight F-35A fighter jets and three F-35Bs
- ○Upgrade of F-2 fighter jets
- ○Acquisition of the next-generation primary trainer aircraft (T-6) and ground-based training equipment and others

Armored Modular Vehicle – Armored Personnel Carrier

Common Tactical Wheeled Vehicles (Reconnaissance Combat Variant) (conceptual image)

New FFM (image)

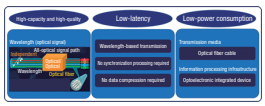
SH-60L patrol helicopter

F-35A fighter

Fighter (F-35B)

Command and control / intelligence-related functions

- ○Enhancement of command-and-control functions
- ○Strengthening of functions such as intelligence collection and analysis
- ○Responding to Integrated Information Warfare with Special Regard to the Cognitive dimension etc.



Establishment of the APN (image)

Mobile deployment capabilities / civil protection

- ○Acquisition of four KC-46A aerial refueling/transport aircraft
- ○Acquisition of Medium-Sized Vessels (Landing Ship, Vehicle: LSV), Small-Sized Vessels (Landing Craft, Utility: LCU), and High-Mobility Boats
- ○Acquisition of UH-2 utility helicopters
- ○Private transport capacity utilization project (PFI vessels)
- ○Acquisition of various trucks etc.

Medium-Sized Vessels (Landing Ship, Vehicle: LSV)

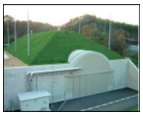
Small-Sized Vessels (Landing Craft, Utility: LCU)

Mobile craft (image)

Aerial Refueling/ Transport Aircraft (KC-46A)

Sustainability and resilience

- ○Procurement of various ammunition necessary for continuous unit operation
- ○Sustainment and maintenance for equipment and others
- ○Securing ammunition storage facilities
- ○Improvement of resiliency of JSDF facilities and others


Magazine

Resolving the issue of having non-operational aircraft

Section 2 Defense-Related Expenditures

1 Overview of Defense-Related Expenditures for FY2025

Under the NDS and the DBP, the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities will proceed through the systematic buildup of capabilities across the following seven fields: (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 and intelligence-related functions, (vi) mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, and (vii) sustainability and resiliency. For the defense-related expenditures for FY2025, the MOD/JSDF secured a budget that is necessary and sufficient to achieve the goal of fundamentally reinforcing Japan's defense capabilities within the DBP period.

On an annual expenditure basis,[1] the Government of Japan steadily increased the budget, in line with the progress of programs and execution of budget, with a total of 8,474.8 billion yen allocated for the DBP-related expenditures (a 9.7% year-on-year increase of 749.8 billion yen).

On a contract basis,[2] the Government of Japan compiled the projects necessary to start by FY2025, with a total of 8,433.2 billion yen allocated for DBP-related expenditures (a 9.9% year-on-year decrease of 929.3 billion yen).

In allocating the budget, programs will continue to be classified into 15 categories in view of the DBP for meticulous progress management. Amid higher prices and a weaker yen, the MOD/JSDF will thoroughly implement further optimization and rationalization of defense buildup. It will also thoroughly scrutinize expenses and further promote efficient equipment acquisition through such bulk purchases, long-term contracts among other means.

See Fig. II-3-2-1 (Comparison between Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget) of FY2024 and FY2025)), Fig. II-3-2-2 (Trends in Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget)), Fig. II-3-2-3 (Budget Allocation for FY2025 (15 categories)), 4 (Breakdown of Defense-Related Expenditures), Reference 8 (Pattern of Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget Basis))

Fig. II-3-2-1 Comparison between Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget) of FY2024 and FY2025)

(Unit: 100 million yen)

Category		FY2024	FY2025	Fiscal YOY growth	
Annual expenditure		77,249	84,748	7,498	9.7%
	Personnel and food provisions	22,290	23,508	1,218	5.5%
	Material expenses	54,960	61,240	6,280	11.4%
Future obligation		135,006	153,886	18,880	14.0%
	New contracts	76,594	66,211	-10,383	-13.6%
	Existing contracts	58,412	87,675	29,262	50.1%

(Notes) 1 The figures above do not include SACO-related expenses and the U.S. Forces realignment-related expenses (the portion allocated for mitigating the impact on local communities), etc. If these are included, the total amounts of defense-related expenditures are 7,949.6 billion yen for FY2024 and 8,700.5 billion yen for FY2025; and for future obligation, 14,192.6 billion yen for FY2024 and 16,035 billion yen for FY2025.
2 The budget amounts include expenditures pertaining to the Digital Agency.
3 Figures may not add up to the total due to rounding.

2 High-Priority Focuses

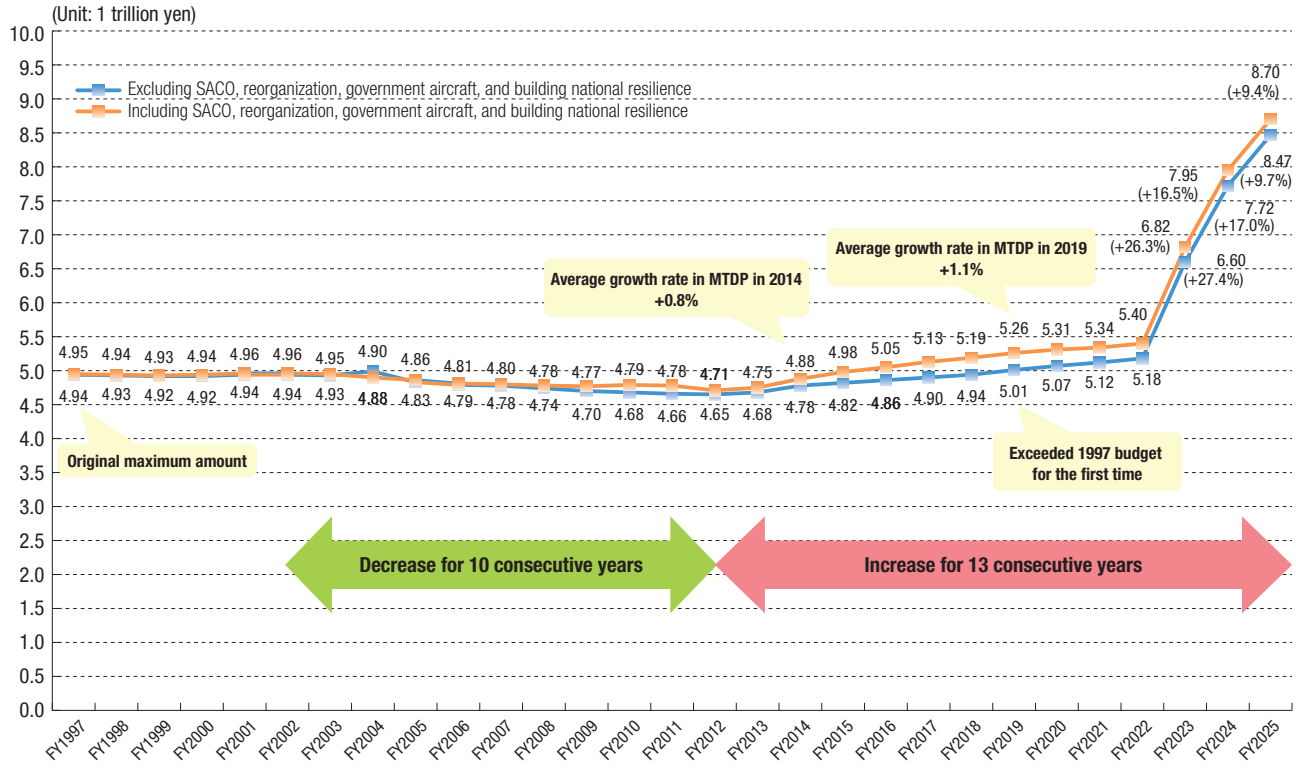
1 Procuring various types of stand-off missiles

For the buildup of various stand-off missiles, as in FY2024, research and development, mass production, and acquisition will continue to be carried out for various stand-off missiles, each with different characteristics in terms of range, speed, flight trajectories, target detection, and platforms in FY2025.

In order to rapidly build up stand-off defense capabilities, deployment of the domestically produced Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surface-launched variant) will begin within FY2025, and mass production of the same missile's ship-launched variant is also scheduled to commence. In addition, mass production of the domestically produced submarine-launched missile is also scheduled to begin in FY2025. As for U.S.-made Tomahawk missiles, acquisition is scheduled to begin in FY2025.

1 The total amount paid during the fiscal year concerned for programs for equipment acquisition, facility improvement, and the like.
2 The total amount of contracts concluded during the fiscal year concerned for programs for equipment acquisition, facility improvement, and the like.

Fig. II-3-2-2 Trends in Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget)



(Notes) 1. Expenses for the introduction of new government aircraft are included in the budget for FY2015 to FY2022.
2. Expenses for the three-year emergency measures for disaster prevention, mitigation, and national resilience are included in the budget for FY2019 andFY2020.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-1 (Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities)

Launch test of Upgraded Type-12 SSM

2 Satellite Constellation Construction

From the perspective of ensuring the effectiveness of stand-off defense capabilities, it is necessary to develop a system that allows Japan itself to more effectively collect target information. To this end, beginning at the end of FY2025, construction of a **satellite constellation** using the Private

KEY WORD **Satellite Constellation**

A system in which numerous small artificial satellites are operated in a coordinated, integrated manner along a fixed orbit, used for purposes such as satellite communication and information gathering for images and the like.

REFERENCE: Overview of FY2025 Budget
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/budget/yosan_gaiyo/index.html

REFERENCE: How the Defense Budget Is Spent (Graphical Summary)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/guideline/pamph/graphicalsummary.html

Fig. II-3-2-3 Budget Allocation for FY2025 (15 categories)

Category	Area	Total program expenses for five years	Program expenses for FY2023	Program expenses for FY2024	Program expenses for FY2025
Stand-off defense capability		Approx. 5 trillion yen	1.413 trillion yen	712.7 billion yen	939 billion yen
Integrated air and missile defense capabilities		Approx. 3 trillion yen	982.9 billion yen	1.2284 trillion yen	533.1 billion yen
Unmanned defense capabilities		Approx. 1 trillion yen	179.1 billion yen	114.6 billion yen	111 billion yen
Cross-domain operation capabilities	Space	Approx. 1 trillion yen	152.9 billion yen	98.4 billion yen	211.9 billion yen
	Cyberspace	Approx. 1 trillion yen	236.3 billion yen	202.6 billion yen	261.5 billion yen
	Vehicles, ships, aircraft, etc.	Approx. 6 trillion yen	1.1763 trillion yen	1.3391 trillion yen	1.1385 trillion yen
Command and control/intelligence-related functions		Approx. 1 trillion yen	305.3 billion yen	424.8 billion yen	385.2 billion yen
Mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection		Approx. 2 trillion yen	239.6 billion yen	565.3 billion yen	454.5 billion yen
Sustainability and resiliency	Ammunition, guided missiles	Approx. 2 trillion yen (Approx. 5 trillion yen including other areas)	212.4 billion yen (828.3 billion yen including other areas)	401.5 billion yen (924.9 billion yen including other areas)	287.6 billion yen (767.5 billion yen including other areas)
	Sustainment and Maintenance for Equipment, and Securing Operational Availability	Approx. 9 trillion yen (Approx. 10 trillion yen including other areas)	1.793 trillion yen (2.0355 trillion yen including other areas)	1.9094 trillion yen (2.3367 trillion yen including other areas)	1.7696 trillion yen (2.2247 trillion yen including other areas)
	Improving the Resiliency of Facilities	Approx. 4 trillion yen	474 billion yen	631.3 billion yen	695.3 billion yen
Reinforcing Defense Production Base		Approx. 0.4 trillion yen (Approx. 1 trillion yen including other areas)	97.2 billion yen (146.9 billion yen including other areas)	83 billion yen (92 billion yen including other areas)	96.4 billion yen (99.6 billion yen including other areas)
Research and development		Approx. 1 trillion yen (Approx. 3.5 trillion yen including other areas)	232 billion yen (896.8 billion yen including other areas)	225.7 billion yen (822.5 billion yen including other areas)	218.9 billion yen (638.7 billion yen including other areas)
Base measures		Approx. 2.6 trillion yen	514.9 billion yen	513.8 billion yen	536.1 billion yen
Education and training expenses, fuel expenses, etc.		Approx. 4 trillion yen	943.7 billion yen	911.8 billion yen	794.5 billion yen
Total		Approx. 43.5 trillion yen	8.9525 trillion yen	9.3625 trillion yen	8.4332 trillion yen

(Note) Figure have been rounded off and may not add up to the total.

Finance Initiative (PFI) method will be commenced, with the aim of acquiring the capability to continuously detect and track target information by utilizing the space domain.

3 Development of the Next-Generation Defense Communications Satellite

As the currently operating X-band defense communications satellite called Kirameki-2 is scheduled to end its operations in FY2030, the development of its successor begins in FY2025 as the next-generation defense communications satellite with high-capacity communication capabilities and strong resiliency.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-4 (Strengthening Cross-domain Operation Capabilities)

4 Establishment of the Space Operations Wing (Tentative Name)

Within the ASDF, as the development of a system in the space domain, efforts are underway to reinforce space operational capabilities, with a view toward future reorganization into the Air and Space Self-Defense Force (tentative name). As part of this, in FY2025, the current Space Operations Group will be abolished, and a new unit called the Space Operations Wing (tentative name) will be established in order to strengthen capabilities for space domain awareness, including the development of an operational structure for the Space Domain Awareness (SDA) satellite, which is scheduled to launch in FY2026.

5 Utilization of Civilian Maritime Transport Capabilities

In order to respond to invasions of remote islands or large-scale natural disasters, it is important to strengthen integrated transport capabilities by ensuring the ability to deploy rapidly and at scale while cooperating with civilian transportation capabilities during peacetime. To this end, in FY2025, four new civilian vessels will be secured through the PFI method to enable efficient implementation of large-scale transport in cooperation with the JSDF's transport capabilities.

6 Securing Various Types of Transport Vessels

To strengthen maritime transport capabilities to remote islands, in FY2027, one medium-class and one small-class vessel, along with three mobile boats, will be newly acquired for operation by the JSDF Maritime Transport Group newly established as a joint unit.

7 Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft

With regard to the development of the next-generation fighter aircraft, development work on the airframe, engine, and other components had previously been conducted under domestic contracts by Japan. In order to streamline and make the development work more efficient, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy established the GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO), and the corresponding Joint Venture (JV). This will enable steady execution of the FY2025 budget and help accelerate development work.

3 Initiatives for Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

During the Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel, which was established in October 2024, active discussions were held frequently under the leadership of the Prime Minister, and the Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel was formulated. In the FY2025 draft budget, a total of 409.7 billion yen was allocated for necessary expenses of related initiatives, including (i) 16.7 billion yen for improving the treatment of JSDF personnel, (ii) 387.8 billion yen for improving living and working environments, (iii) 1.9 billion yen for establishing new lifetime career plans, and (iv) 3.2 billion yen for other related matters.

See FOCUS 2, Part IV, Chapter 1 (Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel)

4 Breakdown of Defense-Related Expenditures

1 Classification by expenses

Defense-related expenditures are broadly classified into "personnel and food provision expenses," which covers items such as wages and meals for JSDF personnel, and "material expenses," which finance the procurement, repair and maintenance of equipment, the purchase of fuel, the education and training of JSDF personnel and others. Material expenses are further classified into "obligatory outlay expenses,"[3] which are paid based on contracts concluded in previous fiscal years, and "general material expenses," which are paid under current-year contracts. Material expenses are also referred to as "program expenses," and since general material expenses include repair costs for equipment, education and training expenses for personnel, and the purchase of fuel, they are referred to also as "activity expenses."

Personnel and food provision expenses as well as obligatory outlay expenses, both of which are mandatory expenses, account for 80% of the total defense-related budget. The remaining 20% of the budget includes spending for repairing equipment and for implementing measures to mitigate the impact on local communities hosting U.S. bases in Japan. As such, a high percentage of the budget is allocated for maintenance purposes.

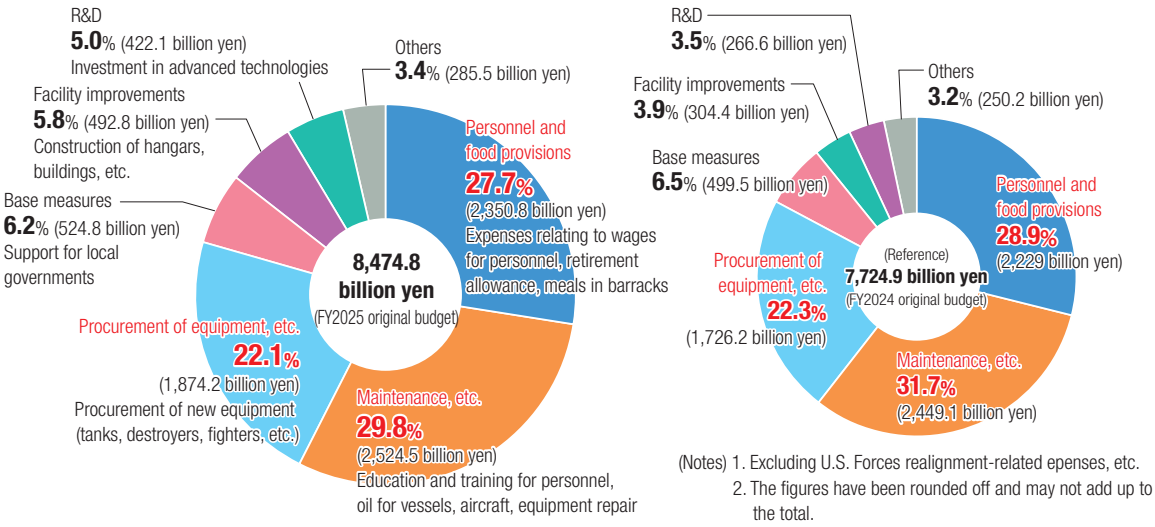
2 Classification by purpose of use

By purpose of use, defense-related expenditures are broadly classified into "personnel and food provision expenses," which cover items such as wages and meals for JSDF personnel; "equipment procurement expenses," which cover the procurement of new equipment (e.g., tanks, destroyers, fighter aircraft, etc.); "maintenance expenses," which cover items such as training and education of JSDF personnel, fuel for vessels and aircraft, and equipment repairs; "facility improvement expenses," which cover the construction of buildings such as aircraft hangars and barracks; and "research and development expenses," which cover investments in cutting-edge technologies. In the defense-related expenditures for FY2025, as in those of the past two fiscal years, the combined total of expenses for equipment procurement and research and development exceeds 20% of the total defense-related expenditure, while the percentage for facility improvements and other expenses has also increased.

See Fig. II-3-2-4 (Classification of Defense-Related Expenditures by Purpose of Use (FY2025))

3 Some projects for the buildup of defense capabilities extend over multiple years. In these cases, the fiscal year in which the contract is concluded is different from the fiscal year in which the payment to the contractor is made. Therefore, the maximum obligation over later fiscal years is first allocated to the budget as a contract, resulting in a Treasury obligation (a type of budget that only grants the authority to incur obligations; the contracts can be concluded, but payment cannot be made). Based on such budgeting, in the fiscal year in which the construction is completed or the equipment is procured, the expenses necessary for payment are in principle allocated as a budget expenditure (a type of budget that grants the authority to incur obligations and to make payment; the contracts can be concluded and payment can be made). Budget expenditure for payments incurred under contracts concluded in previous fiscal years is called "obligatory outlay expenses," while expenditure for future fiscal years is termed "future obligations."

Fig. II-3-2-4 Classification of Defense-Related Expenditures by Purpose of Use (FY2025)



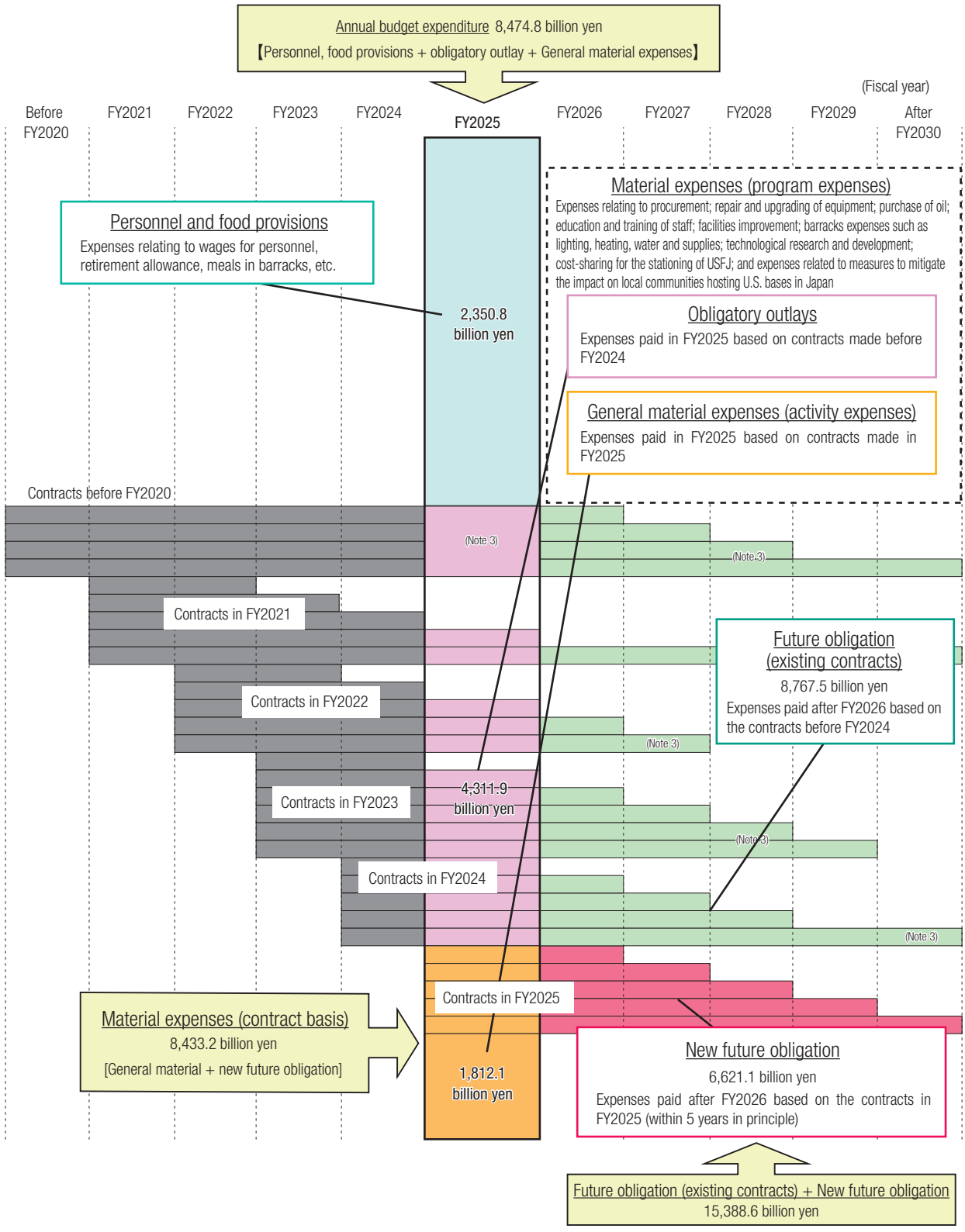
(Notes) 1. Excluding U.S. Forces realignment-related epenses, etc.
2. The figures have been rounded off and may not add up to the total.

3 Future obligations concerning new contracts

Apart from the annual budget expenditure, the future obligations concerning new contracts (the new future obligations arising in the applicable fiscal year) indicates payments for the following year and beyond. In the build-up of defense capabilities, it is common to take multiple years from contract to delivery or completion, in areas such as the procurement of vessels, aircraft, and other major equipment, as well as the construction of buildings such as aircraft hangars and barracks. Concerning these projects, while contracts covering multiple fiscal years are concluded in the applicable fiscal year in question, and payments for the next fiscal year and beyond (in principle, within five years) are promised in advance at the time of concluding the contract (the total of general material expenses and future obligations concerning new contracts is equal to the total amount of the contract concluded in that fiscal year (scale of projects), which is referred to as the “contract basis”).

See Fig. II-3-2-5 (Structure of Defense-Related Expenditures)

Fig. II-3-2-5 Structure of Defense-Related Expenditures



(Notes) 1 In the SACO-related and U.S. Forces realignment-related expenses, the portion allocated for mitigating the impact on local communities is excluded.
2 This is a conceptual diagram and the lengths of the graph do not necessarily correspond to the actual data.
3 Part of expenses, such as long-term contracts for the procurement of equipment, is paid for over five years.

5 Optimization Efforts

In the DBP, substantive funds will be secured by means such as thoroughly ensuring greater efficiency and streamlining of the buildup of defense capability. The FY2025 budget aims to realize a cost reduction of approximately 265.3 billion yen through initiatives shown below:

- The operation of equipment of declining importance due to obsolescence, etc., will be suspended and its use terminated. (cost reduction of 0.7 billion yen)
- Prices and procurement costs will be reduced by increasing companies' predictability and encouraging their efficient production through bulk purchase of equipment, including through long-term contracts. At the same time, Performance Based Logistics (PBL), in which consideration for the equipment is linked to the maintenance outcomes achieved, and other umbrella contracts will be expanded. (cost reduction of 25.9 billion yen)
- Procurement time and life cycle costs will be reduced by narrowing down the JSDF's proprietary specifications through modularization, communalization, and the use of civilian goods. (cost reduction of 0.2 billion yen)
- In addition to reviewing projects with low cost-effectiveness, the cost of each project will be carefully managed, and the utilization of external personnel from private contractors will be expanded. (cost reduction of 95.7 billion yen)
- Prices of equipment and others will be reduced through such means as closer scrutiny of manufacturing processes and person-hours involved as well as of related expenses. (cost reduction of 142.7 billion yen)

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 4 (Equipment Optimization Efforts)

6 Secure Financial Resources for Reinforcing Defense Capabilities

Fundamentally reinforced defense capabilities must be maintained and further reinforced into the future. Stably supporting such efforts requires solid financial resources. To secure financial resources for the stable sustainment of defense capabilities after FY2027 as well as for covering the DBP from FY2023 to FY2027, the DBP calls for implementing necessary measures in both expenditure and revenue, such as government expenditure reforms, the use of settlement surplus, creation of the Defense Buildup Fund utilizing non-tax revenues, and tax measures.

The Defense Buildup Fund was created under the Defense Financing Act,[4] enacted in 2023.

Also, tax measures have been addressed by the FY2023 Tax Reform Outline[5]. The Outline calls for incremental measures on corporate tax, income tax, and tobacco tax over several years to secure a little more than 1 trillion yen for FY2027. In the FY2025 Tax Reform Outline[6], the specific details of these measures were presented, and based on that, the Act for Partial Amendment of the Income Tax Act, etc. (FY2025 Tax Reform Act) was enacted in March 2025. Under this Act, a surtax of 4% will be imposed on the portion of the corporate tax amount, serving as the taxation standard, which deducted five million yen, starting in April 2026. With regard to the tobacco tax, from April 2026, taxation on heated tobacco products will be revised for fairness, and from April 2027, the tax rate will be raised in phases. As for income tax, the FY2025 Tax Reform Outline states that consideration will be continued based on the basic direction indicated in the FY2023 Tax Reform Outline and the like.

See Chapter 2, Section 3 (Outline of the Defense Buildup Program)

7 Comparison with Other Countries

It is difficult to accurately make an international comparison of defense budgets due to a number of factors: there is no internationally unified definition of a defense budget in the first place; even if defense budgets are publicly disclosed, their overall amount or their breakdown is sometimes unclear; and the budget system varies by country.

On such a basis, if Japan's defense-related expenditures and the defense budgets of other countries officially published by each government were converted into dollar amounts using the purchasing power parity[7] of each country reported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and if a comparison was made in terms of the ratio

4 The Act on Special Measures for Securing Financial Resources Necessary for Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities
5 The FY2023 Tax Reform Outline (Cabinet Decision on December 23, 2022)
6 The FY2025 Tax Reform Outline (Liberal Democratic Party and Komeito Decision on December 20, 2024)
7 A gauge that measures each country's ability to purchase goods and services by taking into account their respective price levels. Although there also exists a method of converting their defense budget into dollar amounts at respective currency rates, their dollar-based defense budget calculated in this way do not necessarily reflect the precise value based on each country's price levels.

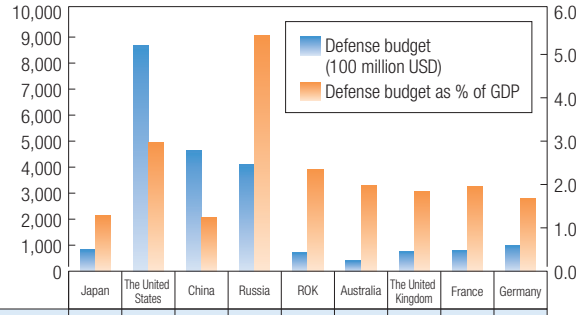
of the defense budget to GDP (gross domesitc product), the results would be as shown in Fig. II-3-2-6 (Comparison with Defense Budgets of Major Countries [FY2024]).

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member countries and other countries have committed to appropriate their defense budget that is commensurate with their respective economic capabilities in order to maintain the security environment.[8] In the case of Japan, looking at its defense budget as a percentage of GDP has a certain significance as an indicator for the reinforcement of its defense capabilities in light of changes in the security environment in the international community. Accordingly, in FY2027, as per its own judgement, Japan will take the necessary measures to make the level of its budget, for both the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and complementary initiatives, reach 2% of the current GDP (FY2022 at the time of the formulation of the NSS), through building on the contents of necessary defense capabilities under the NSS, and by taking into account indexes of international comparison, with a view to coordination with Japan's ally, likeminded countries, and others.[9]

In addition, Fig. II-3-2-7 (Trends in Defense Budgets of Major Countries) shows the trends in the defense budgets of major countries since 1998.

See Reference 9 (Trend of Defense Expenditures of Major Countries)

Fig. II-3-2-6 Comparison with Defense Budget of Major Countries (FY2024)

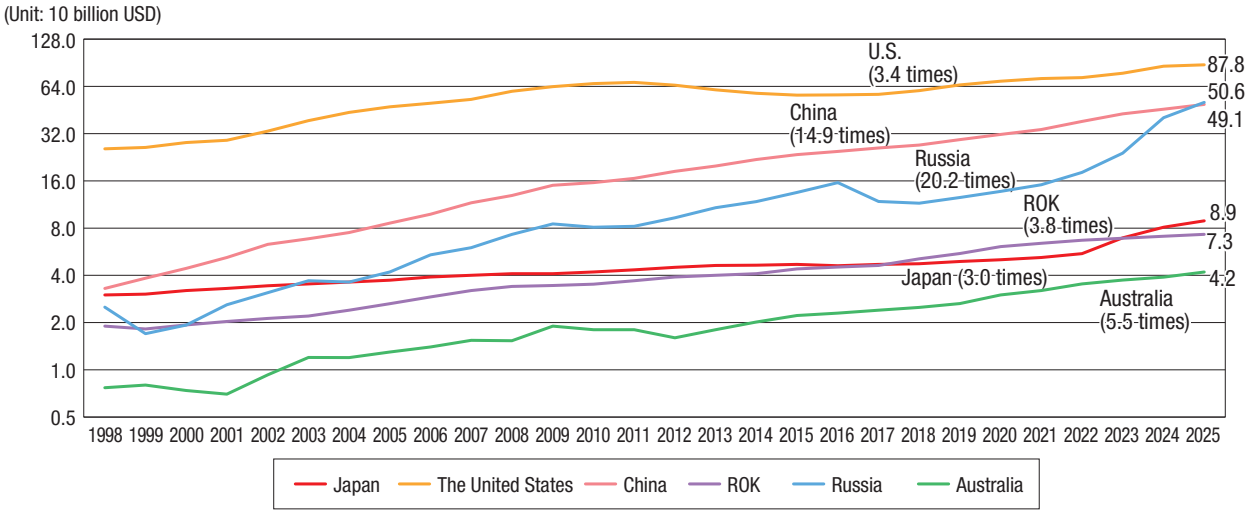


	Japan	The United States	China	Russia	ROK	Australia	The United Kingdom	France	Germany
Defense budget	807	8,595	4,579	4,040	706	390	745	791	979
Defense budget as % of GDP	1.27	2.95	1.23	5.39	2.33	1.96	1.81	1.94	1.67
(Reference) The percentage of GDP based on defense budget published by NATO	—	3.38	—	—	—	—	2.33	2.06	2.12
Defense budget per person (approx. US$○)	658	2,515	321	2,806	1,366	1,460	1,095	1,219	1,175
Defense budget per person (approx. ○ ten thousand yen)	6	24	3	27	13	14	10	12	11

(Notes) 1 This defense budget are based on those officially published by each country (DoD budget for the United States) and are converted to U.S. dollars, using each country's purchasing power parity for FY2024 as published by the OECD (officially published rate as of May 2025). As of May 2025, the OECD had not released the 2024 purchasing power parity (PPP) data for China and Russia; therefore, the 2023 PPP values were used to convert the figures into U.S. dollars. (1 U.S. dollar = 95.694479 yen = 3.636979 yuan = 26.670071 rubles = 841.61954 won = 1.369466 Australian dollars = 0.694113 pound = 0.71663 euros (France exchange rate) = 0.733194 euros (Germany exchange rate)
2 The amounts of defense budget published by China appear to be only part of its actual expenses for military purpose. According to analysis from the U.S. Department of Defense, China's actual defense budget much more than in its published defense budget.
3 The percentage of GDP is calculated based on defense budget officially published by each country (in local currency) using the GDP of each country published by the IMF (in local currency).
4 As defense budget published by NATO (which include pensions for retired veterans, etc.) may differ from those officially published by each country, the percentage of GDP based on defense budget published by NATO (in June 2024) does not necessarily coincide with the percentage of GDP calculated based on defense budget officially published by each country.
5 Defense budget per person are calculated using the populations published by the UNFPA (State of the World Population 2024).
6 According to a SIPRI Fact Sheet (published in April 2025), global defense budget represented 2.5% of global GDP in 2024, and defense budget represented 1.4% of Japan's GDP.

8 For example, the United Kingdom has announced its long-term goal of increasing its defense budget to 2.5% of GDP, with the aim of reaching 3% in the future.
9 The aggregate of DBP-related expenditures and expenditures "for complementary initiatives" for FY2025 amounts to 9.9 trillion yen, which represents about 1.8% of Japan's GDP for the fiscal year in which the NSS was formulated (FY2022).

Fig. II-3-2-7 Trends in Defense Budget of Major Countries



(Notes)1 Regarding the defense budget of the six countries, figures officially published by the government of each country were converted into U.S. dollars amounts, using the purchasing power parity for each year (published by the OECD as of May 2025). Incidentally, the values for 2025 were converted into USD with the purchasing power parity for 2024, because the one for 2025 has not been published yet for now. In addition, the 2024 purchasing power parity (PPP) data for China and Russia have not been released as well; therefore, the 2023 PPP values were used to convert the figures into U.S. dollars for 2024 and 2025.

2 Japan's defense-related expenditure shows its original budget (excluding SACO-related expenses, the U.S. Forces realignment-related expenses (the portion allocated for mitigating the impact on local communities), and expenses for the three-year emergency response plan for disaster prevention, disaster mitigation, and building national resilience, etc.)

3 The amount and year-on-year growth rate (figures rounded to one decimal place) for FY1998-FY2025 are indicated.

Commentary

Defense Financing and Defense Capabilities Reinforcement

When considering the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities recently, the Government of Japan (GOJ) carried out a variety of studies, including extremely realistic simulations, to determine how we can fully protect the lives of Japanese citizens at a time when we are facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II. Then GOJ accumulated the details of the defense capabilities which will be necessary and derived the scale of defense expenditure: about 43 trillion yen as the amount for the level of defense capabilities buildup necessary over the five year period from FY2023 to FY2027.

This defense expenditure on the scale of about 43 trillion yen is necessary as the level of expenditure which can enable the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) to achieve the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and fulfil their roles thoroughly.

When securing the financial resources necessary for this purpose, the GOJ have decided to cover approximately three-quarters of the financial resources by taking all available measures, such as the reform in government expenditure, using settlement surplus, and securing non-tax revenues, in order to reduce the burden on the public as much as possible. For the approximately one-quarter of the financial resources which is not covered by those measures, the GOJ will ask the public for their cooperation through tax measures. The Act for Partial Amendment of the Income Tax Act, etc. (the FY2025 Tax Reform Act) in which these tax measures are incorporated was enacted on March 31, 2025.

These tax measures take variety of aspects of the economy into consideration. For example, five million yen is deducted from the corporation tax amount which is the tax base for corporation tax to give consideration to small and medium enterprises. Having ensured predictability of the measure, raise in tobacco tax will be gradually implemented, and gives sufficient consideration to the impact on domestic leaf tobacco farmers, consumers, and other parties concerned.

Furthermore, regarding the income tax which FY2025 Tax Reform Outline stated as a matter for continuous consideration, a new 1% surtax will be imposed on the income tax while the rate of special income tax for reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake will be reduced by 1%, keeping the total tax rate unchanged from the current level. This is to give consideration by ensuring there is no increase in the burden on households at the present time.

The MOD will make effort to provide even more careful explanations about the budget expenditure and the progress of the Defense Buildup Program to gain public understanding of the necessity of the budget and the tax measures. It will also strive to achieve fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities by further streamlining and rationalization of the buildup of defense capability, even in a situation of overall increase in prices and fluctuations in exchange rate accompanied by depreciation of the yen.

Chapter 4 Organizations Responsible for Japan's Security and Defense

Section 1 National Security Council

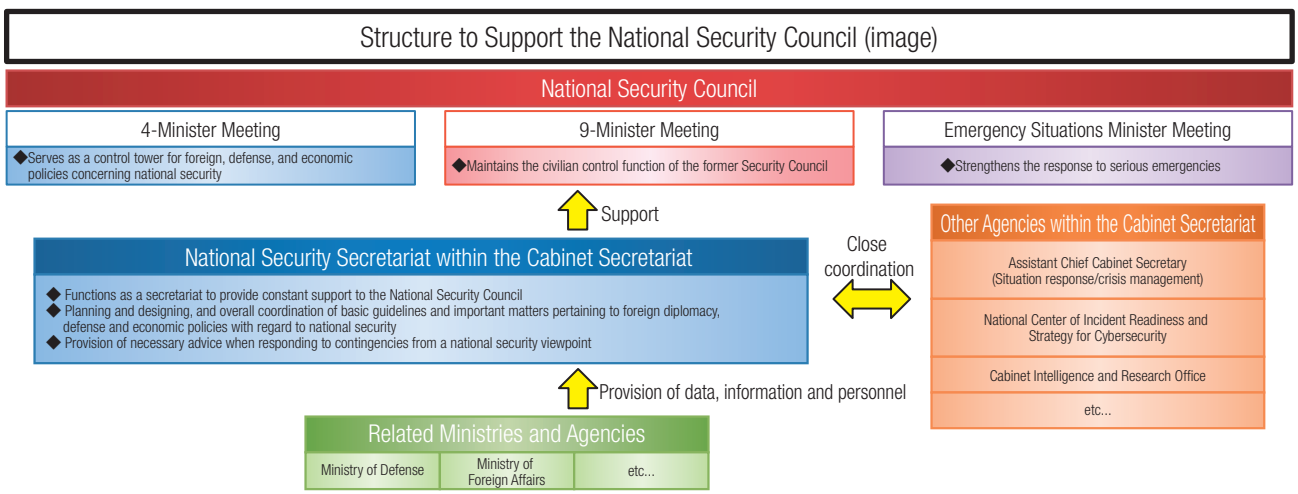
Japan's security environment is the most severe and complex since the end of World War II, and the security challenges that it needs to address are becoming more serious. Under such circumstances, it is necessary to carry forward the policies pertaining to national security from a strategic perspective under strong political leadership with the Prime Minister at its core. For this reason, the National Security Council, which was established in the Cabinet to provide a platform to discuss important matters with regard to Japan's security, has been serving as a control tower for foreign, defense, and economic policies pertaining to national security. Since its establishment in December 2013, the Council has met 351 times (as of the end of March 2025). The NSS, NDS, and DBP formulated in 2022 have also been deliberated and approved in the National Security Council.

The National Security Secretariat established within the Cabinet Secretariat provides constant support to the National Security Council as its secretariat. The Secretariat is also tasked with the planning, design, and overall coordination of basic guidelines and important matters with regard to foreign, defense, and economic policies pertaining to national security. The Secretariat is provided with human resources and information by the ministries and agencies closely related in terms of policy. The Secretariat has many civilians and uniformed JSDF personnel of the MOD with concurrent posts, who are engaged in the planning and designing of policies, as well as the utilization of respective specialized knowledge. In addition, the MOD/JSDF shares global military trends and other information in a timely manner.

The enhanced ability to formulate national security policies has led to the systematic alignment of Japan's national security, and to the provision of a direction for policies with regard to new security challenges. Furthermore, individual defense policies are formulated and efforts to accelerate decision-making are made based on the basic guidelines discussed at the National Security Council, and this is contributing significantly to improved development and implementation of policies within the MOD/JSDF.

See Fig. II-4-1-1 (Organization of the National Security Council)

Fig. II-4-1-1 Organization of the National Security Council



REFERENCE: Meetings of the National Security Council
URL: https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/anzenhosyoukaigi/kaisai.html

Section 2 Organization of the MOD/JSDF

1 Organizational Structure Supporting Defense Capability

1 Organization of the MOD/JSDF

To fulfill their mission of defending Japan, the MOD/JSDF consists of various organizations, mainly the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces as armed forces.

The MOD and the JSDF refer to the same organization. Whereas the term "Ministry of Defense" refers to the administrative aspects of the organization, which manages and operates the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF, the term "JSDF" refers to the operational aspects of the organizations whose mission is the defense of Japan.

See Fig. II-4-2-1 (Organizational Chart of the MOD/JSDF), Fig. II-4-2-2 (Outline of the MOD/JSDF), Fig. II-4-2-3 (Organizational Diagram of the Self-Defense Forces), Fig. II-4-2-4 (Location of Principal JSDF Units (for illustrative purposes) (As of March 31, 2024))

Fig. II-4-2-1 Organizational Chart of the MOD/JSDF

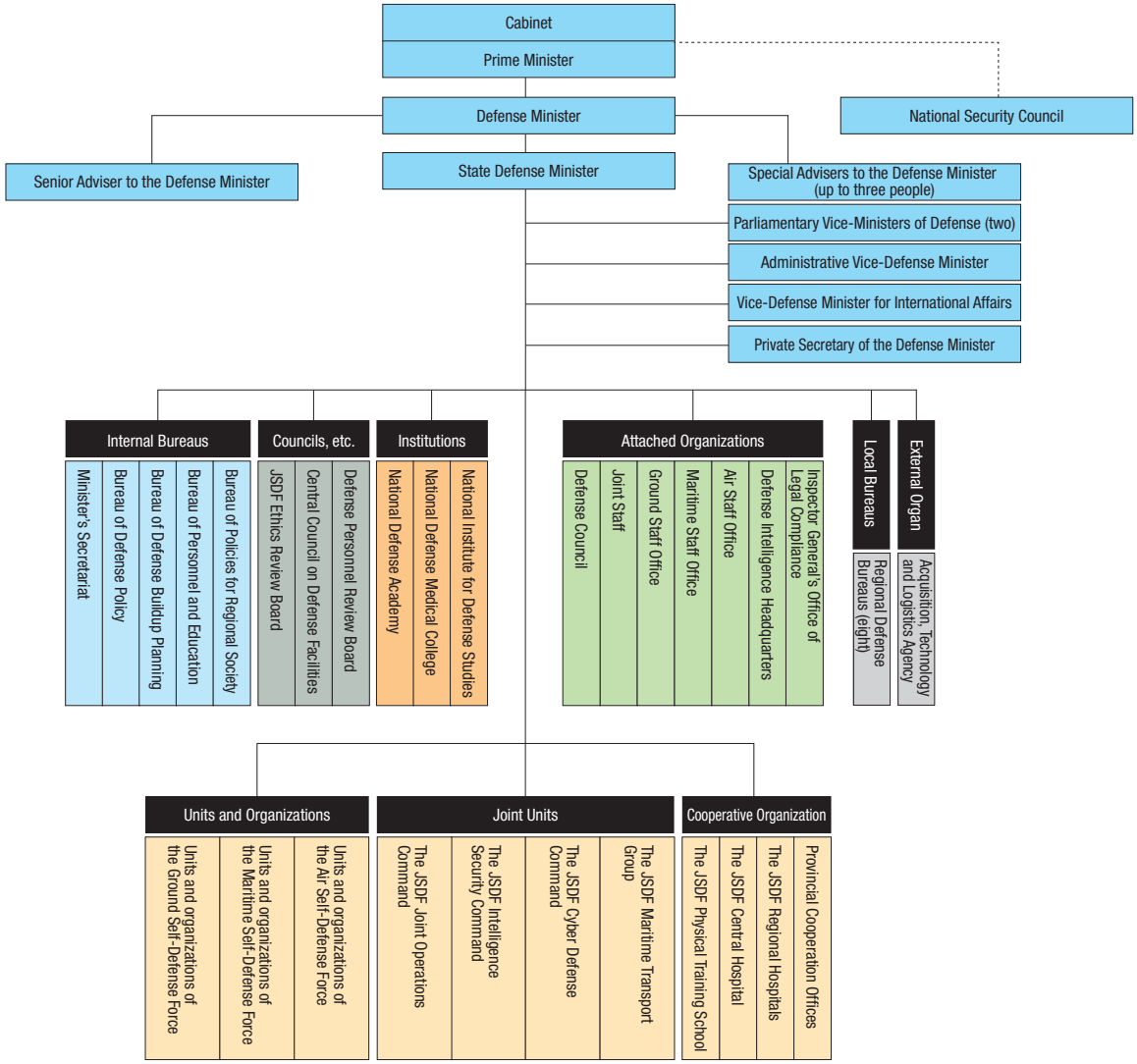


Fig. II-4-2-2 Outline of the MOD/JSDF

Organization	Outline
Internal Bureaus	● Responsible for basic policy relating to the duties of the MOD and JSDF (defense and security affairs, basic conduct of the JSDF [political and administrative affairs such as planning and drafting of laws and regulations or government-level policies], personnel affairs, budgets, etc.) ● Composed of the Bureau of Defense Policy, Bureau of Defense Buildup Planning, Bureau of Personnel and Education, and Bureau of Policies for Regional Society, in addition to the Minister's Secretariat
Joint Staff	● A staff organization for the Defense Minister concerning the operation of the JSDF ● Responsible for making plans on defense and security affairs concerning joint operation and making action plans ● The Minister's commands concerning the operations of the JSDF are delivered through the Chief of Staff, JS and orders concerning operations of the JSDF are executed by the Chief of Staff, JS.
Ground Staff Office Maritime Staff Office Air Staff Office	● Staff organizations for the Defense Minister concerning the duties of each JSDF unit ● Responsible for making plans on defense and security affairs of each JSDF unit and making plans on buildup of defense capabilities, education and training.
Ground Self-Defense Force	● Ground Component Command • Composed mainly of airborne brigades, amphibious rapid deployment brigades, etc. • Realization of unified command over GSDF troops. ● Regional Armies • Composed of multiple divisions and brigades, and other directly controlled units (such as engineer brigades and antiaircraft artillery groups) • There are five regional armies, each mainly in charge of the defense of their respective regions ● Divisions and Brigades Composed of combat units, combat support units, logistics support units and others
Maritime Self-Defense Force	● Self-Defense Fleet • Consists of key units such as the Fleet Escort Force, the Fleet Air Force (consisting of fixed-wing patrol aircraft units and such), and the Fleet Submarine Force • Responsible for the defense of sea areas surrounding Japan primarily through mobile operations ● Regional Districts There are five regional districts who mainly protect their responsible territories and support the Self-Defense Fleet
Air Self-Defense Force	● Air Defense Command • Composed of four air defense forces • Primarily responsible for general air defense duties ● Air Defense Force Composed of key units such as air wings (including fighter aircraft units and others), the Aircraft Control and Warning Wing (including aircraft warning and control units), and Air Defense Missile Groups (including surface-to-air guided missile units and others)
National Defense Academy of Japan	● An institution for the cultivation of future JSDF personnel ● Offers a science and engineering postgraduate course and a comprehensive security postgraduate course equivalent to master's or doctoral degree from a university (undergraduate and postgraduate courses)
National Defense Medical College	● An institution for the cultivation of future JSDF medical personnel ● An institution for the cultivation of future JSDF officers who are public nurses, nurses, and JSDF engineering personnel ● Offers a graduate medical course equivalent to PhD programs at medical universities based on the School Education Law
National Institute for Defense Studies	● National security-related academic research and education institute ● Conducts basic research and study related to the administration and operation of the JSDF • Conducts research and study on security • Conducts research and study and compiles data on military history • Management and publication of data on military history ● Educates and trains JSDF personnel and other senior officials
Inspector General's Office of Legal Compliance	● Organization that inspects overall tasks of the Ministry of Defense and the JSDF from an independent position
Regional Defense Bureau (eight locations nationwide)	● Local Bureaus in charge of comprehensive defense administration in regional areas • Conducts cost audit, supervision, and inspection related to the procurement of equipment by ensuring understanding and cooperation of local public organizations, and acquiring, managing, building and constructing defense facilities, and taking measures concerning neighborhood of the base • Consists of eight Regional Defense Bureaus (Hokkaido, Tohoku, North Kanto, South Kanto, Kinki-Chubu, Chugoku-Shikoku, Kyushu and Okinawa)
Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency	● An external bureau in charge of effective and efficient procurement of defense equipment and international defense equipment and technology cooperation • Implementation of constant project management throughout the life cycle of defense equipment from an integrated perspective • Smooth and prompt reflection of each unit's operational needs in equipment procurement • Proactive initiatives in new areas (further internationalization of defense equipment and investments in advanced technological research, etc.) • Achievement of procurement reform and, at the same time, maintenance and strengthening of defense production and of the technological and industrial bases of defense

Fig. II-4-2-3 Organizational Diagram of the Self-Defense Forces

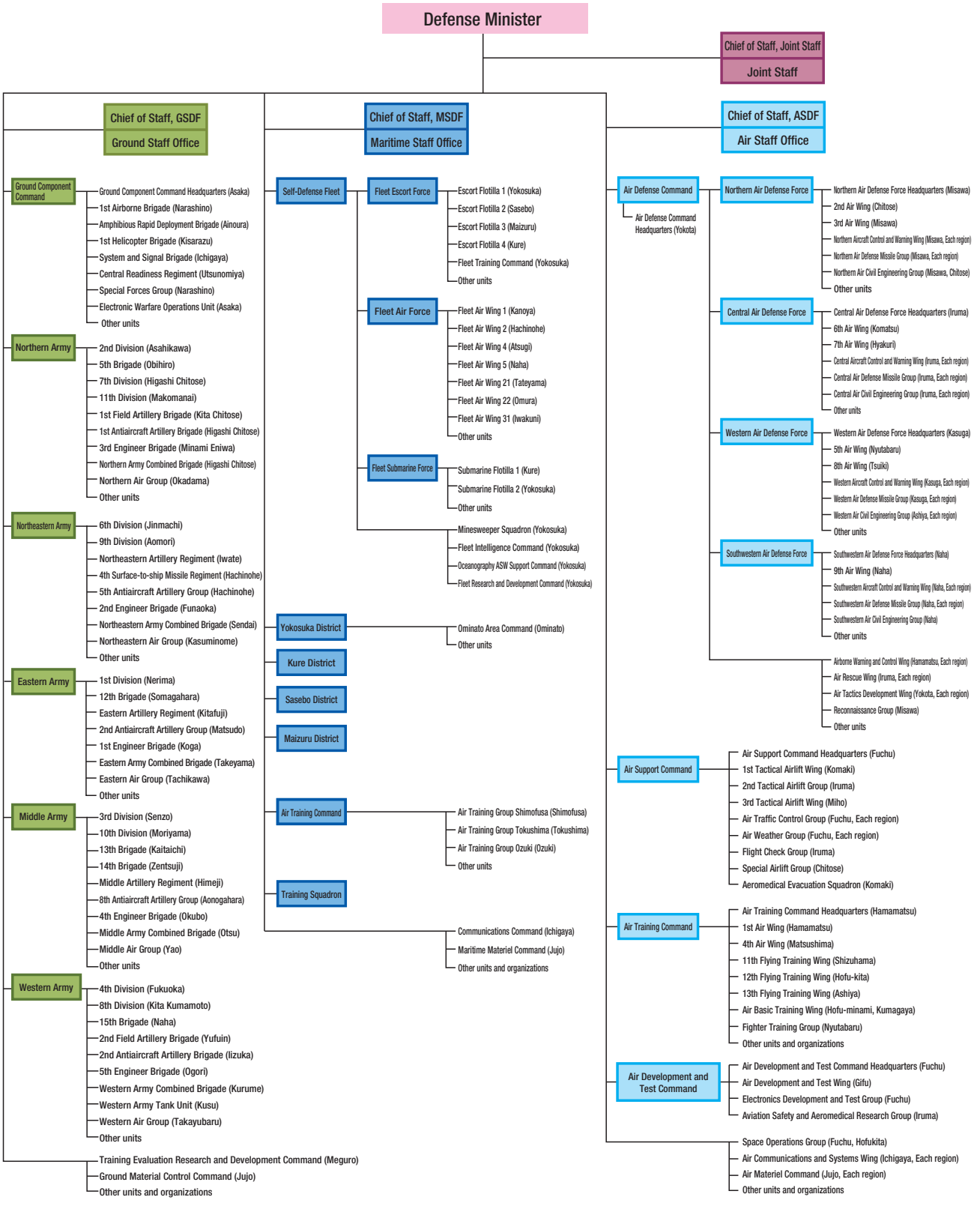


Fig. II-4-2-4 Location of Principal JSDF Units (for illustrative purposes) (As of March 31, 2024)

2 Systems to Support the Defense Minister

The Defense Minister takes charge of and manages the matters related to the defense of Japan as the competent minister, and is in overall charge of the JSDF duties in accordance with the provisions of the JSDF Law. The State Defense Minister, the Parliamentary Vice-Ministers of Defense (two), and the Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister assists the Defense Minister. There are also the Special Advisers to the Defense Minister, who advise the Defense Minister, and the Defense Council, which deliberates on basic principles concerning affairs under the Ministry's jurisdiction. Furthermore, there are the Administrative Vice-Defense Minister, who organizes and supervises the administrative affairs of each bureau and organization to support the Defense Minister, and the Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs, who is responsible for the overall coordination of duties such as those related to international affairs.

Moreover, the Internal Bureaus of the MOD, Joint Staff, Ground Staff Office, Maritime Staff Office, Air Staff Office, and the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA), as an external bureau, have been established in the MOD. The Internal Bureaus of the MOD are responsible for basic policy relating to the duties of the MOD/JSDF. The Minister's Secretariat and the Directors-General of each Bureau within the Internal Bureaus, along with the Commissioner of ATLA who is in charge of defense equipment administration, support the Defense Minister by providing assistance from a policy perspective.

The Joint Staff is a staff organization for the Defense Minister concerning the operation of the JSDF. The Chief of Joint Staff provides centralized support for the operations of the JSDF for the Defense Minister from a military expert's perspective. The Ground Staff Office, Maritime Staff Office and Air Staff Office are the staff organizations for the Defense Minister concerning their respective services except operations of the JSDF, with the Chiefs of Staff for the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) and the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) acting as the top ranking expert advisers to the Defense Minister regarding these services.

In this manner, the MOD has ensured well-balanced support from both a policy perspective and a military expert's perspective, like the two wheels of a cart, will be provided for the Defense Minister, so that the Minister can make appropriate decisions.

See Chapter 1, Section 2-3-4 (Securing Civilian Control)

3 Base of Defense Administration in Regional Areas

The MOD has Regional Defense Bureaus in eight locations across the country (Sapporo City, Sendai City, Saitama City, Yokohama City, Osaka City, Hiroshima City, Fukuoka City, and Kadena Town) as its local branches in charge of comprehensive defense administration.

In addition to implementing measures to promote harmony between defense facilities and local communities and inspecting equipment, the Regional Defense Bureaus adopt various measures to obtain the understanding and cooperation of both local governments and local residents towards the activities of the MOD/JSDF.

See Part V, Chapter 2, Section 1 (Measures to Harmonize with Local Communities and the Environment)

2 Joint Operations System of the JSDF

In order to rapidly and effectively fulfill the duties of the JSDF, the MOD/JSDF has adopted the joint operations system in which the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF are operated integrally. Furthermore, it works towards building an architecture that is capable of realizing cross-domain operations in domains such as space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum.

The Joint Staff is responsible for joint operations of the JSDF. It is headed by the Chief of Joint Staff, who develops a joint operations concept for JSDF operations, and centrally supports the Defense Minister on JSDF operations from a military expert's perspective. The Defense Minister's commands concerning the operations of the JSDF are delivered through the Chief of Joint Staff, and the Defense Minister's orders concerning operations of the JSDF are executed by the Chief of Joint Staff. In doing this, the Defense Minister's commands and orders are delivered through the Chief of Joint Staff not only in cases where two or more JSDF units are employed, but also in cases where a single JSDF unit is employed to respond.

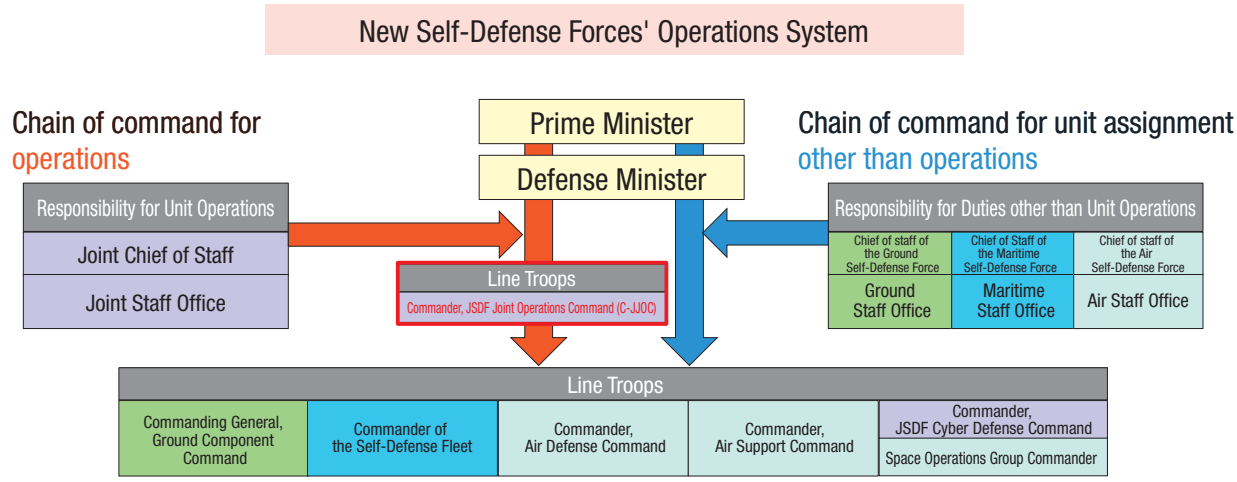
The Joint Staff undertakes functions relating to the operations of the JSDF, while the Ground, Maritime and Air Staff Offices undertake functions for unit maintenance, such as personnel affairs, building-up defense capability, and education and training.

3 JSDF Joint Operations Command

The NDS and DBP call for the establishment of a permanent Joint Headquarters that facilitates the centralized command of the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF units. The aim is to build a system that enables seamless cross-domain operations at all stages from peacetime to contingency, with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations of all JSDF services. To this end, in March 2025, the MOD/JSDF established the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) in Ichigaya as the permanent Joint Headquarters, which is headed by the Commander, the JSDF Joint Operations Command (C-JJOC).

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

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



1 Significance

Before the establishment of the JJOC, an ad hoc joint task force[1] consisting of any two or more units from the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF was temporarily organized as needed to conduct joint operations. Under such a system, however, the JSDF could not quickly establish a flexible defense posture in response to the situation and transition. It was also difficult to establish the necessary posture for cross-domain operations on a regular basis.

The establishment of the JJOC allows the unification of the command of joint operations by the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF on a daily basis. It enables to train the cross-domain operations capability from peacetime, which will improve the effectiveness of joint operations and realize rapid response to situations and decision-making constantly.

Chief of Staff, Joint Staff has coordinated with both the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is in charge with mid- to long-term U.S. military strategies, and the Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, who is in charge of bilateral operations between the JSDF and the U.S. Forces. The establishment of JJOC and C-JJOC will allow

The JJOC activation ceremony (March 2025)

1 This refers to cases where a special unit is organized to carry out a specific mission or where required units are placed under the OPCON of a commander other than a commander to whom the unit is subordinated, in accordance with Article 22, Paragraphs 1 or 2 of the JSDF Law; the unit consists of any two or more units from the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF. In order to quickly and effectively carry out various missions such as ballistic missile defense and large-scale disasters response, it is necessary to operate the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF in an integrated manner. Therefore, under a single commander, a joint task force is organized across the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF. For simultaneous responses to multiple situations such as contingencies and disasters, a separate joint task force can be organized even after the JJOC establishment.

closer coordination with the U.S. Forces on operations and strengthen bilateral response capabilities.

2 Relations between the JJOC and the Joint Staff

The Joint Staff is a staff organization that supports the Defense Minister with regard to the operations of the JSDF from a military expert's perspective. The JJOC, on the other hand, is a newly established unit eligible to centrally command GSDF, MSDF, and the ASDF units across Japan as to operations of the JSDF from peacetime, which has not existed as a permanent function of the JSDF before. Thus, the purpose and positioning of the two organizations are different, and the role of the Joint Staff will not change with the establishment of the JJOC.

With regard to the operation of the JSDF, the Defense Minister has commanded through the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff and orders of the Minister are to be executed by the Chief of Staff. Even after the establishment of the JJOC the Chief of Staff is to transmit the Minister's orders on JSDF operations to the JJOC and other units, and to give detailed instructions within the scope of such commands and orders.

In this way, the JJOC and C-JJOC clearly separates roles with the Joint Staff headed by the Chief of Staff. The establishment of the JJOC and its new function that allows to centrally operate all GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF units nationwide from peacetime have improved the effectiveness of joint operations and enabled rapid response to situations and decision-making constantly.

Commentary

Establishment of the JSDF Joint Operations Command

In March 2006, the operational posture of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) was shifted to a "posture based on joint operations" with the establishment of the Joint Staff Office (JSO) and the transfer of operational functions from Ground, Maritime, and Air Staff Offices to the JSO. As a result, the function of supporting the Defense Minister from a military expert's perspective regarding the operation of the JSDF was centralized in the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff. For joint operations, however, an ad hoc joint task force consisting of any two or more units from the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), and Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) was temporarily organized as needed to conduct them. For example, when various situations such as large-scale disasters occurred, an ad hoc joint task force was temporarily organized to deal with the situation after coordination between the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff and the Chiefs of Staff of the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF. Therefore the issue of operating the GSDF, the MSDF and the ASDF in an organic and integrated manner from the peacetime remained unresolved.

For this reason, the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) in Ichigaya was established on March 24, 2025 to realize seamless cross-domain operations at all phases from peacetime to contingencies. The Commander, JSDF Joint Operations Command (C-JJOC), is eligible to command the units centrally from peacetime upon the Minister's orders concerning the operations of the JSDF. This enables seamless response to various situations as they evolve.

Furthermore, in the Japan-U.S. 2+2 in July 2024, an agreement was reached to discuss the counterpart relationship between the JSDF Joint Operations Command and the U.S. Forces. It was also announced that the U.S. Forces in Japan would be reconstituted to the Joint Forces Headquarters assigned under the Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. These initiatives will enhance the command and control frameworks of each country, which will lead to reinforcing interoperability between Japan and the United States and their readiness.

JSDF Joint Operations Command sign

Presentation of the commander's flag

Chapter 5 Framework for the JSDF Activities

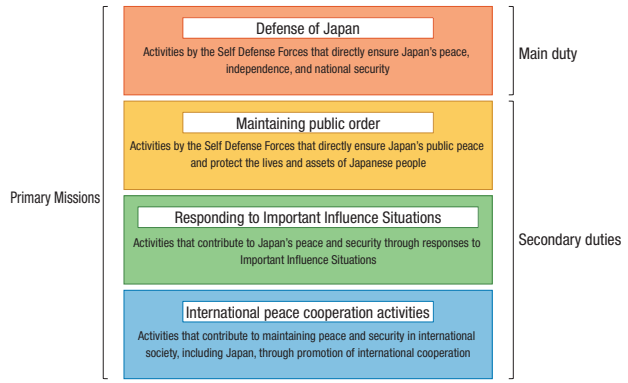
1 Duties of the Self-Defense Forces

Article 3 in the Self-Defense Forces Law differentiate main duties (item 1 of the Article) and secondary duties (items 1 and 2 of the Article of the Self-Defense Forces' duties). Defense Operations to defend Japan correspond to main duties, which only the Self-Defense Forces can carry out.

Secondary duties consist of "duties for maintaining public order as necessary" (secondary duties under item 1) and "duties defined by other laws to an extent that does not interfere with the main duties" (secondary duties under item 2). The former includes Public Security Operations and Maritime Security Operations that let Self-Defense Forces operate when police entities cannot handle alone, destruction measures against ballistic missiles and other weapons, disaster relief dispatches, and countermeasures against airspace violation. The latter covers responses to Important Influence Situations and international peace cooperation activities. These main and secondary duties are jointly known as "primary missions."[1]

See Fig. II-5-1 (Overview of the Self Defense Forces' Duties), Reference 10 (Conditions Required for Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces (Including Diet Approval) and Authority for the Use of Weapons Concerning Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces)

Fig. II-5-1 Overview of the Self Defense Forces' Duties



2 Defense of Japan

1 Armed Attack Situations/ Anticipated Armed Attack Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations

The Armed Attack Situation Response Act[2] is aimed at establishing a system to respond to **Armed Attack Situations** or **Anticipated Armed Attack Situations** and Survival-Threatening Situations, thereby contributing to the peace and independence of Japan as well as the safety of the country and the people. The Act specifies items that should be stipulated as basic principles and basic policies (the Basic Response Plan), as well as the responsibilities of national and local governments, for responding to Armed Attack Situations/Anticipated Armed Attack Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations.

The Government will take action in accordance with the Act in the event of an Armed Attack Situation, such as a missile attack on Japan or an invasion of its remote islands,

KEY WORD

Armed Attack Situations and Anticipated Armed Attack Situations

"Armed Attack Situations" refers to situations where an external armed attack against Japan occurs or in which it is recognized that clear danger of an external armed attack against Japan is imminent.

"Anticipated Armed Attack Situations" refers to situations that are not yet an armed attack situations but in which circumstances are critical and an armed attack against Japan is anticipated.

1 Activities to be performed by the JSDF to leverage its skills, experience, and organizational functions developed over years are known as "side duties" to distinguish them from primary missions. They include transportation for national guests who visit Japan to attend a Summit meeting, commissioned public park ground-leveling and road constructions performed as a part of education and training, and cooperation with athletic events, such as Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, and the National Sports Festivals.

2 Act on the Peace and Independence of Japan and Maintenance of the National and the People's Security in Armed Attack Situations, Anticipated Armed Attack Situations, and Survival-Threatening Situations

KEY WORD **Survival-Threatening Situations**

"Survival-Threatening Situations" means situations where an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs, which as a result, threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger of fundamentally overturning Japanese people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

or a **Survival-Threatening Situation**.

When an Armed Attack Situation/Anticipated Armed Attack Situations or a Survival-Threatening Situation occurs, the Government will make a Cabinet Decision on a Basic Response Plan based on the Armed Attack Situation Response Act. Such a plan must stipulate the following items, which are subject to approval by the Diet.

(1) The Following Items concerning Situations that Need to Be Dealt with:

- The circumstances of the situation, the confirmation of an Armed Attack Situation/Anticipated Armed Attack Situation or a Survival-Threatening Situation, and the facts upon which such confirmation is based
- The reason why there are no other appropriate means available to ensure Japan's survival and to protect its people, and the use of force is deemed necessary to respond to the situation when an Armed Attack Situation/Anticipated Armed Attack Situation or a Survival-Threatening Situation is confirmed

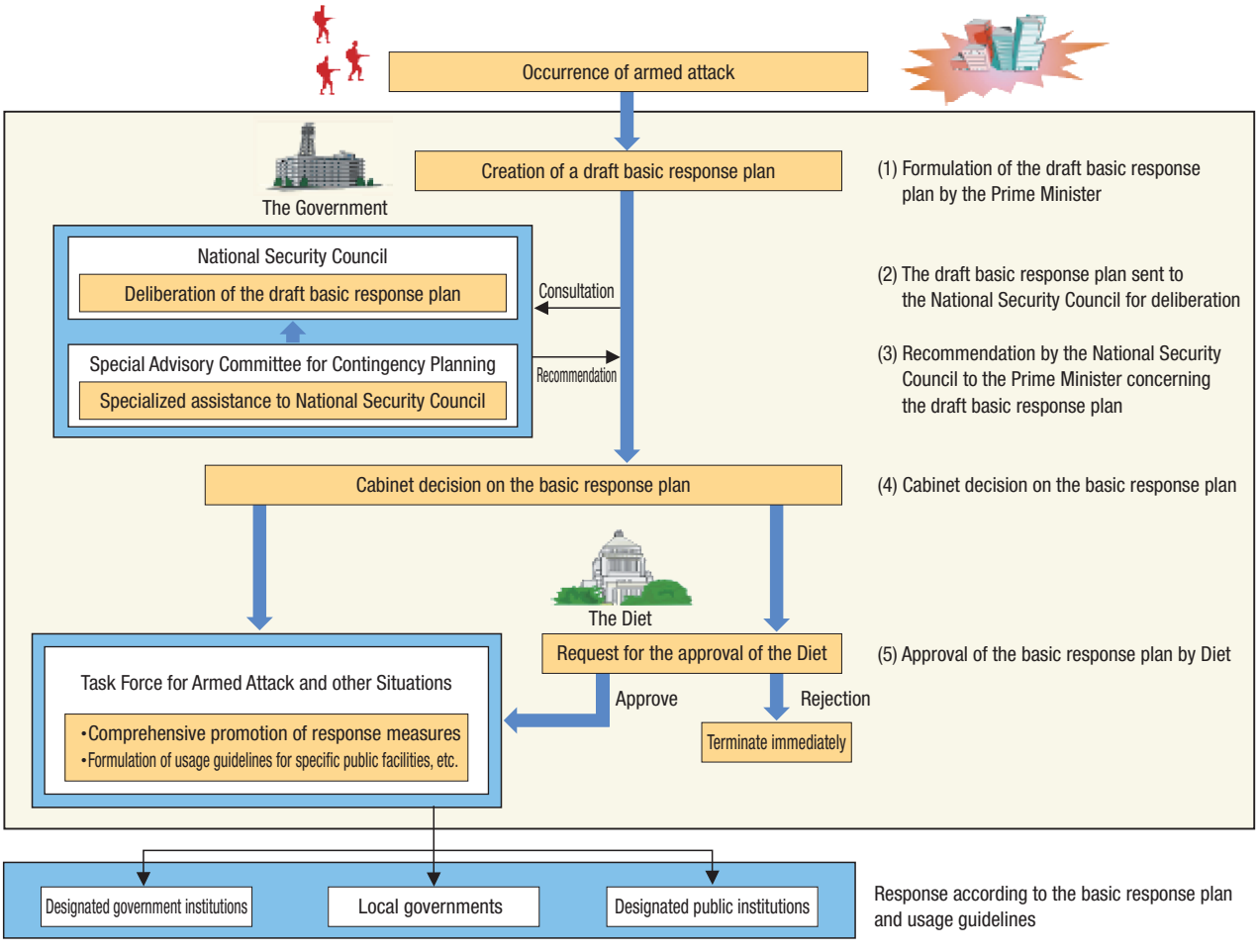
(2) An Overall Plan Related to the Response

(3) Important Matters Related to the Response Measures

Important matters related to the response measures include the issuance of a Defense Operation order or requests for Diet approval to issue such orders, as described below, in the event of an Armed Attack Situation or a Survival-Threatening Situation.

See Fig. II-5-2 (Procedures for Responding to Armed Attack Situations/Anticipated Armed Attack Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations)

Fig. II-5-2 Procedures for Responding to Armed Attack Situations/Anticipated Armed Attack Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations



2 Responses of the JSDF

The Prime Minister may issue a Defense Operation order to the whole or part of the JSDF when it is deemed necessary for the defense of Japan in Armed Attack Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations. Prior Diet approval is required for a Defense Operation order in principle. The JSDF under Defense Operation duty is allowed to use force only when the Three Conditions for the "Use of Force" are met.

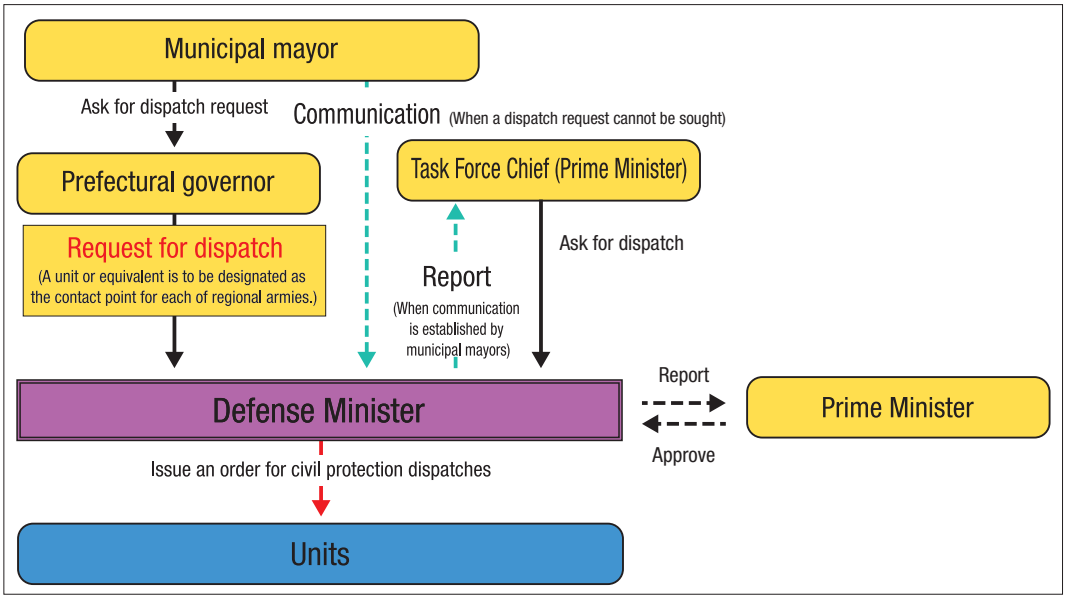
See Chapter 1, Section 2-2-2 (Measures for Self-Defense Permitted under Article 9 of the Constitution), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-1 (Responses to Invasions of Japan, Large-Scale Terrorism, Etc.)

3 Civil Protection

The Civil Protection Law[3] specifies the responsibilities of the national and local governments, evacuation of residents, providing relief to evacuated residents, and responding to armed attack disasters; the aim is to protect the lives, bodies, and property of the people and to minimize the impact on the livelihoods of the people in an Armed Attack Situation/ Anticipated Armed Attack Situation and during an emergency response.[4] If the Defense Minister deems it unavoidable after receiving a request from prefectural governors or a request from the Task Force Chief,[5] the Defense Minister may order JSDF units and organizations,[6] upon approval from the Prime Minister, to implement civil protection measures or emergency response protection measures including assisting with the evacuation of residents and immediate restoration.

See Fig. II-5-3 (Flow of Civil Protection Dispatches), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-6-2 (3) (Efforts on Civil Protection)

Fig. II-5-3 Flow of Civil Protection Dispatches



3 Act Concerning the Measures for Protection of the People in Armed Attack Situations and Anticipated Armed Attack Situations.
4 This refers to a situation, as stipulated in Article 22-1 of the Armed Attack Situation Response Act, in which an act that kills or injures a large number of people by means similar to those of an armed attack occurs or in which the obvious danger of such an act occurring is recognized to be imminent and requires urgent action by the state.
5 While the Prime Minister is to be appointed as the Director of The Crisis Management Headquarters, the two are stipulated separately.
6 Units and organizations of the GSDF, the MSDF, or the ASDF

3 Maintenance of Public Order and Responses to Aggression that Do Not Amount to an Armed Attack

1 Public Security Operations

(1) Public Security Operations by Order

Based on Article 78 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, in the event of an indirect aggression[7] or other such emergency situations, the Prime Minister can order the whole or part of the JSDF to deploy if it is deemed impossible to maintain public security with the police forces. In this case, in principle, the Prime Minister must bring the order to the Diet for deliberation, and request for its approval within twenty days from the day the order has been given.

(2) Public Security Operations by Request

Based on Article 81 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, the governor of a prefecture, upon consulting with the Public Safety Commission of the prefecture, can request the Prime Minister to dispatch units and organizations of the JSDF if it is deemed unavoidable as the situation will have a serious influence on public security. Following such a request, the Prime Minister may order the mobilization of the JSDF when he/she deems it unavoidable.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-1-7 (Responses to Large-Scale Terrorism and Attacks on Critical Infrastructure)

2 Maritime Security Operations

Based on Article 82 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, when there is a special need to protect lives or property or to maintain public security at sea,[8] the Defense Minister may order the JSDF units to take necessary actions at sea upon approval by the Prime Minister.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2 (Responses to Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force and Such Attempts)

3 Counter-Piracy Operations

Based on Article 82-2 of the Self-Defense Forces Law and Article 7 of the Counter-Piracy Measures Act,[9] when there is a special need to respond to acts of piracy, the Defense Minister may order JSDF units to conduct operations necessary to deal with piracy acts at sea upon approval by the Prime Minister.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-7 (1) (Counter-Piracy Operations)

4 Destruction Measures against Ballistic Missiles or Other Objects

In cases where ballistic missiles or other objects are flying to Japan as an armed attack or in a Survival-Threatening Situation, and where the "Three Conditions" are met, the JSDF may respond with the Defense Operation. On the other hand, in cases where ballistic missiles or other objects are flying to Japan but are not deemed to be an armed attack, the Defense Minister may take the following measures based on Article 82-3 of the Self-Defense Forces Law:

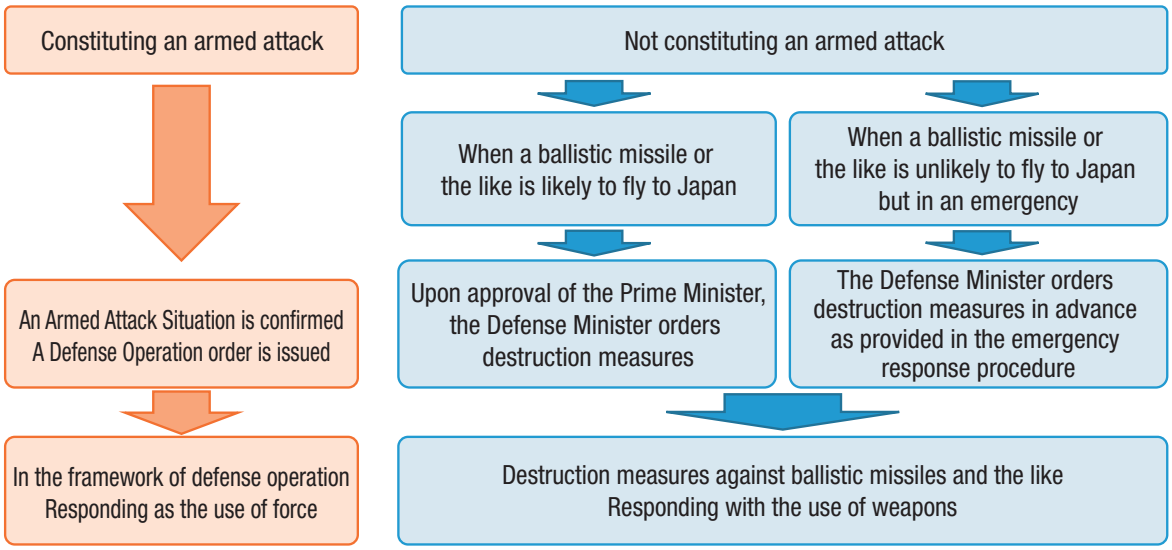
(1) If the Defense Minister judges that ballistic missiles or other objects are likely to fly to Japan and it is necessary to prevent damage to human lives and property in the Japanese territory, the Minister, upon the approval of the Prime Minister, may order the JSDF units to take measures to destroy the ballistic missiles or other objects actually flying to the country in the airspace over the Japanese territory or the high seas.

(2) In addition to the cases of (1), there may be cases where the situation suddenly changes with little information available on the launch, for example, and the Defense Minister cannot have time to obtain approval from the Prime Minister. In preparation for such cases, the Defense Minister may create an emergency response procedure beforehand and obtain approval from the Prime Minister. Following the emergency response procedure, the Defense Minister may order, for a specified period of time, the JSDF units to take measures to destroy ballistic missiles or other objects in the airspace over the Japanese territory or the high seas when such objects are actually flying to the country.

See Fig. II-5-4 (Flow of Response to Ballistic Missiles or Other Objects), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-1-3 (Responses to Missile Attacks), Fig. III-1-2-4 (Intercepting Part of Future Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) (image))

7 A major internal riot or disturbance caused by the instigation or intervention by a foreign country
8 When response by the JCG is impossible or extremely difficult
9 Act on Punishment of Acts of Piracy and Measures against Acts of Piracy

Fig. II-5-4 Flow of Response to Ballistic Missiles or Other Objects



5 Disaster Relief Dispatches and Others

(1) Disaster Relief Dispatches

Based on Article 83 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, prefectural governors or other officials[10] may request the Defense Minister, or an officer designated by the Minister,[11] to dispatch JSDF units and organizations in the event of a disaster[12] if they deem such a dispatch necessary in order to protect lives or properties. Upon such a request, the Minister or the designated officer will, in principle, make a judgment based on a comprehensive evaluation of three conditions—urgency, non-substitutability, and public nature—and dispatch the units if it is deemed necessary for the JSDF to respond to the disaster. This procedure is based on the idea that it is best for prefectural governors and other officials to assess the overall disaster situation in the area, and decide whether or not to make a request for the JSDF dispatch, taking into consideration the local disaster relief capabilities. However, under circumstances of particular urgency when there is no time to wait for a request, the Defense Minister or the designated officer may discretionarily dispatch units and organizations without waiting for such a request.

In cases where emergency patients need to be transported from the sea, remote islands or elsewhere but both the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) and the local governments have difficulty in dealing with the situation, the JSDF conducts an emergency airlift of such patients under the framework of disaster relief dispatches.

(2) Earthquake Disaster Prevention Dispatch and Nuclear Disaster Relief Dispatch

Based on Article 83-2 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, when a warning declaration[13] is issued based on the Act on Special Measures Concerning Large-Scale Earthquakes, the Defense Minister is authorized to dispatch units upon the request of the Director of the Seismic Disaster Warning Headquarters (the Prime Minister).

In addition, based on Article 83-3 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, when a declaration of a nuclear emergency situation is issued based on the Act on Special Measures Concerning Nuclear Emergency Preparedness, the Defense Minister is authorized to dispatch units upon the request of the Director of the Nuclear Disaster Countermeasures Headquarters (the Prime Minister).

See Fig. II-5-5 (Flow of a Disaster Relief Dispatch), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3-7 (Response to Large-Scale

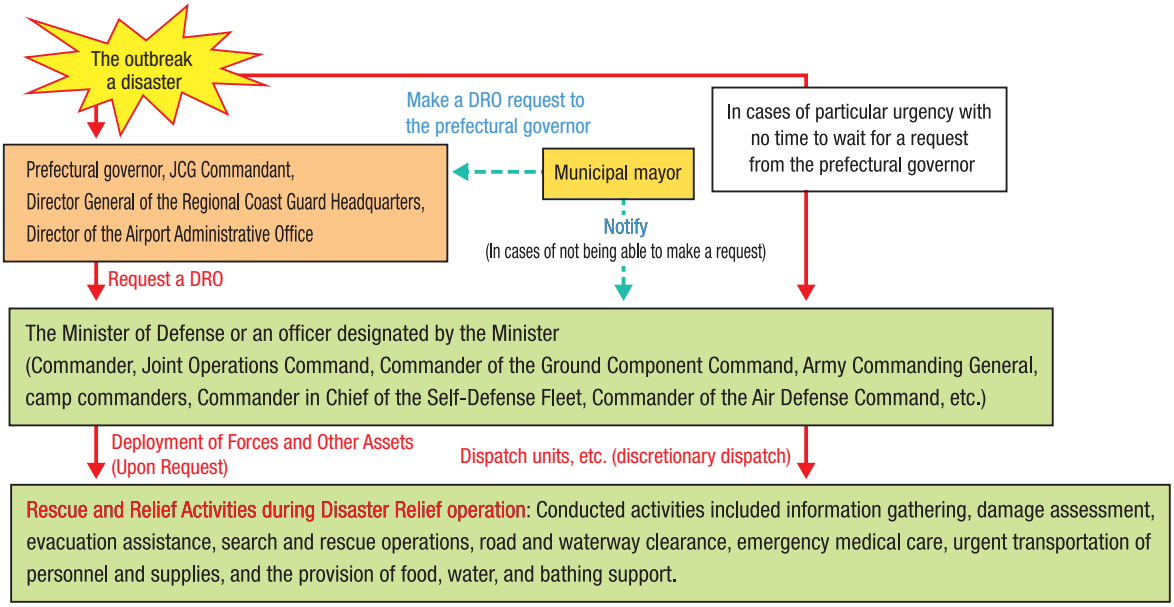
10 The Commandant of the Japan Coast Guard, the Director General of the Regional Coast Guard Headquarters, and the Director of the Airport Administrative Office may request a disaster relief dispatch. With regard to disaster relief dispatch, earthquake disaster prevention dispatch, and nuclear disaster relief dispatch, (1) JSDF personnel who are dispatched may take measures such as evacuation (Article 4 of the Police Duties Execution Law) based on Article 94 of the JSDF Law (Authorites in Disaster Relief Dispatch); (2) The Defense Minister may call up JSDF Reserve and JSDF Ready Reserve for disaster relief dispatch and JSDF Ready Reserve for earthquake disaster prevention dispatch or nuclear disaster relief dispatch; and (3) The Defense Minister may form temporary special units as necessary.

11 The commanding officers of JSDF units across Japan are designated in consideration of convenience for prefectural governors when they make a request.

12 Disasters include not only natural disasters such as storms, torrential rains, tremendous snowfalls, floods, storm surges, earthquakes, and tsunamis, but also human-caused disasters such as fires, maritime accidents, aircraft crashes, and train accidents.

13 The Prime Minister issues an earthquake alert with the endorsement of the Cabinet in the event that an earthquake prediction is reported by the Director-General of the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) and when it is deemed necessary to take emergency earthquake disaster prevention measures urgently.

Fig. II-5-5 Flow of a Disaster Relief Dispatch



Disasters, etc.), Reference 18 (Record of Disaster Relief (Past Five Years))

6 Measures against Intrusion of Territorial Airspace

Under international law, nations have complete and exclusive sovereignty over their territorial airspace. Based on Article 84 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, the Defense Minister may order JSDF units to take the necessary measures to make the intruding aircraft land or withdraw from the territorial airspace of Japan (by guiding intruders away, issuing radio transmission warnings, using weapons, etc.) when an intrusion into Japanese territorial airspace in violation of international law, the Aviation Law, or other domestic laws and regulations. Such countermeasures against airspace violation are conducted as activities to exercise the right of policing intended to maintain public order.

It is a violation of Japanese airspace when objects of foreign countries, even if they are unmanned aircraft (including balloons), intrude into our airspace without permission. The Japanese Government has traditionally considered that the use of weapons during countermeasures against airspace violation is permissible only when such measures fall under the requirements of legitimate self-defense or emergency evacuation, assuming that such intrusions are made by manned and military aircraft. Given that the use of weapons against unmanned aircraft that intrude into Japanese airspace would not directly harm people, the Government of Japan clarified its interpretation that in such a case where the safe flight of other aircraft cannot be ensured if the situation is left as it is, and when deemed necessary to use weapons to protect legal interests such as lives and properties of people within Japanese territory as well as the safety of aircraft flying along air routes, such use of weapons can be permitted even if such use does not fall under the requirements of legitimate self-defense or emergency evacuation.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-2 (Warnings and Scrambles in Preparation against Airspace Violation)

7 Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals Overseas

Based on Article 84-3 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, after obtaining approval from the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister can rescue Japanese nationals and others by protecting or recovering them upon request from and consultation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs if there is a threat of harm to lives or bodies and all of the following are satisfied:

- Competent authorities of the country concerned are currently working on maintaining public safety and order, and no acts of combat are confirmed to take place in the areas where rescue measures are taken;
- The country concerned provides consent for the JSDF to take the rescue measures (including the use of weapons);
- Coordination and cooperation with the competent authorities of the country concerned is expected to be ensured to carry out the rescue measures as smoothly and safely as possible in response to anticipated dangers.

In addition, based on Article 84-4 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, the Defense Minister can transport Japanese nationals and others in need of life or physical protection to a safe area if requested by the Minister for Foreign Affairs

in the event of emergency situation in a foreign country. The Government of Japan has amended Article 84-4 of the Self-Defense Forces Law three times to date. The latest amendment—which was made in 2022 considering experiences including the transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Afghanistan—involved removing restrictions on the means of transportation, reviewing the safety requirements for implementation, and expanding the scope of primary transportation recipients.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3-8 (Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas), Reference 19 (Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas by the Self-Defense Forces), Reference 20 (Record of Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas)

8 Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and other Forces

Based on Article 95-2 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, JSDF personnel are authorized to protect weapons and other equipment1[14] of the units of the U.S. Forces and other forces[15] currently engaged in activities that contribute to the defense of Japan in cooperation with the JSDF. The basic principles of this Article, and the involvement of the Cabinet in applying this Article, are set forth in the Implementation Guidelines[16] as outlined below:

(1) Purpose of Article 95-2

Protection under this Article can be applied to weapons and other equipment of the units of the U.S. Forces and foreign armed forces, and other such organizations currently engaged in activities that contribute to the defense of Japan in cooperation with the JSDF (including bilateral/multilateral exercises but excluding activities carried out in places when combat activities are currently occurring). This Article allows very passive and limited use of weapons to the minimum extent necessary to protect what can be evaluated as important material means which constitute the defense capability of Japan from infringements not amounting to an armed attack.

(2) Activities that Contribute to the Defense of Japan

"Activities that contribute to the defense of Japan" are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include the following: (1) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) activities including ballistic missile surveillance; (2) transportation and logistics activities in Important Influence Situations; and (3) bilateral/multilateral exercises to enhance capabilities required for defending Japan.

(3) Decision on Protection Missions

When the Defense Minister receives a request from the U.S. Forces, and other forces, the Minister makes a decision on his/her initiative whether the relevant activities fall under "activities that contribute to the defense of Japan" and whether protection is necessary, by considering the objective and details of the activities, capability of the unit, and surrounding circumstances as well as the impacts on the JSDF's regular duties.

(4) Involvement of the Cabinet

Requests from the U.S. Forces and other forces should be deliberated in the NSC prior to the decision by the Defense Minister in the following cases. However, in urgent cases, the Minister should promptly report to the NSC.

- First request from the U.S Forces and other forces.
- Request for protection in the territory of a third country.
- Other requests deemed particularly important.

In addition, in case it is recognized that an asset protection is necessary in Important Influence Situations, the Basic Plan which stipulates its necessity should be approved by the Cabinet upon the deliberation in the NSC.

See Part III, Chapter 2, Section 2-4 (Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and other Forces), Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-1 (Australia), Reference 11 (Implementation Guidelines for Article 95-2 of the JSDF Law), Reference 23 (Track Record of Asset Protection for the U.S Forces and Other Forces (JSDF Law Article 95-2))

14 Weapons, ammunition, explosives, vessels, aircraft, vehicles, wired telecommunications equipment, wireless telecommunications equipment or liquid fuels.
15 "Other forces" include armed forces of foreign countries and other similar organizations (organizations of foreign countries similar to armed forces such as coast guards are assumed).
16 The Implementation Guidelines for Article 95-2 of the Self-Defense Forces Law, approved by the National Security Council on December 22, 2016

4 Responses to Important Influence Situations

The Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Important Influence Situations[17] aims to strengthen cooperation with foreign countries to respond to Important Influence Situations by carrying out measures such as logistics support activities and thereby contributing to the peace and security of Japan in the event of such situations. The Law provides the coverage and response measures as follows:

1 Support Target

The armed forces and other services, responding to **Important Influence Situations**, which the JSDF may support, are (1) U.S. Forces engaged in activities contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, (2) armed forces of other foreign countries engaged in activities contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the UN Charter and (3) other similar organizations.

KEY WORD **Important Influence Situations**

"Important Influence Situations" refers to situations that have an important influence on Japan's peace and security including situations that could result in a direct armed attack on Japan if left unattended.

2 Response Measures to Important Influence Situations

The following measures can be taken to respond to Important Influence Situations:

(1) Logistics support activities

Provision of goods and services (supply, transportation, repair and maintenance, medical services, communications, airport and seaport services, base services, lodging, storage, use of facilities, and training services), conveniences, and other support measures to the armed forces and other organizations responding to Important Influence Situations.

While the provision of weapons is not allowed, "provision of ammunition" and "refueling and maintenance of aircraft preparing for combat operations" are allowed.

(2) Search and Rescue Activities

(3) Ship Inspection Operations[18] (Those Set Forth in the Ship Inspection Operations Law)[19]

(4) Other measures necessary to respond to Important Influence Situations

It is possible to implement response measures in foreign territories, but only with the consent of the foreign country concerned.

3 Measures to Avoid Forming an Integrated Part of the Use of Force

The following measures are set forth in order to avoid integration with the use of force by other countries and also to ensure the safety of JSDF personnel:

- Japan does not implement support activities in the areas where combat is actually taking place. Regarding search and rescue operations, however, when a victim has already been found and rescue operations have commenced, the JSDF units are allowed to continue search and rescue activities as long as their safety is ensured.
- The commanding officers or others directing activities of the JSDF units, order a temporary suspension of support activities if combat activities occur or are expected to occur at the site of their activities or in its vicinity.
- The Defense Minister designates the area for the activities, and promptly changes the area or orders to suspend the activities if it is deemed difficult to carry out activities smoothly and safely in all or part of the area.

4 Relationship between Important Influence Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations

While both Important Influence Situations and Survival-Threatening Situations are different legal concepts that are determined separately based on the requirements set forth in the respective laws, they share common standards such as the likelihood of Japan being embroiled in a war and the extent of damage to Japanese nationals. Therefore, Survival-Threatening Situations may be conceptually subsumed under Important Influence Situations. Accordingly, depending on how a situation evolves, Important Influence Situations may also satisfy the requirements of Survival-Threatening Situations and be determined as such.

17 Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Important Influence Situations.

18 Operations to inspect and confirm the cargo and destination of ships (excluding warships and others) and to request, if necessary, a change in sea route, destination port, or destination, for the purpose of strictly enforcing the regulatory measures concerning trade and other economic activities to which Japan is a party, conducted based on UN Security Council resolutions or with the consent of the flag state (the state that has the right to fly its flag as prescribed in Article 91 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea).

19 Law Concerning Ship Inspection Operations in Important Influence Situations and Other Situations

5 Framework for Contributing to the Peace and Stability of the International Community

1 Response to Joint International Peace Response Situations

Under the International Peace Support Act,[20] in order to ensure peace and security of the international community, Japan can cooperate with or support the armed forces of foreign countries engaged in operations for international peace and security in **Joint International Peace Response Situations**. From the perspective of enabling seamless responses to any situation, the International Peace Support Act, enacted as a general law, enables Japan to conduct operations more expeditiously and effectively, making it possible to proactively contribute to international peace and security on Japan's own initiative.

KEY WORD **Joint International Peace Response Situations**

Situations that threaten peace and security of the international community where the international community is collectively addressing in accordance with the objectives of the U.N. Charter to remove the threat and Japan is also expected to contribute proactively as a member of the international community.

(1) Requirements

Either of the following UN resolutions (by the General Assembly or the Security Council) are required for Japan to cooperate with or support the armed forces of other countries.

(1) Resolutions that decide, call upon, recommend or authorize the country of support recipient to respond to situations that threaten the peace and security of the international community

(2) Other than (1), resolutions that acknowledge the situations as a threat to or disruption of peace and call on United Nations (UN) member states to respond to the situations concerned

(2) Response Measures

The following response measures can be implemented in Joint International Peace Response Situations.

a. Cooperation and Support Activities

Provision of supplies and services to the armed forces of other countries (supply, transportation, repair and maintenance, medical services, communications, airport and seaport services, base services, lodging, storage, use of facilities, training services, and construction)

While the provision of weapons is not allowed, as in the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Important Influence Situations, the law allows the "provision of ammunition" and "refueling and maintenance of aircraft preparing for combat operations."

b. Search and Rescue Activities

c. Ship Inspection Operations (Those Set Forth in the Ship Inspection Operations Law)

(3) Measures to Avoid Integration with the Use of Force

The following measures are set forth in order to avoid integration with the use of force by other countries and also to ensure the safety of JSDF personnel:

- Japan does not implement support activities in the areas where combat is actually taking place. Regarding search and rescue operations, however, when a victim has already been found and rescue operations have commenced, the JSDF units are allowed to continue search and rescue activities as long as their safety is ensured.
- The commanding officers or others directing activities of the JSDF units, order a temporary suspension of support activities if combat activities occur or are expected to occur at the site of their activities or in its vicinity.
- The Defense Minister designates the area for the activities, and promptly changes the area or orders to suspend the activities if it is deemed difficult to carry out activities smoothly and safely in all or part of the area.

See Reference 12 (Summary Comparison of Laws Concerning International Peace Cooperation Activities)

2 International Peace Cooperation Assignments

The International Peace Cooperation Act[21] is aimed at active contributions by Japan to efforts for international peace led by the United Nations. The Act serves to set forth a framework for the implementation of International Peace Cooperation Assignments so that Japan can appropriately and promptly make contributions to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO)[22] and Internationally Coordinated

20 Law Concerning Cooperation and Support Activities for Armed Forces of Foreign Countries in Situations where the International Community is Collectively Addressing Peace and Security

21 Act on Cooperation with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations

22 "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" refer to operations that are conducted under the governing framework of the United Nations to respond to conflicts and maintain international peace and security, which are implemented by the United Nations and two or more participating countries at the request of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and with the consent of the disputing parties.

Operations for Peace and Security.[23] The Act also sets forth procedures for taking measures for material cooperation in these activities.

(1) Requirements for Participation

a. UN PKO

The so-called Five Principles as follows for Participation in PKO constitute Japan's basic policy for participating in UN PKO.

(i) Agreements on a ceasefire have been reached among the Parties to Armed Conflict

(ii) Consent for the conduct of UN PKO as well as Japan's participation in such operations has been obtained from the countries to which the area where those operations are to be conducted belongs as well as the Parties to Armed Conflict

(iii) The operations shall be conducted without partiality to any of the Parties to Armed Conflict

(iv) Should any of the requirements in the above-mentioned principles cease to be satisfied, the International Peace Cooperation Corps dispatched by the Government of Japan may terminate International Peace Cooperation Assignments.

(v) The use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary to protect of the lives and bodies of personnel. When the consent for acceptance is deemed to be consistently maintained, the use of weapons in defense of the mission mandate is allowed in accordance with specific requirements.

b. Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security

Japan can participate in Internationally Cooperated Operations for Peace and Security whose nature or details are similar to those of UN PKO, when the Five Principles for participation are met and one of the following exists.

(1) Resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council, or the Economic and Social Council of the UN

(2) Requests of any of the following international organizations:

- The UN
- Organs established by the UN General Assembly or Specialized Agencies of the United Nations including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and those specified by a Cabinet Order
- Regional organizations prescribed in Article 52 of the UN Charter or organs established by multilateral treaties including the European Union and those specified by a Cabinet Order, acknowledged to have the actual achievements or expertise pertaining to the activities

(3) At the requests of the countries to which the activities belong (limited to only those cases that are supported by any of the principal organs of the UN prescribed in the Article 7 (1) of the UN Charter).

(2) Description of Major Tasks

- Ceasefire monitoring and humanitarian relief operations for affected people
- Monitoring, stationing, patrols, inspections at checkpoints, and security escorts to ensure the security of specified areas, including prevention and suppression of injury or harm against the lives, bodies, and property of local residents, affected people, and other populations in need of protection (so-called "safety-ensuring" operations)
- Protection of the lives and bodies of parties engaged in international peace cooperation operations or providing support for such operations in response to urgent requests when unexpected dangers to the lives and bodies of such individuals related to these operations occur or are imminent (so-called "kaketsuke-keigo" (coming to the aid of geographically distant units or personnel under attack) operations)
- Provision of advice or guidance for establishing or reestablishing organizations of the Government related to national defense and other organizations
- Essential work for the organizations undertaking the supervision and coordination of the activities, including planning, coordination, and the collection and organizing of information at the Headquarters Office

(3) Others

a. Dispatch of uniformed JSDF personnel to the UN (Dispatch of UN PKO Force Commanders)

JSDF personnel may be dispatched to be engaged in tasks of the UN duties performed by JSDF units or units of other armed forces, upon request of the UN and with the consent of the Prime Minister.[24]

b. Provision of supplies and services to the U.S. Forces and other forces for their operations to cope with a large-scale disaster

The JSDF can provide the U.S. Forces, the Australian Defence Force, or the Armed Forces of the U.K., France, Canada, India or Germany with supplies or services upon their request when they are located in a same area as the units of the JSDF to undertake operations to cope with large-scale disasters, to the extent it does not interfere with International Peace Cooperation Assignments and other activities of the JSDF.

23 "Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security" refer to operations under a framework not overseen by the UN to respond to conflicts and maintain international peace and security, provided that such operations are implemented under the coordination of two or more participating countries and with the consent of the disputing parties.

24 The dispatch of uniformed JSDF personnel is limited to cases where the consent for UN PKO from the hosting countries and the disputing parties, if any, are expected to be maintained stably throughout the period of dispatch and where circumstances are unlikely to cause the suspension of the dispatch.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 2-1 (Frameworks for International Peace Cooperation Activities), Reference 12 (Summary Comparison of Laws Concerning International Peace Cooperation Activities), Reference 61 (The JSDF Record in International Peace Cooperation Assignments)

3 International Disaster Relief Activities

The Japan Disaster Relief Team Law[25] stipulates the measures necessary for dispatching the Japan Disaster Relief Team to undertake rescue activities and provide medical services in response to large-scale disasters overseas, especially in developing regions.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs may consult the Defense Minister with regard to the operations of JSDF units if there is a special need. The Defense Minister may order JSDF units to carry out rescue and medical activities as well as transportation of personnel and supplies and other activities based on the consultation above.[26]

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 2-3 (International Disaster Relief Activities), Reference 12 (Summary Comparison of Laws Concerning International Peace Cooperation Activities), Reference 61 (The JSDF Record in International Peace Cooperation Assignments)

25 Law Concerning the Dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Team

26 The Japan Disaster Relief Team is not to be dispatched if the use of weapons is necessary in order to protect the lives and bodies of personnel and necessary equipment engaged in international disaster relief activities or related transportation when dangers exist due to the security situation and other factors in the affected country. Therefore, members of the team will not carry weapons within the country concerned for the purpose of protecting the lives and bodies of personnel and necessary equipment engaged in international disaster relief activities.

Part III

Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Chapter 1 Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

Chapter 2 Japan-U.S. Alliance

Chapter 3 Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries and Others

Chapter 1 Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

The National Defense Strategy (NDS) sets forth three defense objectives: to shape a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force; to deter such unilateral changes or attempts through cooperation and coordination with Japan's ally, like-minded countries, and others; and for Japan to take primary responsibility to deal with the aggression in the event of an invasion of Japan. To achieve these objectives, the NDS states that all efforts will be made in an integrated manner, outlining three approaches that must be strengthened: (i) Japan's own architecture for national defense, (ii) the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and (iii) collaboration with like-minded countries and others.

Part III explains these three approaches and their specific content for achieving the defense objectives.

Chapter 1, titled "Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense," describes the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and whole-of-government initiatives to reinforce this national defense architecture, including the actions of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) in response to an invasion.

Chapter 2, titled "The Japan-U.S. Alliance," describes initiatives related to the Japan-U.S. Alliance, which is the cornerstone of Japan's security policy, to strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance.

Chapter 3, titled "Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others," explains initiatives to ensure the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community as a whole, including those to strategically promote multilateral and multilayered security cooperation, those to ensure maritime security, and initiatives for international peace cooperation activities, arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

See Part II, Chapter 2, Section 2 (Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS))

Section 1 Responses to Invasion of Japan

Surrounded by water and possessing an extensive coastline, Japan has numerous remote islands far from the main island, a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and a broad continental shelf. It is a challenge to defend to the end the lives, physical well-being, and property of Japan's people, as well as its territorial land, airspace, and waters, and abundant resources widely distributed in these areas. In addition, as Japan relies on overseas trade for much of its resources and food, it is essential to reinforce the free and open maritime order and ensure the freedom and safety of navigation and flight.

In the event that deterrence fails and an invasion of Japan occurs, Japan will respond swiftly and flexibly according to the nature of the situation, taking primary responsibility for countering the invasion while receiving support from its ally. In such a situation, the MOD/JSDF will organically integrate operation capabilities across land, sea, and air domains, as well as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. By coordinating Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), and Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) units to conduct joint operations, they will deter and eliminate any invasion of Japan. In addition, in the event of a large-scale terrorist attack or an attack on critical infrastructure that poses a serious threat to the lives, physical wellbeing, and property of Japanese citizens, Japan will cooperate with related organizations to take effective countermeasures.

The MOD/JSDF must not only respond to any invasion but also continuously demonstrate the will and capabilities to address and deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts that affect Japan's peace and security. To this end, the MOD/JSDF continuously conducts information gathering and surveillance activities from peacetime to identify signs of situations at an early stage, and maintains a posture that enables swift and appropriate responses to airspace violations or intrusions into territorial waters by foreign military aircraft, vessels, and the like. In addition, in order to secure the stable use of sea lanes which are important to Japan, the MOD/JSDF will implement necessary efforts to conduct counter-piracy operations and ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels in cooperation and collaboration with relevant organizations, like-minded countries, and others.

1 Responses to Invasions of Japan, Large-Scale Terrorism, Etc.

1 Joint Operations of the JSDF

In the event of an invasion of Japan, the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF will not respond independently, but through joint operations in which JSDF units work together under the centralized command of the Commander, JSDF Joint Operations Command (C-JJOC).

In particular, in modern warfare, it is important to organically integrate operation capabilities in the space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic domains in addition to the land, sea, and air domains. It is also necessary to respond swiftly and appropriately a wide range of situations that are neither peacetime nor contingency, such as gray zone situations, as well as to hybrid warfare.

To that end, in accordance with the Minister's orders on JSDF operations, the Commander of the JSDF Joint Operations Command (C-JJOC) is eligible to command centrally major units of Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces, as well as units operating in the Space and Cyber domains from peacetime, so that the JSDF will be able to establish a flexible defense posture quickly depending on the situation. The C-JJOC takes control of the overall operations, assigns missions to the necessary subordinate commanders, and allocates the required forces to each commander in order to conduct joint operations quickly and effectively.

Major joint operations include amphibious operations to retake islands, operations utilizing counterstrike capabilities, and missile defense operations. For example, in amphibious operations, the GSDF amphibious units and MSDF transportation units work in coordination to land forces from the sea on remote islands.

See Fig. III-1-1-1 (An Example of Joint Operations by the JSDF (image)), Part II, Chapter 2, Section 2-2-1 (1) a. (Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities)

Fig. III-1-1-1 An Example of Joint Operations by the JSDF (image)

2 Responses in the Ground, Maritime, and Air Domains

(1) Air Defense Operations

In modern warfare,[1] it is expected that prior to a full-scale invasion by ground forces, the enemy would conduct sudden air attacks using aircraft and missiles. For this reason, the JSDF detects such attacks at an early stage using warning and control radars and airborne warning and control systems[2] (AWACS), and intercepts them at a distance using fighter aircraft and surface-to-air missiles in order to prevent harm to Japan's people and territory.

(2) Operations to Defend the Waters Surrounding Japan and Ensure Security in Maritime Transportation

If an armed attack is carried out against Japan, aerial attacks are expected to be combined with attacks against our ships and territory by enemy destroyers. Thus, the JSDF conducts searches for vessels and the like using patrol aircraft,[3] and responds to maritime invasions with destroyers and submarines.

In addition, for sea lanes, which are of critical importance to Japan as it relies heavily on overseas resources and food, the JSDF ensures safety through actions such as escorting Japanese vessels with destroyers, submarines, and patrol aircraft.

(3) Operations Protecting the Land

It is expected that following or alongside air and maritime invasions, the enemy would conduct land invasions by its ground forces. Forms of enemy land invasions may include landings of ground troops from the sea/ocean or drops of airborne forces. Using stand-off missiles and other weapons in maritime and coastal areas, the JSDF will block enemy landings, and in the event of an actual landing, will eliminate the enemy with additional anti-ground attacks by fighter aircraft and firepower from the GSDF.

See Section 2-1 (Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities)

3 Responses to Missile Attacks

(1) Response by the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/JSDF

In response to ballistic missile attacks, ballistic missile defense (BMD) is based on a multi-layered defense that combines detection of ballistic missiles by warning and control radar and other means, upper-tier interception using Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) deployed on Aegis destroyers, and lower-tier interception using Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missiles.[4] The entire sequence of command and control up to interception is carried out through the Japan Aerospace Defense Ground Environment (JADGE).[5]

North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles and other projectiles. The MOD/JSDF has maintained the necessary readiness to prepare for any situations through the Minister's order to intercept them,[6] deploying PAC-3 in areas such as Okinawa Prefecture. In the event of a ballistic missile launch, the MOD promptly shares information with the entire Government of Japan and related agencies and collects and analyzes related information.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-4 (Destruction Measures against Ballistic Missiles or Other Objects)

(2) Cooperation with the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK)

In responding to ballistic missile attacks, it is essential to have peacetime cooperation with the United States, including the U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ). Measures including constant real-time sharing of BMD operational and relevant information and the expansion of cooperation have been agreed upon at Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (2+2) Meetings.

If a ballistic missile is actually launched, Japan closely cooperates with the United States, including by receiving Shared Early Warning (SEW)[7] information from the U.S. Forces, as well as information collected by transportable

1 Air operations are important elements influencing the results of the entirety of operations. It is vital to obtain air superiority before or at the same time as implementing ground or maritime operations.
2 Aircraft with warning control systems and radar capable of monitoring omnidirectionally. Being excellent in speed performance and boasting long cruising time, the aircraft is able to fly to distant areas to engage in warning for a long time. Moreover, as it is also able to engage in warning at high altitude, it has outstanding flight performance and the monitoring and surveillance capability, such as a long line-of-sight distance. The ASDF has been operating E-767 aircraft based on civil aircraft B-767.
3 Aircraft purposed to patrol for gathering information to prevent surprise attacks by enemy forces, and for other purposes. MSDF possesses P-3C patrol aircraft and P-1 patrol aircraft as fixed-wing patrol aircraft and SH-60J patrol helicopters, SH-60K patrol helicopters and SH-60L patrol helicopters as rotary-wing patrol aircraft.
4 The PAC-3 is one of the missiles operated by the Patriot surface-to-air guided missile system, and it is primarily a missile intended to intercept ballistic missiles. It should be noted that the term "PAC-3" may refer either to the missile itself or to the Patriot system modified to enable PAC-3 operation.
5 A core system for command and control as well as communication functions. It centrally processes information regarding aircraft captured by radar equipment installed nationwide and provides fighter aircraft with instructions required for scrambling against aircraft intruding into Japanese territorial airspace and air defense combat operations. In addition, it controls PAC-3, radar, etc., in responses to ballistic missiles.
6 In May 2023, the Defense Minister issued an Operation Order for the Self-Defense Forces concerning implementation for destructive measures against ballistic missiles, etc.
7 Information on the area and time of launch, as well as where and when objects are expected to fall, relating to ballistic missiles launched in the direction of Japan. This information is analyzed and conveyed to the JSDF by the U.S. Forces in a short period of time just after the launch (the JSDF started to receive the information in April 1996).

SM-3 launched from a MSDF destroyer

Patriot PAC-3 maneuver and deployment training

BMD radar (TPY-2 radar)[8] and Aegis-equipped destroyers deployed by the USFJ.

In addition, with regard to Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation, the three countries announced their intention to share North Korean missile warning data in real time at the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting in November 2022. Since December 2023, the three countries have been able to continuously share information on ballistic missiles and other projectiles launched by North Korea.

4 Responses in the Space Domain

Outer space is increasingly being utilized in fields such as communications and positioning, and is also a domain of military importance. In order to secure military superiority in the space domain, countries are increasingly conducting activities using military satellites and the like. In addition, ensuring the stable utilization of space has become a challenge, including the increasing amount of space debris such as parts from artificial satellites. For this reason, the JSDF has assigned the ASDF Space Operations Group[9] the mission of **Space Domain Awareness (SDA)**, which involves collecting and analyzing space-related information, such as monitoring suspicious satellites and identifying space debris, thereby conducting activities for the stable utilization of space.

In carrying out SDA duties, the Squadron also cooperates with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), as well as the space forces of Japan's ally including the United States and like-minded countries.

KEY WORD

Space Domain Awareness

In addition to identifying the positions and orbits of space objects, Space Domain Awareness (SDA) refers to gaining an understanding of the operational status, intentions, and capabilities of artificial satellites and the like. To protect Japan's artificial satellites from killer satellites (satellites designed to attack other satellites) and space debris, and to ensure the stable utilization of space, continuous monitoring and accurate recognition of the space environment is essential. Due to this, the ASDF began SDA duties in March 2023.

Space Operations Group performing SDA duties

5 Responses in the Cyber Domain

Cyberspace is one of the critical infrastructures also used for military purposes in areas such as command and control and organization's networks. It is also an important domain for the defense of Japan. Countries, including those in the surrounding region, are believed to be advancing the

8 The U.S. forces have deployed part of their missile defense system in Japan. Specifically, a TPY-2 radar (so-called X-band radar) for BMD was deployed at the U.S. Shariki Communication Site (Aomori Prefecture) in 2006. In October 2006, PAC-3 units were deployed in Okinawa Prefecture and in October 2007, a Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTAGS) was deployed in Aomori Prefecture. Furthermore, the 2nd TPY-2 radar was deployed at the U.S. Kyogamisaki Communication Site (Kyoto Prefecture) in December 2014. In October 2018, the 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade Headquarters was deployed in Sagamihara (Kanagawa Prefecture). In addition, BMD-capable Aegis ships of the U.S. Forces were deployed at Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka (Kanagawa Prefecture) in October 2015, March 2016 and May 2018.

9 It is planned to reorganize the Group into the "Space Operations Wing" (tentative name) in FY2025.

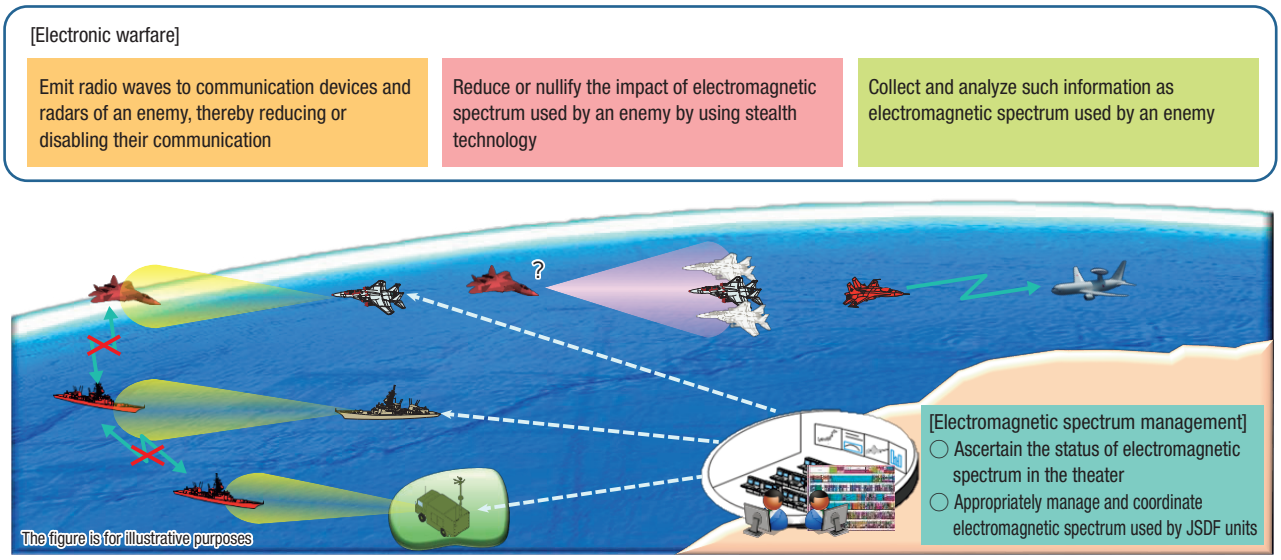
development of cyberattack capabilities, which are difficult to attribute to specific attackers and can disrupt the target's operations at low cost. For this reason, the JSDF, including the JSDF Cyber Defense Command, monitors the MOD/JSDF's networks 24 hours a day, collects and analyzes information on cyberattacks, and maintains readiness to promptly respond when cyberattacks occur.

6 Responses in the Electromagnetic Spectrum Domain

Electromagnetic spectrum is used for command and communication, surveillance, intelligence gathering, precision guidance of missiles, and other purposes. Because the use of electromagnetic spectrum spans not only the land, sea, and air, but also outer space and cyberspace, in order to gain the advantage in operations across all domains, it is essential to secure superiority in the electromagnetic spectrum domain by strengthening electronic warfare capabilities and properly managing the electromagnetic spectrum. To this end, the JSDF conducts operations such as disrupting enemy use of electromagnetic spectrum and collecting and analyzing information related to electromagnetic spectrum through the use of the Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS), multi-purpose EP-3 aircraft, and RC-2 signals intelligence aircraft.

See Fig. III-1-1-2 (Electronic Warfare and Electromagnetic Spectrum Management), Part I, Chapter 4, Section 4 (Trends in Electromagnetic Domain)

Fig. III-1-1-2 Electronic Warfare and Electromagnetic Spectrum Management



7 Responses to Large-Scale Terrorism and Attacks on Critical Infrastructure

(1) Basic Concept

Japan is highly urbanized and even subversive activities by a small number of people can have a significant impact on the lives of the people and the socio-economic system, including a severe reduction in urban functions. In particular, large-scale terrorist attacks and attacks on critical infrastructure such as nuclear power plants pose serious threats to the lives, bodies, and property of the Japanese people. These attacks can take various forms, including illegal activities by foreign armed agents[10] who have infiltrated Japan and sabotage carried out by guerillas or special forces.

The MOD/JSDF works in close coordination with relevant organizations such as the police, the Japan Coast Guard (JCG), fire departments, and local governments to respond to large-scale terrorist attacks and attacks on critical infrastructure.

The police assumes primary responsibility to respond to these terrorist activities or attacks, with the MOD/JSDF supporting the police as needed. If it is difficult for police forces to respond, the MOD/JSDF will respond through Public Security Operations. Furthermore, if such terrorist activities or attacks are recognized as armed attacks against Japan, the MOD/JSDF will respond with Defense Operations.

(2) Response to Armed Agents

Cooperation with the police is important in responding to illegal activities by armed agents and similar threats. With

10 Refers to persons committing illegal acts such as subversive activities in Japan while possessing weapons with significant wounding and killing power.

regard to Public Security Operations, the JSDF and the police have concluded a basic agreement[11] stipulating cooperation between the JSDF and police as well as local agreements between GSDF divisions/brigades and prefectural police departments.[12] The JSDF closely cooperates with the police to protect facilities and search for armed agents. To this end, the JSDF and police conduct joint training across the country to strengthen cooperation.

Joint training with the police (Chiba Prefecture) (February 2025)

(3) Responses to Attacks by Guerillas and Special Operations Forces

Typical forms of attacks by guerrillas or special forces include destruction of critical civilian infrastructure and other facilities, attacks against civilians, and assassinations of dignitaries.

To respond to attacks by guerrillas or special forces, the JSDF will endeavor for early detection and recognizing indications through surveillance, gather information, conduct surveillance along coastal areas, and protect critical facilities including nuclear power plants. If guerrillas or special forces infiltrate Japanese territory, the JSDF will promptly deploy forces to capture or eliminate them.

(4) Response to CBRN Weapons

With regard to weapons of mass destruction such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons, along with their delivery systems like ballistic missiles and related equipment, the danger of their proliferation to terrorists and countries of concern is recognized. In Japan, chemical agents were used in the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack in 1995, resulting in the deaths and injuries of many civilians.

If CBRN weapons are used in Japan and this constitutes an armed attack, the JSDF will conduct Defense Operations to repel the armed attack and rescue victims. In case it does not fall under the category of an armed attack but where police forces cannot maintain public order, the JSDF will conduct Public Security Operations to suppress armed groups and rescue victims in cooperation with related agencies. Furthermore, even if cases do not fall under the category of Defense Operations or Public Security Operations, the chemical and medical units of the GSDF and other units will cooperate with related agencies in information gathering, decontamination activities, and medical activities through disaster relief and civil protection dispatches.

The JSDF always maintains readiness to be able to deploy quickly in such situations.

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

1 Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance Surrounding Japan

(1) Basic Concept

Japan's territory extends approximately 3,000 kilometers along both the north-south and east-west axes. It has a vast maritime area ranking sixth-largest[13] in the world when combining its territorial waters (including inland waters) with its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), as well as a large number of islands spread across a wide area. The MOD/JSDF is engaged in information gathering and surveillance during peacetime over Japan's territorial waters and airspace, as well as the surrounding sea and airspace, so that it can respond to various contingencies immediately and seamlessly.

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

In Japan's territorial waters and airspace and their surrounding maritime and airspace areas, the MOD/JSDF conducts information gathering and surveillance 24 hours a day in peacetime through ASDF radar sites nationwide, airborne warning and control systems (AWACS), and MSDF patrol planes. Surveillance activities in major channels are also conducted around the clock by MSDF guard posts, GSDF coastal surveillance units, and other

11 The Agreement on the Maintenance of Public Order in the Event of Public Security Operations, concluded between the then Defense Agency and the National Public Safety Commission (concluded in 1954 and fully revised in 2000).

12 In 2004, then Defense Agency and the National Police Agency jointly developed the guideline for joint handling of armed agent incidents during Public Security Operations.

13 This is the eighth largest in the world if sea areas in overseas territories of various countries are considered as belonging to the countries concerned.

Commentary

Senkaku Islands, Inherent Part of the Territory of Japan

The Senkaku Islands (Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture) are clearly an inherent part of the territory of Japan, both historically and under international law. Japan actually has effective control of the islands. Therefore, there is no territorial issue to be resolved in the first place.

After carefully confirming that there were no signs of any other country's control in 1895, the Japanese government decided to put the Senkaku Islands under the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture by legitimate means under international law at a Cabinet meeting and officially incorporated the islands into the territory of Japan. China began to make its own claims regarding the Senkaku Islands in the 1970s, after a UN agency pointed out possible oil reserves in the East China Sea in 1968. It had not raised any objections until this point. Nor had it given any explanation for not raising any objections.

However, since Chinese government vessels intruded into Japanese territorial waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands for the first time in 2008, such vessels and others have repeatedly intruded into our territorial waters despite our strong protests, which is utterly unacceptable. The activities of Chinese maritime patrol vessels, which are asserting their own claims in our territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, are a violation of international law in the first place.

Japan strongly urges China to improve its actions in response to such unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force. The MOD and the JSDF will continue to deal with this situation calmly and resolutely, taking all possible measures to monitor the situation in close cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies, in order to protect the lives and property of the people and the territory, territorial waters, and airspace of Japan.

A MSDF P-3C patrol aircraft flying around the Senkaku Islands

assets.[14] Furthermore, in addition to this information gathering and surveillance posture, the JSDF flexibly operates vessels and aircraft as needed, maintaining a readiness posture capable of responding promptly to various contingencies.

Within the ASDF, the newly established Reconnaissance Group at Misawa Air Base (Aomori Prefecture) in 2022 operates the long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle RQ-4B (Global Hawk) to strengthen continuous, persistent monitoring.

In addition, in November 2024, the MSDF decided to introduce the MQ-9B (SeaGuardian), a long-endurance unmanned aircraft, to enhance offshore surveillance capabilities.

In recent years, Chinese naval vessels have intensified their activities in the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, Okinawa Prefecture, and China Coast Guard vessels have repeatedly intruded into Japan's territorial waters. There have also been cases of Chinese naval vessels navigating within or near Japan's territorial waters, and activities by Chinese aircraft carriers in the waters around Japan are continuing. In August 2024, a Chinese naval vessel navigated through

The MQ-9B (SeaGuardian) long-endurance unmanned aircraft, which was selected for introduction by the MSDF (photo shows same model)

Japan's territorial waters southwest of Kuchinoerabu Island (Kagoshima Prefecture). In September of the same year, the Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning navigated through waters near Japan's territorial waters between Yonaguni Island and Iriomote Island in Okinawa Prefecture. It was the first time that a Chinese aircraft carrier had navigated through the waters

REFERENCE: Movement of foreign naval vessels in FY2024
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/js/activity/domestic/keikai2024.html

14 Article 4(1)18 of the Act for Establishment of the MOD (Investigation and research required for the performance of duties within jurisdiction) provides the legal basis for monitoring and surveillance activities by the JSDF.

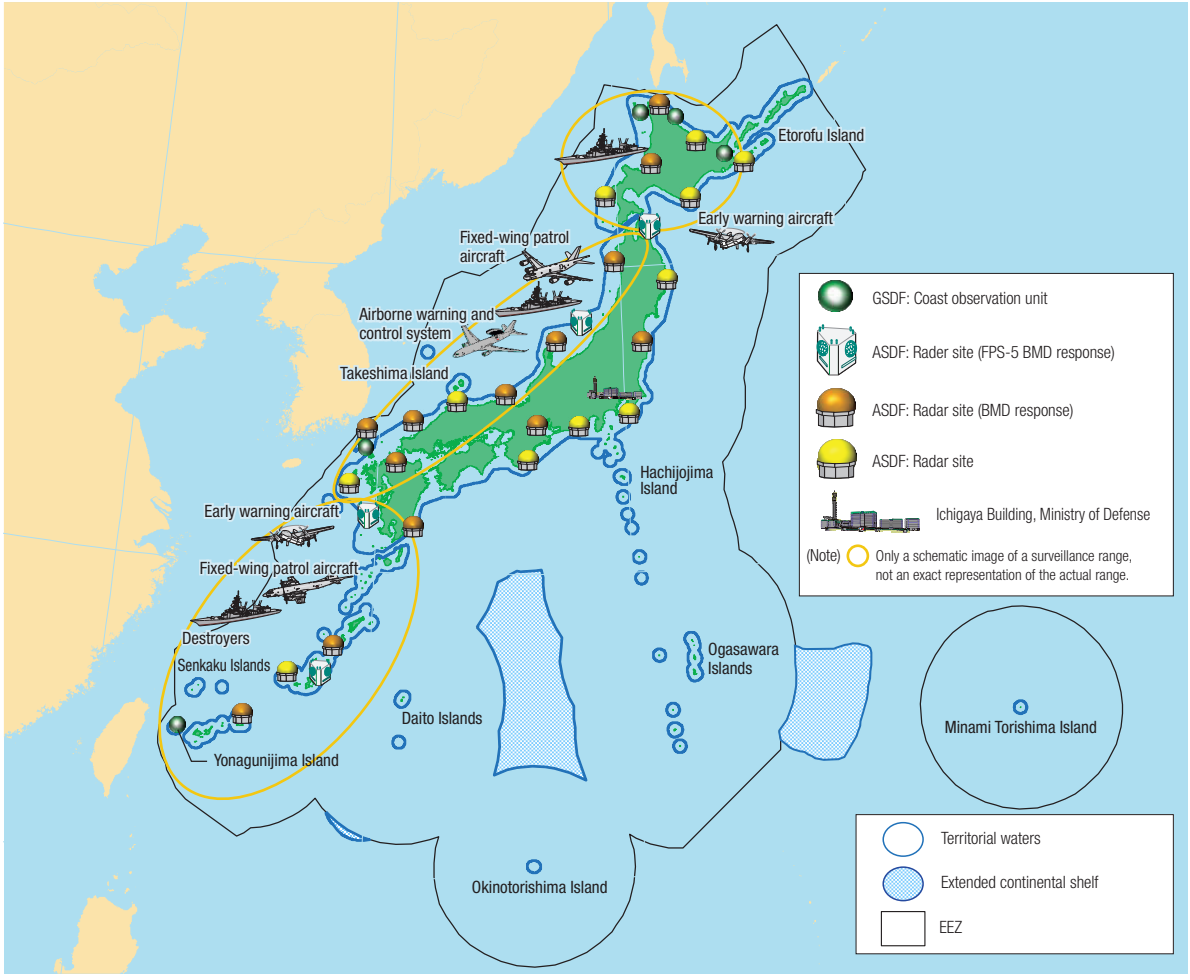
between Yonaguni Island and Iriomote Island. Furthermore, joint navigation by Chinese and Russian naval vessels has been confirmed in the waters around Japan. In light of this, the MOD/JSDF is conducting surveillance of the maritime and airspace areas surrounding Japan with a strong sense of urgency.

The MOD/JSDF also shares the information obtained through such surveillance with related ministries and agencies, including the JCG.

See Fig. III-1-1-3 (Monitoring and Surveillance of the Waters and Airspace Surrounding Japan (Conceptual Image)), Section 3-5 (Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance from Peacetime), Reference 13 (Number of Days and Total Incursions into the Territorial Waters Around the Senkaku Islands by Ships Belonging to the China Coast Guard Bureau, etc.)

Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning sailing between Yonaguni Island and Iriomote Island (September 2024)

Fig. III-1-1-3 Monitoring and Surveillance of the Waters and Airspace Surrounding Japan (Conceptual Image)



2 Warnings and Scrambles in Preparation against Airspace Violation

(1) Basic Concept

Only the JSDF has the capabilities to conduct countermeasures against airspace violation by foreign aircraft from warning to the use of weapons if deemed necessary. Within the MOD/JSDF, the ASDF holds primary responsibility for carrying out these countermeasures against airspace violation.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-6 (Measures against Intrusion of Territorial Airspace)

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

The ASDF detects and identifies aircraft flying in airspace surrounding Japan using warning and control radars as well as early warning and control aircraft. If any suspicious aircraft heading to Japanese territorial airspace are detected, fighters and other aircraft scramble to approach them to confirm the situation and monitor the aircraft as necessary. Furthermore, in the event that such suspicious aircraft have actually intruded into Japanese territorial airspace, the ASDF issues a radio transmission or other warning such warning to leave the airspace.

In FY2024, ASDF aircraft scrambled 704 times (464 times in response to Chinese aircraft, 237 times in response to Russian aircraft and 3 other times).

Flight patterns of Chinese military aircraft in recent years have diversified, and now their range of activities is extending to not only the airspace over the East China Sea, but also the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan.

In addition, joint long-range flights by Chinese and Russian bombers and other aircraft have been conducted around Japan a total of eight times since the joint flight in 2019. In November 2024, joint long-range flights by Chinese and Russian bombers were confirmed over the Sea of Japan, East China Sea, and Pacific Ocean over a two-day period.

As Chinese and Russian aircraft continue their active operations in the vicinity of Japan, the MOD/JSDF closely monitors their movements and takes all necessary measures to ensure thorough countermeasures against airspace violation.

ASDF fighters responding with a scramble

(3) Violations of Japanese Territorial Airspace by Chinese and Russian Aircraft

On August 26, 2024, one Chinese military Y-9 intelligence-gathering aircraft violated Japanese territorial airspace over the waters off the Danjo-gunto Islands (Nagasaki Prefecture). In addition, on September 23 of the same year, one Russian military IL-38 patrol aircraft violated territorial airspace north of Rebunto Island (Hokkaido) three times. Furthermore, on May 3, 2025, a China Coast Guard helicopter, which took off from a China Coast Guard vessel violated Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands (Okinawa Prefecture), violated Japanese territorial airspace. In both cases, the ASDF scrambled fighters to respond. In response to the violations of Japanese airspace by Russian aircraft, flares[15] were also used for the warning for the first time in countermeasures against airspace violation.

Such airspace violations not only constitute a serious infringement of Japan's sovereignty but also pose a threat to the safety of its people and are utterly unacceptable. The Government of Japan lodged strong protests with the Chinese and Russian governments and firmly demanded the prevention of any recurrence.

MOVIE: UNIT-1 Aircraft warning and control
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKd7UEU73rM

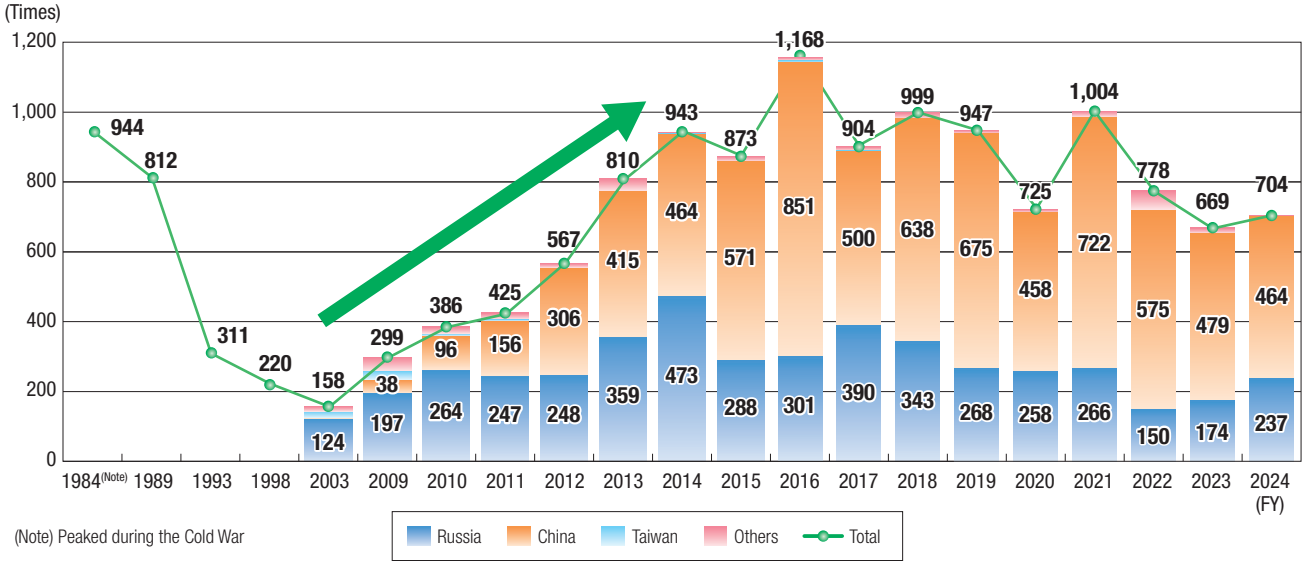
REFERENCE: Aircraft scrambles in FY2024
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/js/activity/domestic/Scramble2024.html

15 Decoy heat sources dispersed in the air by fighter jets and other aircraft to evade infrared-guided missiles. They are easily visible because they burn intensely.

See Fig. III-1-1-4 (Number and Breakdown of Scrambles since the Cold War), Fig. III-1-1-5 (Example Flight Patterns of Russian and Chinese Aircraft to Which Scrambles Responded (FY2024)), Fig. III-1-1-6 (Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) of Japan and Those of Neighboring Countries/Regions (image)), Fig. III-1-1-7 (Overview of the Actions of the Chinese Y-9 Intelligence-Gathering Aircraft that Intruded into Japanese Territorial Airspace – August 26, 2024), Fig. III-1-1-8 (Overview of the Actions of the Russian IL-38 Patrol Aircraft that Intruded into Japanese Territorial Airspace – September 23, 2024), Part I, Chapter 3, Section 2-2-6 (2) (Military Activities in Japan's Surrounding Waters and Airspace), Part I, Chapter 3, Section 5-5-3 (Relations with China)

ASDF fighter deploying flares (image)

Fig. III-1-1-4 Number and Breakdown of Scrambles since the Cold War



(Note) Peaked during the Cold War

Fig. III-1-1-5 Example Flight Patterns of Russian and Chinese Aircraft to Which Scrambles Responded (FY2024)

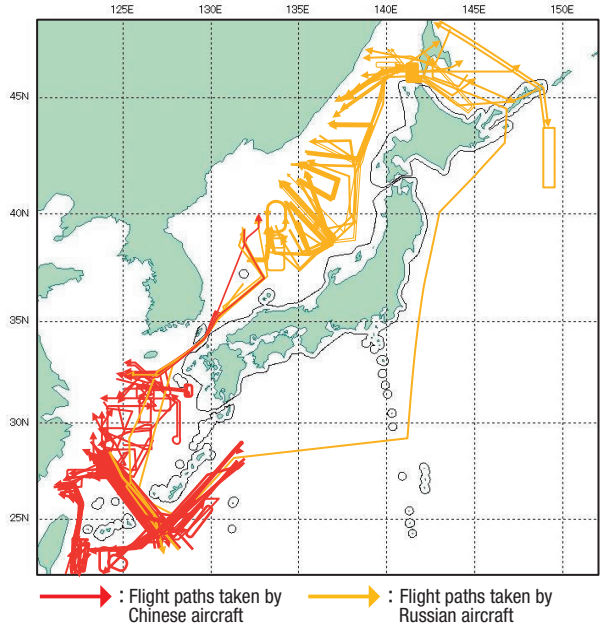
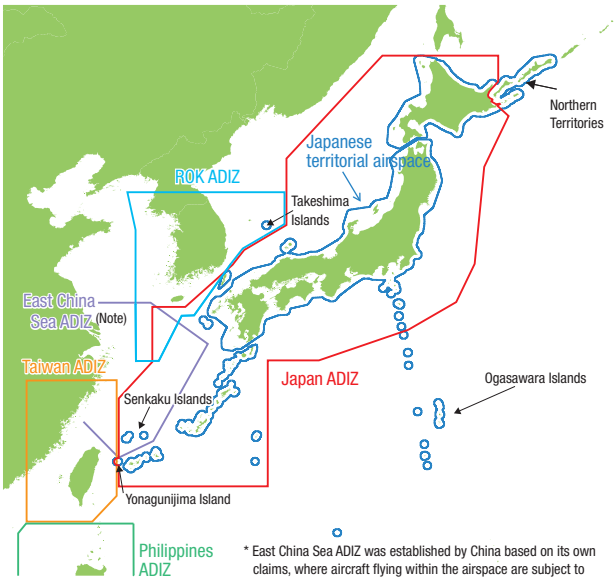
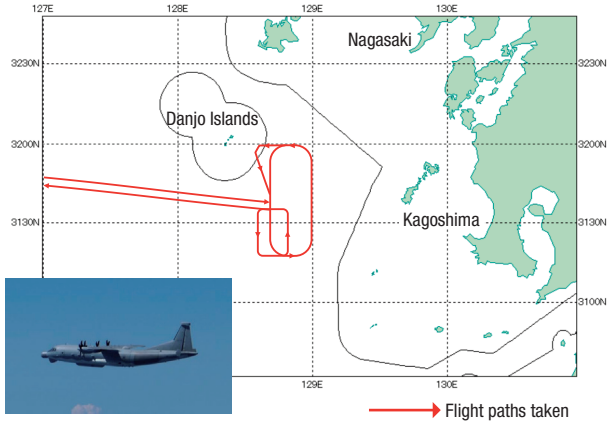


Fig. III-1-1-6 Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) of Japan and Those of Neighboring Countries/Regions (image)



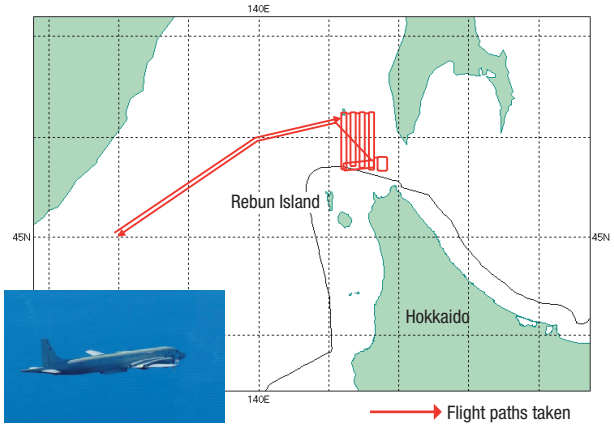
* East China Sea ADIZ was established by China based on its own claims, where aircraft flying within the airspace are subject to the regulations set forth by the Chinese Ministry of National Defense, and in case of non-compliance, the Chinese military will take emergency defensive measures, which inappropriately infringes on the fundamental principle of freedom of flight over international waters stipulated in international law.

Fig. III-1-1-7 Overview of the Actions of the Chinese Y-9 Intelligence-Gathering Aircraft that Intruded into Japanese Territorial Airspace – August 26, 2024



Y-9 intelligence-gathering aircraft (the spotted one)

Fig. III-1-1-8 Overview of the Actions of the Russian IL-38 Patrol Aircraft that Intruded into Japanese Territorial Airspace – September 23, 2024



IL-38 Patrol Aircraft (the spotted one)

3 Responses to Submarines Navigating Underwater in Japanese Territorial Waters

(1) Basic Concept

The Defense Minister will issue an order for Maritime Security Operations to deal with foreign submarines submerging in Japanese territorial waters.[16] Such submarines will be required to navigate on the surface and show their flags[17] in accordance with international law. If they do not comply, they will be required to leave Japanese territorial waters.

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

The MSDF conducts surveillance of the waters surrounding Japan using patrol aircraft and vessels. When there is detection of submerged navigation by a foreign submarine within

16 The term "territorial waters" also includes inland waters.
17 Article 20 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea states, "In the territorial sea, submarines and other underwater vehicles are required to navigate on the surface and to show their flag."

Japan's territorial waters, it works to identify and track the submarine. It strives to maintain and enhance its capabilities to demonstrate its intent not to permit submerged navigation in violation of international law, as well as to respond even in shallow-water maritime areas.

In 2004, the MSDF observed a submerged Chinese nuclear-powered submarine navigating under Japanese territorial waters around the Sakishima Islands (Okinawa Prefecture). In response to this incident, the MSDF issued an order for Maritime Security Operations and continued to track the submarine with MSDF vessels until it entered the high seas. In addition, in 2018, underwater navigation by a Chinese submarine was confirmed for the first time through Japan's contiguous zone in the vicinity of the Senkaku Islands. Furthermore, in 2021, a submarine presumed to be Chinese was confirmed to be navigating underwater through the Japanese contiguous zone in the vicinity of Amami Oshima Island (Kagoshima Prefecture), and surveillance operations were carried out by MSDF destroyers and patrol aircraft. The MOD/JSDF will continue to maintain a surveillance posture and enhance response capabilities in order to address submerged navigation by foreign submarines within Japan's territorial waters.

4 Response to Armed Special Operations Vessels

(1) Basic Concept

The JCG is primarily responsible for responding to suspicious armed special operations vessels (unidentified vessels). When it is extremely difficult or impossible for the JCG to respond to a situation, the Defense Minister will issue an order for Maritime Security Operations and the JSDF will deal with it in cooperation with the JCG.

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

In light of the lessons learned from the cases of an unidentified vessel off the Noto Peninsula (Ishikawa Prefecture) in 1999, an unidentified vessel in the sea southwest of Kyushu in 2001 and other similar incidents, the MOD/JSDF has been making various efforts. In particular, the MSDF has taken steps such as establishment of the MSDF Special Boarding Unit[18] and equipment of destroyers with machine guns. In addition, based on "the manual for jointly dealing with suspicious vessels" formulated by the then Defense Agency and the JCG in 1999, the MSDF has regularly conducted joint training with the JCG to strengthen coordination.

5 Responses to Integrated Information Warfare with Special Regard to the Cognitive Dimension

(1) Basic Concept

In recent years, concerns have been growing within the international community about information warfare that influences people's perceptions and affects public opinion and governmental decision-making. This includes dissemination of disinformation and the spread of information aimed at eroding trust in government and dividing society. Countries that engage in information warfare, such as Russia and China, are believed to be aiming at shaping a favorable security environment for themselves by disseminating information advantageous to their own interests. Japan is working to strengthen its capabilities to respond to integrated information warfare, with special regard to the cognitive dimension, such as the spread of disinformation.

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF will build a more desirable security environment while preventing influence on Japan's decision-making by addressing integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension from peacetime through the following means: (i) acquiring diverse intelligence collection capabilities by strengthening intelligence functions, (ii) determining the veracity and intentions of all threats, including disinformation spread by other countries, and neutralizing them or taking other measures through various means, and (iii) disseminating rapidly and strategically appropriate information at every opportunity in cooperation with our ally, like-minded countries, and others.

Furthermore, Japan will not implement efforts that damage our credibility (such as dissemination of disinformation via social media and other means, manipulation of public opinion, conspiracy, etc.).

Within the MOD/JSDF, the Defense Intelligence Headquarters plays a central role in responding to information warfare. It continuously gathers and analyzes a wide range of information, determines the authenticity of that information, and disseminates appropriate information, among other necessary measures.

18 A specialized unit (established in March 2001) deployed under Maritime Security Operations to disarm suspicious vessels when conducting on-board inspections.

Perspective

The Battle in the Cognitive Dimension

YAMAGUCHI Shinji, Senior Fellow, China Division, National Institute for Defense Studies

In recent years, the battle in the cognitive dimension has intensified, with countries attempting to disrupt and have an impact on the politics and societies of adversary countries through information manipulation and influence operations. In the current great power competition, problems around ideology and values have become important. China and Russia are attempting to take advantage of the characteristics of free and open political and social systems in democratic countries to disrupt the politics of adversary countries and lead them in a direction which is desirable for themselves, by carrying out information manipulation using disinformation and other techniques and influence operations against the democratic countries.

Their techniques include promotion, propaganda, information manipulation on social media, and united front (influence) operations. Promotion and propaganda refer to activities by China's state-controlled media, such as Xinhua News Agency and others, to communicate the narrative of China to the world, transmit government views and Chinese culture, and rebut the propaganda of foreign countries.

Next, there is the spread of disinformation through social media and other channels. We are seeing cases in which the governments of other countries deliberately spread disinformation with the aim of causing disruption and division in the domestic politics and societies of adversary countries. China is also expanding these kinds of activities.

Its united front operations are one type of influence operation to create external collaborators in order to achieve the political goals of the Chinese Communist Party. It targets people who are favorable to China, who hold views close to China on certain issues, and who have cultural or ethnic ties to China, and attempts to lead them in a direction advantageous to China's political objectives.

What China is trying to achieve through these activities is, firstly, to enhance China's image and expand support for its policies; secondly, to rebut the claims and information of foreign countries that are disadvantageous to China; and thirdly, to increase social divisions and create political and social disruption in adversary countries. The targets of China's operations are mainly Taiwan and the countries in the Global South. China is aiming to disrupt politics in Taiwan and form advantageous conditions for itself and is scheming to increase support for itself by trumpeting the shortcomings and problems of the United States and Europe to the Global South countries.

It has been thought that China has not been directing its activities against Japan very actively, but recently its activities directed against Japan have been intensifying. In particular, since President Xi Jinping mentioned the "historical ties between Fujian Province and Okinawa" in June 2023, China's operations surrounding Okinawa Prefecture have intensified. The number of Chinese government and party officials visiting Okinawa Prefecture is increasing, and activities such as fake accounts on social media attempting to spread false videos inciting "Ryukyu independence" have been seen.

The activities of China, Russia, and others have not necessarily been highly effective. However, this kind of cognitive warfare can pose a serious challenge to democracy as it attempts to incite division by taking advantage of areas of disagreement in the adversary's politics and society. It is necessary for various government departments, companies, and society as a whole to cooperate to respond to it.

(Note) This column is an independent analysis from the researcher's academic perspective, and its contents do not represent an official government position.

6 Responses to Illicit Ship-to-Ship Transfers

(1) Basic Concept

In 2017, UN Security Council Resolution 2375 was adopted, prohibiting UN member states from engaging in illicit ship-to-ship transfers of goods at sea involving North Korean vessels. This is intended to prevent North Korea from smuggling to evade sanctions imposed based on the UN Security Council resolution.

Japan is committed to ensuring the effectiveness of the UN Security Council resolution by responding to illicit ship-to-ship transfers in close cooperation not only with the United States and ROK but also with the international community, toward the realization of North Korea's dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

(2) Response by the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF has the MSDF gather information on vessels suspected of violating the UN Security Council resolution as part of its regular surveillance activities in the waters surrounding Japan, and cooperates closely with relevant ministries and agencies, countries, and international organizations. As a result, during the period from 2018 onward to the end of March 2025, there has been confirmation of

REFERENCE: Japan's Initiatives to Ensure the Effectiveness of the UN Security Council Resolution
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/sedori/index.html

24 cases of seaborne rendezvous between North Korean-flagged tankers and foreign-flagged tankers, etc. on the high seas of the East China Sea. Given the strong suspicions that these vessels engaged in illicit ship-to-ship transfers, which is prohibited by the UN Security Council resolution, Japan shared the information with relevant countries and made public announcements on the subject.

In recent years, there has been growing international concern about these illicit maritime activities, including illicit ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean vessels. Since April 2018, the United States and the ROK, as well as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy, have dispatched naval vessels and aircraft in the waters surrounding Japan to conduct surveillance activities. The MOD/JSDF will continue close cooperation with relevant countries to ensure the effectiveness of the UN Security Council resolution.

7 Efforts to Ensure the Stable Use of Sea Lanes

(1) Counter-Piracy Operations

a. Significance of Counter-Piracy Operations and Efforts by the International Community

Piracy is a grave threat to public safety and order on the seas. In particular, for Japan, a maritime nation that depends on maritime transportation to secure most of resources and food necessary for its survival and prosperity, it is a problem that cannot be ignored.

Japan's primary response to piracy is by the Japan Coast Guard (JCG), which is a law enforcement agency, and the JSDF if the JCG is unable or finds it extremely difficult to cope with the piracy.

In this regard, with respect to acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden described later, JSDF units have been dispatched to carry out counter-piracy operations due to the difficulty for the JCG to respond.

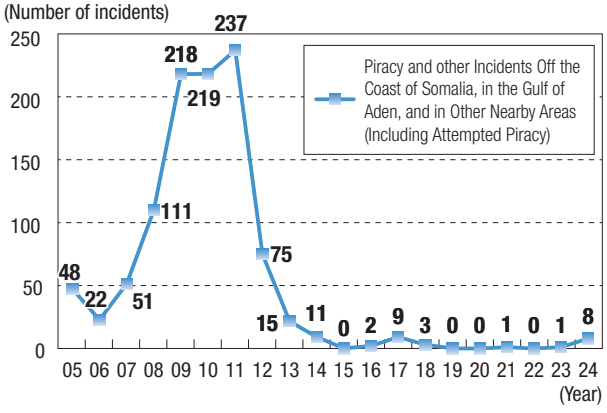
For the international community, including Japan, the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden are extremely important sea lanes, connecting Europe and the Middle East with East Asia. UN Security Council Resolution 1816 was adopted in 2008 in response to the high number of piracy incidents armed with machine guns and rocket launchers in these waters with purposes such as receiving ransoms by detaining hostages. Thereafter, following relevant resolutions additionally adopted that called for action by countries, particularly dispatching warships and military aircraft to deter piracy in these waters, about 30 countries including Japan and the United States have dispatched their warships and other assets to the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

As an international counter-piracy initiative, Japan is working with the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151) and European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) responsible for counter-piracy measures to deter piracy outside the territorial waters of the coastal states in the area of operation.

The number of piracy incidents off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has remained low as a result of these initiatives by the international community. However, one incident occurred in 2023, and eight incidents (including hijackings) occurred in 2024, indicating that pirate activity is once again showing signs of resurgence. In addition, the fundamental issues in Somalia, such as unstable security conditions and poverty, which are considered to be cause of piracy, have still not been resolved, and there is still no change in the situation that necessitates response to acts of piracy. Moreover, Somalia's own capability to control piracy remains insufficient. Therefore, Japan must continue to make all efforts to ensure the safety of navigation in the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, which constitute an extremely important sea lane, and continue to steadily carry out counter-piracy operations in cooperation with the international community, including the forces of other countries, in order to contribute to the peace and stability of the international community.

See Fig. III-1-1-9 (Piracy and Other Incidents Off the Coast of Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden and in Other Nearby Areas (Including Attempted Piracy)), Part I, Chapter 4, Section 5-2-2 (Piracy)

Fig. III-1-1-9 Piracy and Other Incidents Off the Coast of Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden and in Other Nearby Areas (Including Attempted Piracy)



(Note) The data is based on a report by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

b. Japan's Initiatives

In 2009, an order for Maritime Security Operations was issued to protect Japan-related vessels from acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and destroyers[19] and

19 The number of destroyers was changed from two to one from December 2016.

P-3C patrol aircraft[20] were dispatched to begin direct escort and other activities. Further, Japan subsequently enacted the Counter-Piracy Measures Act[21] in the same year. This act allows the JSDF to protect the vessels of all nations from acts of piracy, and to use weapons to a reasonable extent if no other means are available to stop vessels engaged in piracy, such as approaching private vessels.

The MOD/JSDF dispatches the Deployment Surface Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DSPE), Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DAPE), and Deployment Support Group for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DGPE) as counter-piracy unit.

The DSPE strives to ensure the safety of ships navigating in the area by using destroyers in two different manners: direct escort of private vessels across the Gulf of Aden, and zone defense in areas allocated according to the situation in the Gulf of Aden. There are JCG officers aboard the destroyers.[22]

The DAPE conducts warning and surveillance using P-3C patrol aircraft within the flight zone determined in coordination with CTF-151 Headquarters. When a suspicious vessel is identified, information is provided to MSDF destroyers, naval vessels from other countries, and private vessels. If requested, immediate measures are taken to confirm the safety of the surrounding area. In addition, the information gathered by the MSDF P-3C is constantly shared with other related organizations and contributes significantly to deterring acts of piracy and disarming vessels suspected of being pirate ships.

To improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the DAPE, the DGPE carries out security, maintenance, and management of the operation facility in the Republic of Djibouti, located in the northwest district of Djibouti International Airport.

In addition, in order to support these units, the Airlift Squadron and other units are organized as needed to operate ASDF transport aircraft to carry out air transport of materials.

The NDS and other documents state that the JSDF operation facility in Djibouti, which is being operated for counter-piracy operations, will be utilized for the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, while obtaining the understanding of the Djibouti government. In 2023, the Cabinet of Japan approved the "Government Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas in the Middle East and Africa" and added a new mission for the counter-piracy unit to maintain a temporary posture for possible rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, including accumulating and managing equipment.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-3 (Counter-Piracy Operations), Section 3-8 (Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas), Reference 10 (Conditions Required for Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces (Including Diet Approval) and Authority for the Use of Weapons Concerning Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces)

MSDF destroyer (in back) escorting vessels in the Gulf of Aden

c. Achievements and Appreciation for Japan's Initiatives

To strengthen coordination with the units of other countries engaged in counter-piracy operations and enhance the effectiveness of the JSDF's counter-piracy operations, the MOD/JSDF has dispatched JSDF personnel to the CTF-151 and Combined Maritime Force (CMF) headquarters since

REFERENCE: Counter-piracy efforts
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/js/activity/overseas.html

MOVIE: Defending the sea from pirates
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-VIPG_jsMc

MOVIE: Counter-piracy operations in the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GvdTkufJwU&feature=youtu.be

20 The number of aircraft was changed from two to one from December 2023.
21 Act on Punishment of Acts of Piracy and Measures against Acts of Piracy
22 Eight JCG officers are aboard the MSDF destroyer and conducting judicial law enforcement activities, including arresting and interrogating pirates, as required.

2014. Among these, the JSDF dispatched commanders to CTF-151 on four occasions: in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020.

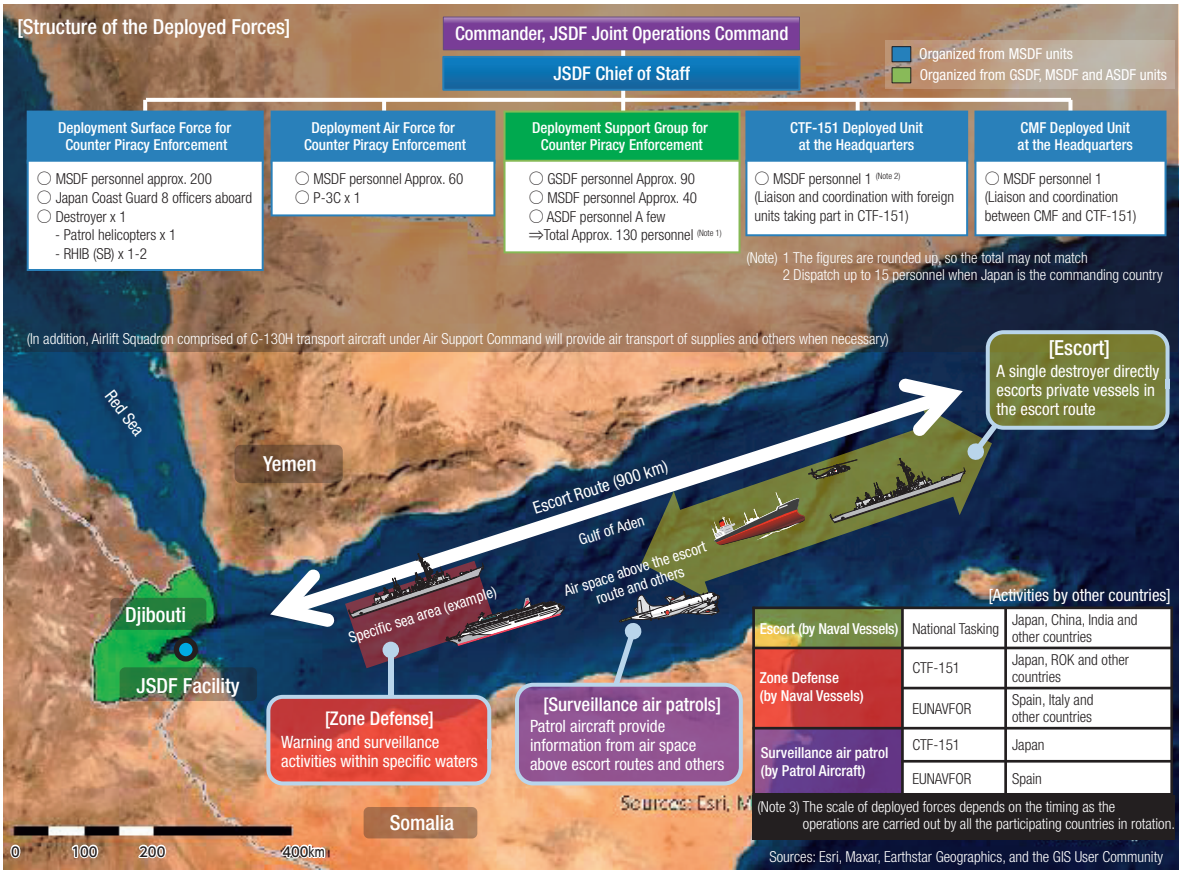
As of March 31, 2025, the DSPE has escorted 4,076 vessels (including 121 vessels escorted based on orders for Maritime Security Operations). The DAPE is also responsible for most of the countries' warning and surveillance activities via aircraft from each country in the Gulf of Aden. As of March 31, 2025, it has flown 3,406 times, totaling approximately 24,300 flight hours, and provided information 16,444 times to ships and other countries engaged in counter-piracy operations.

The counter-piracy operations by the JSDF have been highly praised by the international community. For example, national leaders and others have expressed their gratitude and the JSDF has also been repeatedly well-received by the UN Security Council Resolutions. Moreover, the MSDF destroyers, which are engaging in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, has received many messages from the captains and ship owners of the vessels that its units have escorted, expressing their gratitude that the ships were able to cross the Gulf of Aden with peace of mind and asking them to continue escorting ships there. Additionally, the Japanese Shipowners' Association and other groups have expressed appreciation for protection of Japan-related vessels and continuously asked that all efforts be continued in fighting against piracy.

The MOD/JSDF continues to closely cooperate with the international community, including foreign forces, to ensure the stable use of sea lanes by steadily carrying out counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

See Fig. III-1-1-10 (Structure of the Deployed Forces/ JSDF's Counter-Piracy Operations (image))

Fig. III-1-1-10 Structure of the Deployed Forces/JSDF's Counter-Piracy Operations (image)



(2) Information Gathering Activities for Ensuring the Safety of Japan-related Vessels in the Middle East

a. Background of the Deployment of the JSDF to the Middle East

Peace and stability in the Middle East are crucial to the peace and prosperity of the international community, including Japan. In addition, for Japan as well, it is very important to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East, one of the world's major energy sources, on which Japan depends for about 90% of its crude oil imports.

In the Middle East, amidst rising tensions, there were incidents of attacks on ships. In 2019, Japan-related vessels suffered damage in the Gulf of Oman. Under these circumstances, the United States, European countries, and other countries are taking steps to ensure the safety of navigation in the Middle East by utilizing ships and aircraft.

To ease tensions and stabilize the situation in the Middle East, the Government of Japan has actively promoted diplomatic initiatives. In addition, following deliberations within the Government, the Cabinet approved the "Government's Efforts to Ensure the Safety of Japan-Related Vessels in the Middle East" in 2019. In this context, as Japan's own initiatives, the following whole-of-government comprehensive measures are being taken: (i) further diplomatic efforts to ease tensions in the Middle East and stabilize the situation; (ii) thorough implementation of navigation safety measures, including close information sharing with relevant industries; and (iii) utilization of the JSDF's vessels and aircraft to strengthen the information-gathering posture necessary to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels.

b. Activities by the MOD/JSDF

The information-gathering activities conducted by the MOD/JSDF are carried out by destroyers and P-3C patrol aircraft from the counter-piracy unit in the high seas of three areas of water: the Gulf of Oman, the northern Arabian Sea, and the Gulf of Aden to the east of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait (including the EEZ of the coastal states).

These information-gathering activities are part of the Government's maritime navigation safety measures and are intended to gather information necessary to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels. They also serve to support decision-making on whether to issue Maritime Security Operations Order in response to unexpected circumstances or other changes in situations, and to facilitate the smooth execution of such orders if issued.[23] Specifically, the activities include confirming the type, nationality, location, course, and speed of vessels navigating the operational maritime areas, and gathering information that directly affects the safety of vessel navigation, such as the presence of suspicious vessels or signs of unexpected circumstances, as well as other necessary information.

Information gathered by the MOD/JSDF is shared with the Cabinet Secretariat, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and other relevant ministries and agencies, as well as with relevant industries through public-private liaison meetings, to be used for the Government's navigation safety measures.

With regard to the posture of the information-gathering activities, since 2020, two P-3C patrol aircraft from the counter-piracy unit and one destroyer from the newly formed Deployment Surface Force for Information Gathering Activities (separate from the counter-piracy unit) have each begun conducting information-gathering activities. From 2022 onward, information-gathering duties have also been assigned to destroyers from the counter-piracy unit. Currently, one destroyer and one P-3C patrol aircraft are concurrently conducting both counter-piracy operations and these information-gathering activities.

As for the achievements of these information gathering activities, the surface force (which has concurrently served the DSPE since February 2022) has been active in the high seas of the Gulf of Oman and the northern Arabian Sea. As of March 31, 2025, the total number of vessels confirmed by the surface unit is 95,444.

DAPE has been active in the high seas of the Gulf of Aden and the western part of the northern Arabian Sea. As of March 31, 2025, the total number of vessels confirmed by the air unit is 88,365.

In the Middle East, high tensions persist and, based on the fact that each country is continuing its own activities, including the "International Maritime Security Construct" by the United States and other countries, since 2020, the Japanese Government has been extending the JSDF's activity period by about one year every year.

In light of the need to ensure the safety of navigation for Japan-related vessels, if it is deemed before the expiration of the period that activities by the JSDF are no longer necessary, then, in addition to concluding these activities at that point, the National Security Council will consider how to respond if there is a significant change in the situation.

See Fig. III-1-1-11 (Units Engaged in Information Gathering Activities in the Middle East), Fig. III-1-1-12 (Information Gathering Activities by the JSDF (image)), Part I, Chapter 4, Section 5-2-1 (Maritime Security in the Middle East), Reference 14 (Government's Efforts to Ensure the Safety of Japan-Related Vessels in the Middle East)

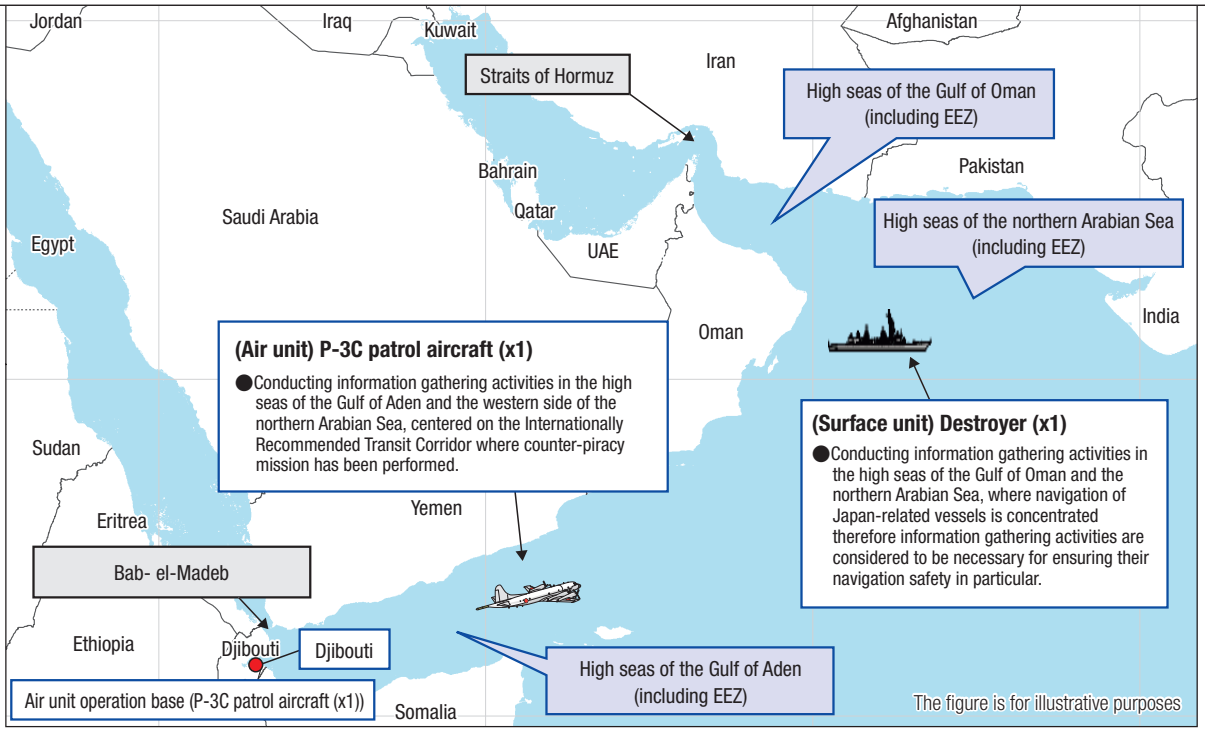
23 These information-gathering activities are conducted based on Article 4(1)18 of the Act for Establishment of the MOD (Investigation and research required for the performance of duties within jurisdiction).

Fig. III-1-1-11 Units Engaged in Information Gathering Activities in the Middle East

(Note) 2 Utilize vessels of Deployment Surface Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DSPE).
3 Including command center officers; The number of personnel may vary depending on ships dispatched.

Fig. III-1-1-12 Information Gathering Activities by the JSDF (image)

- Purpose: Gather information necessary to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels as part of the government's navigation safety measures
  (Note) When further action of the JSDF is found to be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances or other changes in the situation, maritime security actions will be ordered (vessels to be protected are Japan-related ones (Note), and action will be taken depending on the circumstances).
- Assets used: 1 destroyer (equipped with 1 patrol helicopters) and 1 P-3C patrol aircraft (using vessels and aircraft of the Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement)
  ⇒It is possible to continuously gather information on navigation of vessels in the relevant waters, situation of the surrounding waters, and presence of any unusual events.
- Areas for information gathering activities: The three high seas of the Gulf of Oman, the northern Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden on the eastern side of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait (including the exclusive economic zones (EEZ))



(Note) In addition to Japanese vessels and foreign vessels with Japanese nationals onboard, it also refers to vessels that are important to the stable economic activities of Japanese citizens, including foreign vessels operated by a Japanese ship operator, and foreign vessels transporting Japanese cargo.

c. Cooperation with Related Countries

As a result of a comprehensive review of effective responses to ensure the safe navigation of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East, and in light of the need to ensure a stable supply of crude oil, relations with the United States, and relations with Iran, Japan implements its own independent initiatives without participating in the International Maritime Security Construct led by the United States. On the other hand, Japan closely cooperates with its ally, the United States. One MSDF officer has been dispatched as a liaison officer to the U.S. Central Naval Command in Bahrain to facilitate information sharing.

It is important to gain the understanding of the coastal states, including Iran, regarding the information gathering activities that Japan is undertaking as an independent initiative, and Japan has been explaining these activities to them with transparency. In addition, the coastal states play an important role in ensuring safe navigation of vessels in the Middle East. Japan has been reaching out to the coastal states to gain their understanding of Japan's efforts.

Crew member engaged in information gathering activities

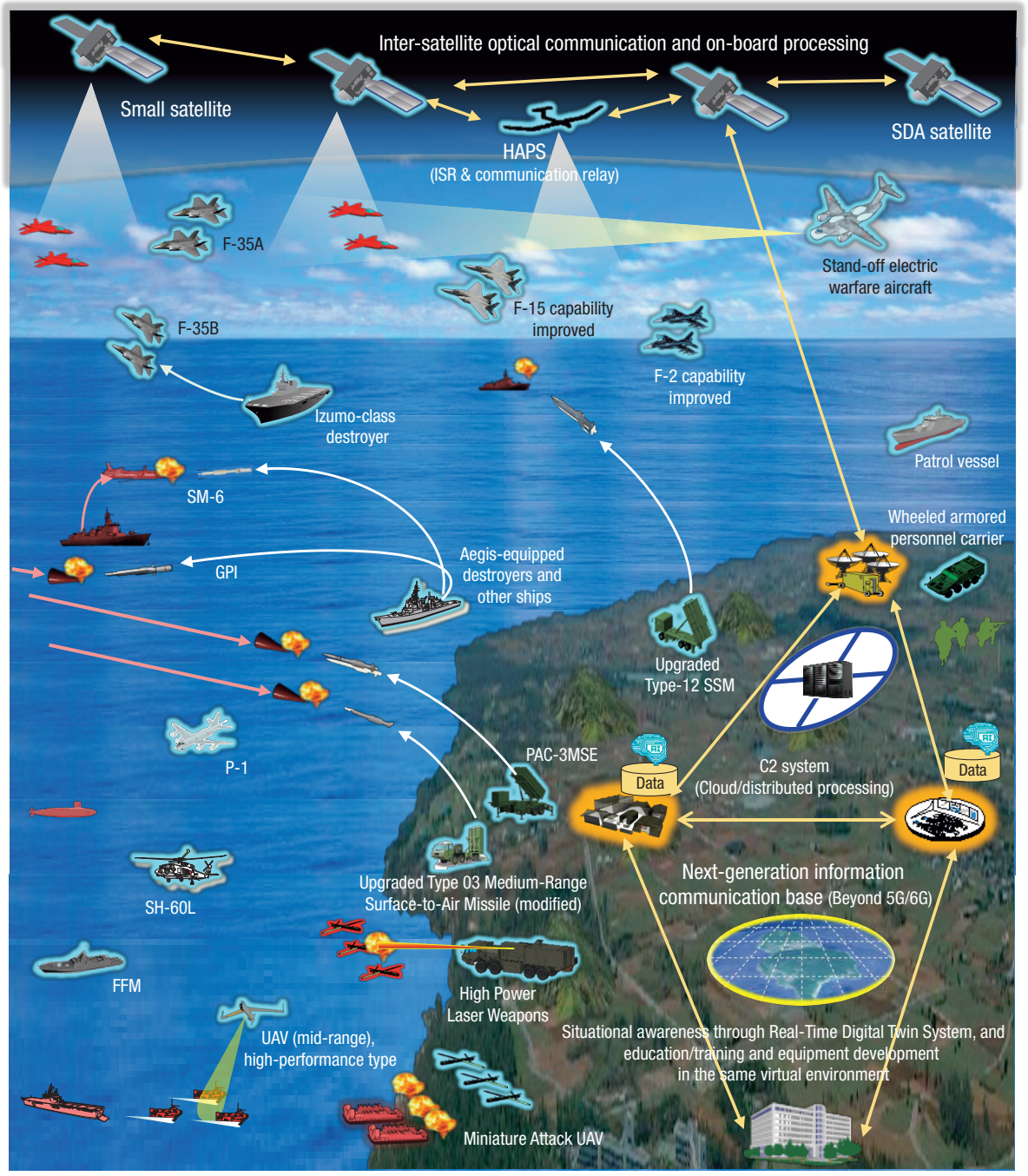
REFERENCE: The Government's efforts to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/m_east/index.html

Section 2 Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities

The characters of combat and modes of attack in modern warfare have changed significantly from those of the traditional ones. In addition to traditional forms of invasion through air, sea and land conducted through now, new ways of warfare combined with large-scale missile attacks using ballistic and cruise missiles with enhanced precision strike capabilities; hybrid warfare including information warfare such as false flag operations;[1] asymmetric attacks through space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum domains with unmanned assets (equipment); and rhetoric that could

Fig. III-1-2-1 Future Cross-Domain Operations (image)



1 An operation to create the appearance of receiving political or military attack for the purpose of denouncing the enemy or enhancing the legitimacy of one's own country

be interpreted as open threats implying the use of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapon states have emerged.

Therefore, Japan requires deterrent making opponents consider unilateral changes to the status quo by force is difficult. For this end, we should enhance our defense capabilities coping with the adversary's ability and new ways of warfare more radically than before; and indicate our intension that we will never tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts in any situation.

The MOD/JSDF will fundamentally reinforce our defense capabilities with an emphasis on seven fields to enhance deterrence and response capabilities, focused on adversaries' capabilities and new ways of warfare. These seven fields are as follows: stand-off defense capabilities, integrated air and missile defense capabilities, unmanned defense capabilities, cross-domain operation capabilities, command and control and intelligence-related functions, mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, and sustainability and resiliency.

In this connection, the Promotion HQ for Realization of Fundamental Reinforcement of Defense Capabilities was established under Defense Minister in 2023 for effective and efficient budget implementation, and the HQ meeting had been held six times by the end of 2024. Under its leadership, the MOD/JSDF will forge ahead with the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities through both thorough progress management of projects and shorter and more streamlined processes for procurement and accounting.

See Fig. III-1-2-1 (Future Cross-Domain Operations (image)), Part II, Chapter 2, Section 2-2 (Outline of the National Defense Strategy (NDS))

1 Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities

1 Basic Concept

Stand-off defense capabilities refer to the ability to engage invading warships and/or landing forces from outside the threat zone. By attacking from outside the threat zone with long range weapons such as stand-off missiles with a longer range and high survivability to evade interception, the JSDF can effectively interdict attacks against Japan while ensuring the safety of its personnel. Furthermore, stand-off defense capabilities also are employed as counterstrike capabilities.

2 Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF will fundamentally strengthen our stand-off defense capabilities. Stand-off missiles can conduct layered attacks using their longer range against invading warships and/or landing forces from various locations across Japan. Furthermore, we can compel the adversary to take more complex and challenging countermeasures by using various stand-off missiles with different characteristics inrange, speed, flying trajectories, etc. To this end, we will promptly procure foreign-made stand-off missiles and, while supporting the expansion of production capacity for domestic stand-off missiles, secure the necessary and sufficient quantities at an early stage. Furthermore, we will promote initiatives to secure a set of functions required for stand-off missiles operations, including the collection of target information and command and control, and we will accelerate research and development as well as mass-production efforts to acquire operation capability for more advanced stand-off missiles.

Specifically, the MOD/JSDF has accelerated the deployment of Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surface-launched variant), which had began the mass production in FY2023, by one year and the deployment begins in FY2025. To ensure diversification, the development of Upgraded Type-12 SSM (ship- and air-launched variants) is continuing.

In addition, we have started mass production of hyper velocity gliding projectile for the defense of remote islands and developed its upgraded type continuously from FY2023. Furthermore, we are pursuing research on hypersonic[2] missiles from same FY2023, and started expansion of manufacturing system in FY2024 to realize early mass production.

Besides, the MOD/JSDF began to develop new surface-to-ship and surface-to-surface precision guided missiles with improved long-range flying performance and precision guidance performance, which utilized the ground equipment of Upgraded Type-12 SSM from FY2024.

As well as acquiring mass-produced domestic stand-off missiles, we will continue acquiring foreign-made stand-off missiles. And that time, we decided to procure U.S. made Tomahawk, which is already in mass production, earlier than foregone plan. Although the acquisition of Block V missiles was initially scheduled in FY2026 and FY2027, in light of the increasingly severe security environment, we decided to acquire Block IVs[3] in FY2025 instead of some Block Vs after negotiations with the U.S. to get the missiles one year earlier than the initial plan. We decided to promptly secure sufficient stand-off missiles operation capabilities before the expanded manufacturing system for domestic stand-off missiles is established, by adding Tomahawk launching capabilities to MSDF vessels as well as educating and training personnel.

In terms of command and control, the MOD/JSDF plans to promote the development of functions, such as those necessary to smoothly implement centralized command activities, with stand-off missile operations as the core. Furthermore, we will

2 Speed range of 5 times faster than the speed of sound.
3 Block IV has the same warhead, guidance system and range as Block V, but Block V uses a newer communication system.

start building satellite constellations at the end of FY2025, by sequentially launching satellites for intelligence gathering, in order to acquire target detection and tracking capabilities which are necessary for the operations of stand-off missiles.

See Fig. III-1-2-2 (Satellite Constellation (image)), Fig. III-1-2-3 (Future Operation of Stand-off Defense Capabilities (image)), Part II, Chapter 3, Section 2-2-2 [KEY WORD] (Satellite Constellation)

Fig. III-1-2-2 Satellite Constellation (image)

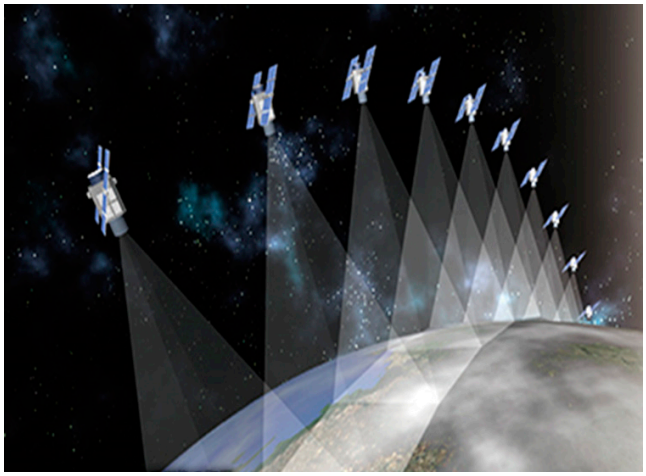
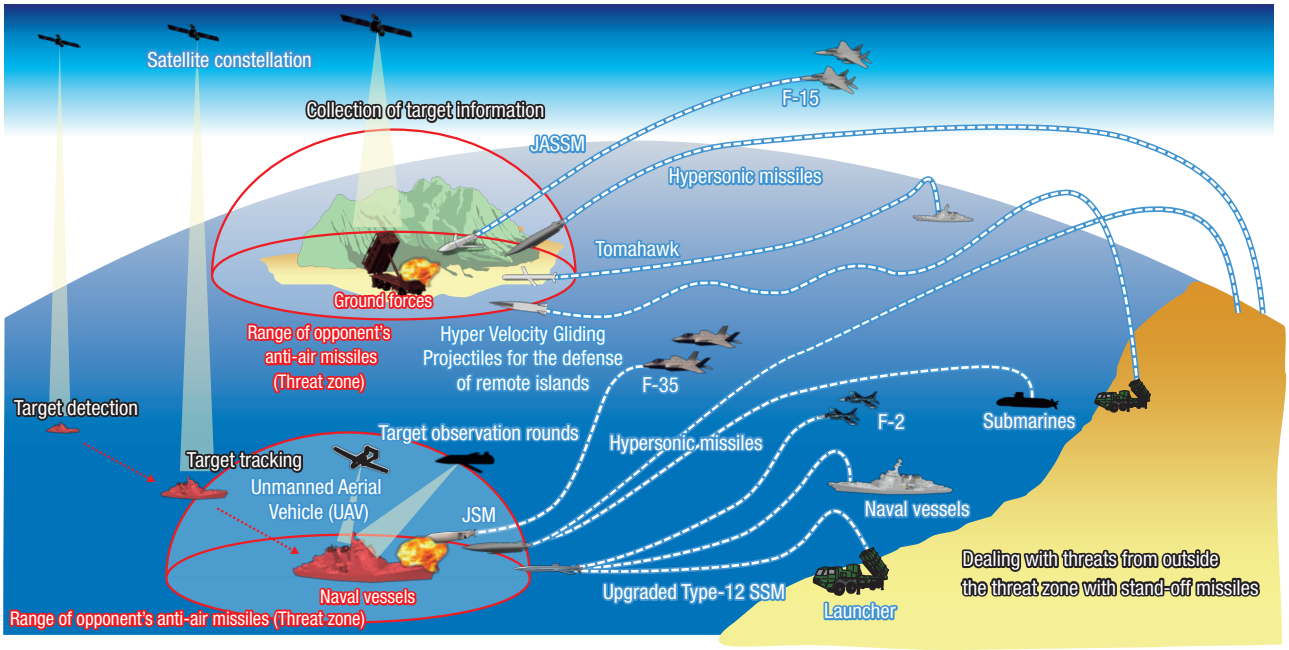


Fig. III-1-2-3 Future Operation of Stand-off Defense Capabilities (image)



(Note) 1 The Joint Strike Missile (JSM) is a stand-off missile capable of being mounted on the F-35A fighter jets, with deliveries scheduled to begin in FY2025.
2 The Joint Air to Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) is a stand-off missile capable of being mounted on the upgraded F-15 fighter jets, with deliveries scheduled to begin in FY2027.

2 Strengthening Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities

1 Basic Concept

As Japan is surrounded by seas, responding to airborne threats - such as invading aircraft and missiles - is extremely important. In recent years, aerial threats to Japan have been becoming increasingly diverse, complex and enhanced, including capability enhancements of ballistic missiles equipped with multiple warheads[4] and/or maneuverable warheads,[5] higher-speed and longer-range cruise missiles, and stealth and multi-role[6] manned and unmanned aircraft, as well as the emergence of anti-ship ballistic missiles and hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs).

4 One ballistic missile with multiple warheads
5 A warhead that can maneuver autonomously via wings, rudder, or rocket propulsion to avoid interception or increase hit probability during reentry into the atmosphere
6 To enable the execution of multiple missions such as air control combat, various attacks, reconnaissance, etc. by changing equipment

Given this factor, Japan will fundamentally enhance our detection, tracking, and interception capabilities against these airborne threats as well as strengthen our integrated air and missile defense capabilities by establishing a networked system that can centrally and optimally operate various sensors and shooters (interceptor missiles and their launching platforms).

The MOD/JSDF, as part of their integrated air and missile defense, will not only intercept missile attacks against Japan with the missile defense network strengthened both in quality and quantity, but also will deter the adversary's missile attacks themselves by containing their launches with our counterstrike capabilities - such as stand-off defense capabilities - in combination with missile defense.

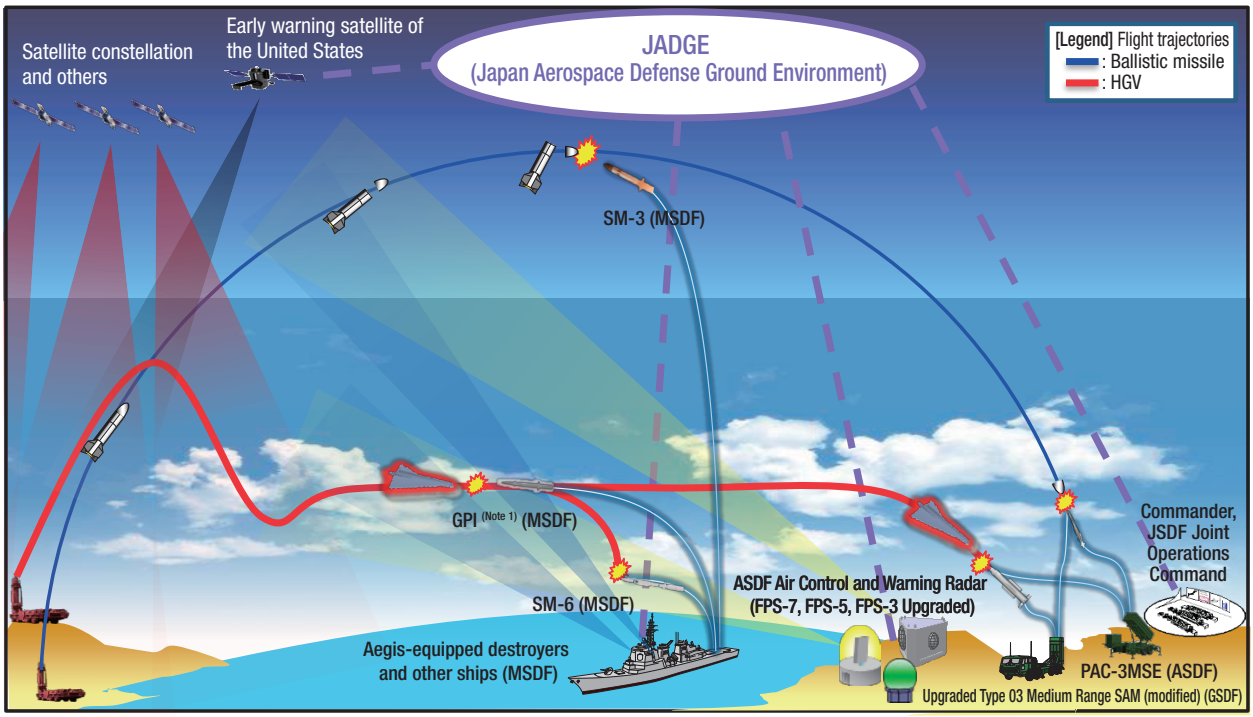
See Fig. III-1-2-4 (Intercepting Part of Future Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) (image))

2 Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

Japan has been advancing the development of its own defense framework against ballistic missile attacks. Our Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system was initiated in 2004, including equipping MSDF Aegis destroyers with ballistic missile intercept capabilities and deploying ASDF Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC)-3 units.

Furthermore, from FY2017, we have been acquiring the

Fig. III-1-2-4 Intercepting Part of Future Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) (image)



(Note) 1 GPI: Glide Phase Interceptor
2 HGV: Hypersonic Glide Vehicle

REFERENCE: Integrated Air and Missile Defense
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/defense/bmd/index.html

MOVIE: UNIT-4 (Air Defense Artillery)
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=coZf5SbfC-M

Standard Missile (SM)-3 Block IIA[7] to be equipped on the Aegis destroyers, which was developed jointly by Japan and the United States. The interception capabilities of SM-3 Block IIA have been enhanced against ballistic missiles equipped with interception avoidance measures such as a decoy and ballistic missiles launched with an intention to avoid being intercepted by taking a higher than normal trajectory (lofted trajectory)[8].

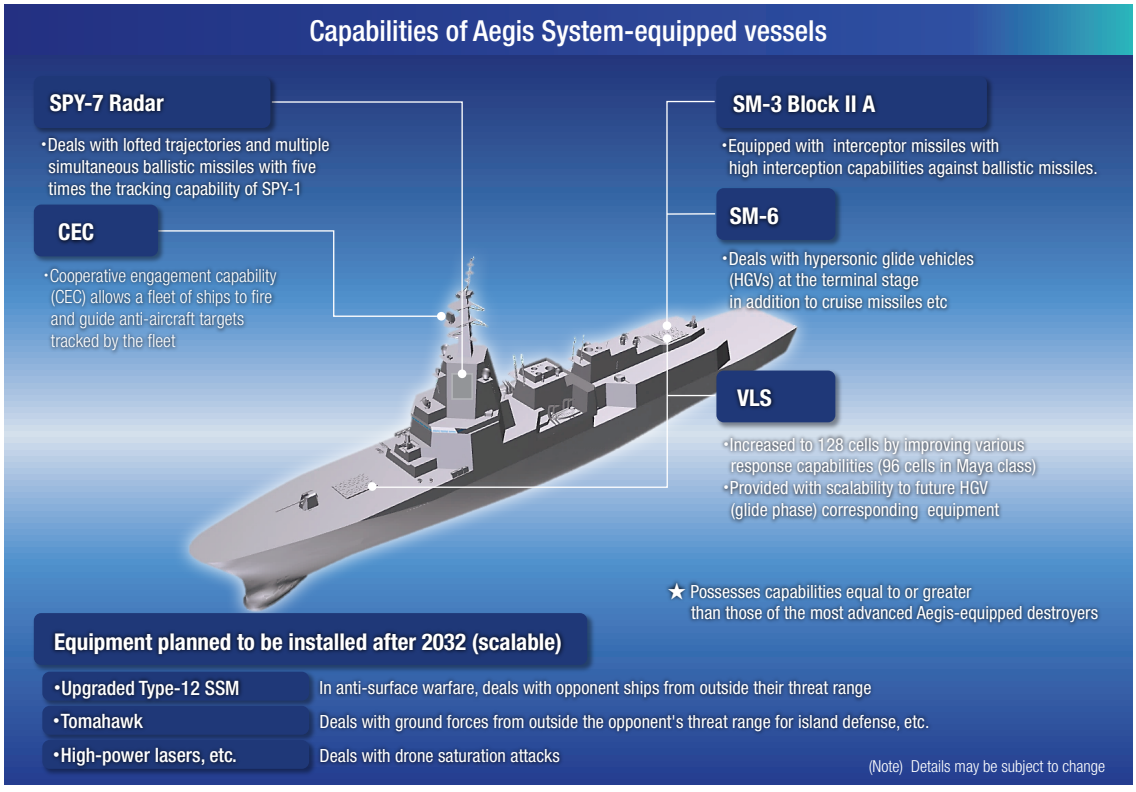
In addition, we started the construction of the two Aegis system-equipped ships instead of the land-based Aegis system (Aegis Ashore) in FY2024. These vessels are armed not only with the SM-3 Block IIA missiles but also with SM-6 missiles for countering HGVs and other threats and have capabilities equaling or exceeding those of even the most advanced Aegis destroyers; seaworthiness in rough weather; and improved habitability for extended missions by reduced crewing requirements.

The MOD/JSDF has been working for procurement of PAC-3 Missile Segment Enhancement (MSE), an enhanced capability variant of PAC-3, and started its deployment in FY2019. This interceptor missile that, compared to the conventional PAC-3, extends its interception altitude against ballistic missiles from around a dozen kilometers to several tens of kilometers, meaning that the coverage of protection (area) will expand more than twice.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to strengthen our integrated air and missile defense capabilities by establishing a framework that operates air-defense systems, which have traditionally been employed separately by the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, together with ballistic missile defense equipment in order to effectively and efficiently counter the increasingly diverse, complex, and advanced aerial threats—such as HGVs— via optimal means and limit our damage.

In this regard, we will standardize and streamline the interceptor systems of each service of the JSDF, including their maintenance and supply chains, and we will enhance the performance of the ASDF's fixed warning and control radars and proceed with their replacement by next-generation warning and control radars in order to strengthen target detection and tracking capabilities against threats such as hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs). In addition, we will improve the PAC-3MSE's capability to counter HGVs and the like by upgrading Patriot with a new radar, Lower Tier Air Missile Defense Sensor (LTAMDS).[9] Moreover, we will enhance our capability to counter HGVs and ballistic missiles

Fig. III-1-2-5 Aegis System-Equipped Vessels (image)



7 In comparison with former SM-3 Block IA, SM-3 Block IIA have not only extended intercept altitude and coverage of protection, but also enhanced defeating capability and simultaneous engagement capability. In 2022, the Aegis destroyer JS "Maya" became the first MSDF vessel to conduct a test launch of the SM-3 Block IIA, successfully intercepting the target.

8 In a lofted trajectory, a ballistic missile is launched at a higher angle than normal. This results in a higher-than-normal flight path, which increases the reentry speed and makes interception more difficult. Other types include the minimum energy trajectory, which maximizes range, and the depressed trajectory, which maintains a low altitude and enables high-speed travel.

9 A launch control radar for low-altitude air defense developed in the U.S. to deal with threats such as HGVs.

by developing Upgraded Type-03 Medium Range Surface-to-air missile (modified).

See Fig. III-1-2-5 (Aegis System-Equipped Vessels (image)), Reference 15 (History of Efforts for BMD Development in Japan)

LTAMDS, the new radar for Patriot system (image)

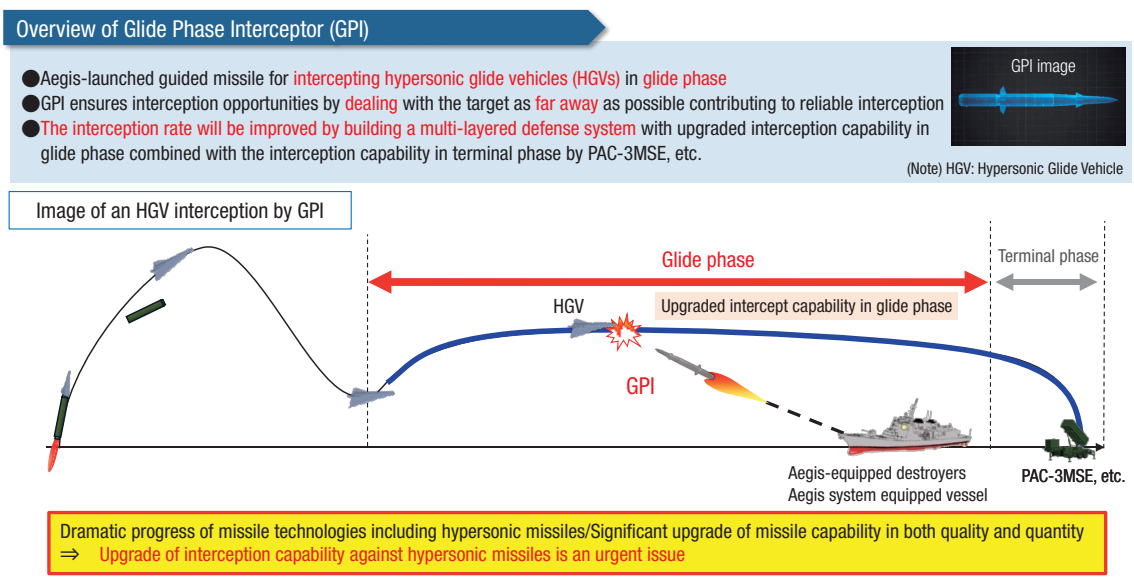
3 Japan-U.S. BMD Technical Cooperation, etc.

The SM-3 Block IIA missile was jointly developed[10] through Japan-U.S. technical cooperation on Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) and has now been deployed. In addition, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting in 2023, the two countries reached agreement on several issues, including the initiation of discussions on the potential joint development of future interceptor missiles. Based on this, in May 2024, we began co-developing the Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) — an interceptor capable of engaging HGVs at the farthest possible range —finalizing its development concept in September of the same year.

See Fig. III-1-2-6 (Overview of GPI), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-3-1 (Joint Research and Development, etc.)

Signing of the Project Arrangement concerning Japan-U.S. cooperative development of GPI (May 2024)

Fig. III-1-2-6 Overview of GPI



10 For the Japan-U.S. cooperative development, it is necessary to export weapons from Japan to the United States. In accordance with the Chief Cabinet Secretary's statement issued in 2004, it was determined that the Three Principles on Arms Exports would not apply to the Ballistic Missile Defense system and related matters under the condition that strict controls are maintained. Based on these circumstances, it was decided that the prior consent of Japan could be given to the third party transfer of the SM-3 Block IIA under certain conditions. This decision was formally announced in the Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. "2+2" in 2011. The Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology (Three Principles) received Cabinet approval in 2014. However, with regard to exceptional measures instigated before this decision, overseas transfers will continue to be organized in the guidelines for the principles as allowable under the Three Principles.

3 Strengthening of Unmanned Defense Capabilities

1 Basic Concept

Unmanned assets (equipment) are often more affordable than manned equipment and can be used continuously for extended periods in hazardous environments. Furthermore, operating them in conjunction with AI enables the simultaneous and large-scale deployment of unmanned assets, while also simplifying the training of operating personnel.

Given these characteristics, the MOD/JSDF will effectively employ unmanned assets across a wide range of missions—on land, at sea, underwater, and in the air—to secure an asymmetric advantage while minimizing the risk and burden on personnel engaged in missions. This will be achieved by using unmanned assets to streamline tasks that have traditionally been handled by manned equipment and to enable new operations by unmanned systems.

2 Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

With regard to unmanned assets of the JSDF, the ASDF operates the RQ-4B Global Hawk to enhance its persistent surveillance capabilities. In November 2024, the MSDF decided to introduce the MQ-9B (Sea Guardian), a long-endurance unmanned aircraft, to strengthen its maritime surveillance capabilities.

See Section 1-2-1 (Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance Surrounding Japan)

Additionally, the MOD/JSDF is conducting demonstration tests of transport and reconnaissance unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

In FY2024, the MOD/JSDF acquired upgraded medium-range unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)[11] to strengthen intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting (ISR&T) functions, and also obtained unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) with proven operational records in other countries as test equipment to acquire knowledge and information on USV operations and promote the development of domestically produced USVs.

UAV (mid-range), high-performance type (image)

Additionally, the MOD/JSDF is researching a combat support, multipurpose USV with stealth characteristics. This vehicle can be equipped with surveillance capabilities and anti-ship missile launchers to support manned warships. The MOD/JSDF is also developing unmanned amphibious vehicles that can traverse over reefs and other obstacles when landing on islands in various missions including transportation of supplies.

In addition, we plan to develop an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that will fly in formation with the next-generation fighter aircraft which is currently jointly developed with the United Kingdom and Italy. The UAV will be capable of making autonomous decisions and supporting the operations of the fighter aircraft. Development of the fighter jet is aimed to be completed by FY2035. In 2023, the governments of Japan and the United States agreed to conduct joint research on AI technology expected to be applied to this UAV.

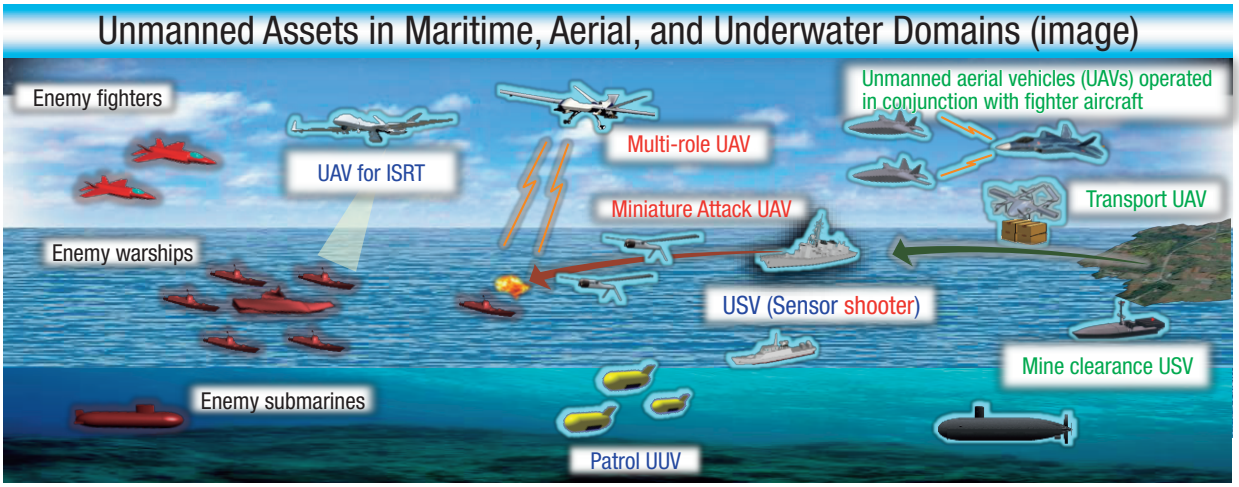
For the FY2025 budget, the MOD/JSDF plan to procure small, ship-borne UAVs to improve the surveillance and intelligence-gathering capabilities of surface vessels. The MOD/JSDF also intends to purchase Small Attack UAVs that can linger overhead and destroy enemy vehicles.

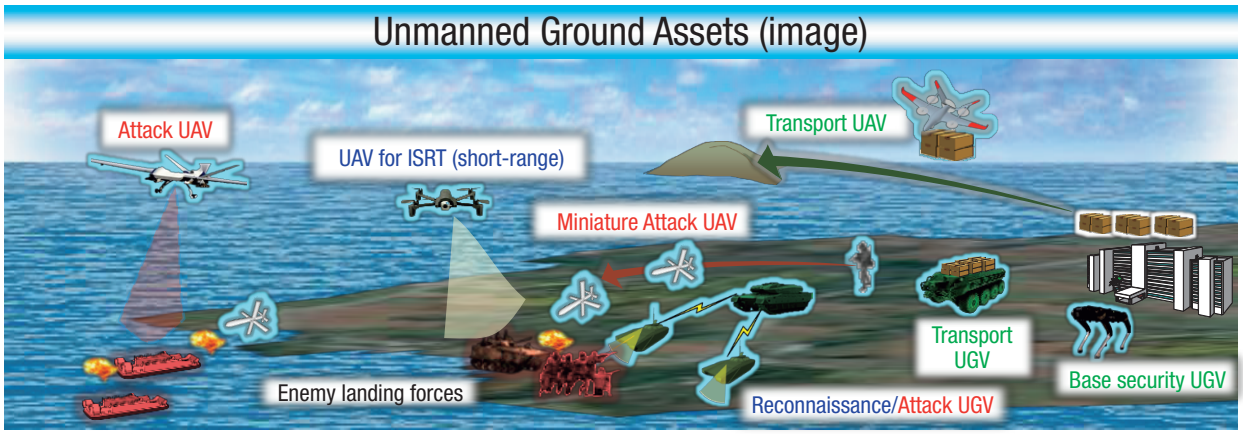
In cooperation with the United States and other partner nations, the MOD/JSDF will promote the acquisition and development of unmanned assets and strengthen the unmanned defense capabilities.

See Fig. III-1-2-7 (Unmanned Assets (Land, Maritime, Aerial, and Underwater) (image))

11 It is possible to capture clear images of targets even at night or in poor visibility due to bad weather conditions.

Fig. III-1-2-7 Unmanned Assets (Land, Maritime, Aerial, and Underwater) (image)





4 Strengthening Cross-domain Operation Capabilities

Cross-domain operations are those that organically integrate operational capabilities from the space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum domains with those from the traditional land, sea, and air domains, amplifying overall effectiveness through synergistic effects. Recognizing the importance of offsetting disadvantages in one domain with strengths in others, the MOD/JSDF will enhance their necessary capabilities in the space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum domains to defend Japan.

1 Space Domain

(1) Basic Concept

Space utilization for communications, positioning and other purposes has become an indispensable part of people's lives. At the same time, it is essential militarily for command and control and information gathering. For this reason, major countries are focusing on strengthening the capabilities and increasing the number of various satellites with early warning of missile launches, communication, positioning, and reconnaissance. The recent increase in Chinese military satellites has been remarkable, with the number of such satellites surging approximately 5.9 times in the 12 years since 2012.

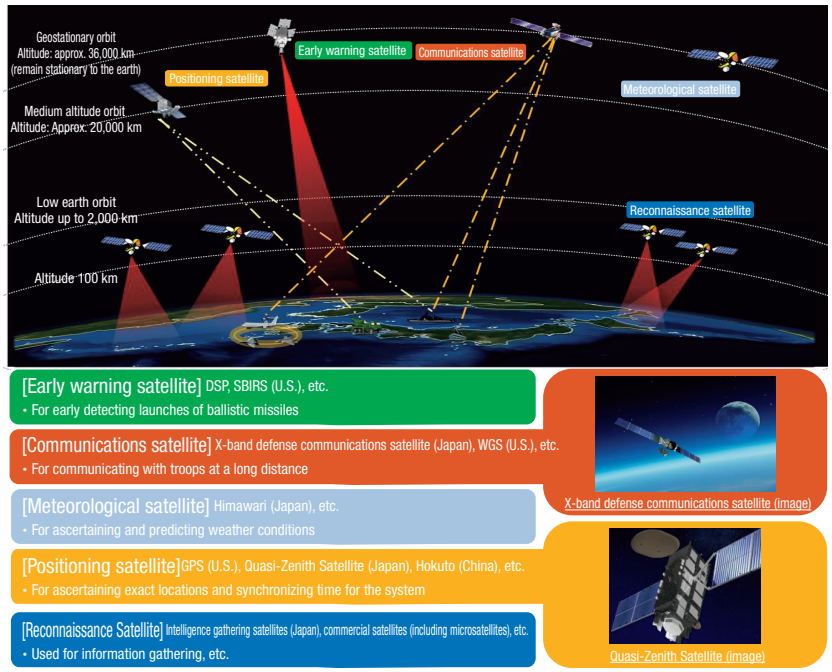
MOVIE: ASDF begins Space Domain Awareness
URL: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=qoBwBWBR0-8

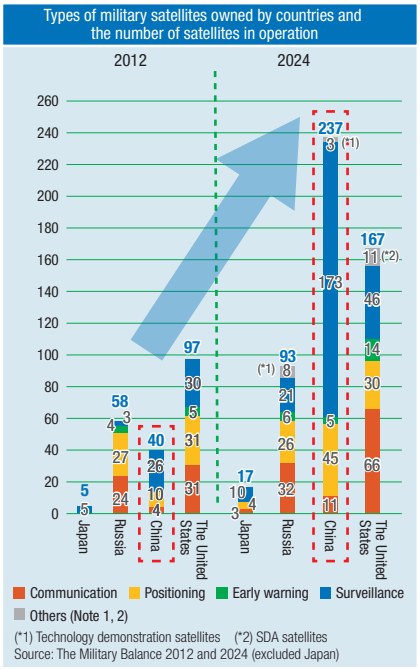
Meanwhile, some states have increased their interference activities against the satellites and similar assets of other countries,[12] turning outer space into a contested warfighting domain. Ensuring the stable use of outer space has now become a matter of vital importance for nations.

In 2023, Japan's Strategic Headquarters for National Space Policy formulated the Space Security Initiative based on the National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) to concretize the challenges and policies related to space security, including the use of civilian technologies for defense purposes, and adopted the Basic Plan on Space Policy reflecting this initiative. According to the Space Security Initiative, the MOD/JSDF will leverage advanced technology research and development (R&D) conducted by other government agencies for defense purposes to realize fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities. The Basic Plan on Space Policy states that the government aims to expand the use of space systems for security purposes, ensure the safe and stable use of outer space, and establish a positive feedback loop between security and the development of the space industry. This will be accomplished through measures such as building satellite constellations for intelligence gathering and establishing a Space Domain Awareness (SDA) framework.

See Fig. III-1-2-8 (Utilization of Space in the Security Field (conceptual image)), Part I, Chapter 4, Section 2 (Trends in Space Domain), Section 3-6 (Efforts Related to the Space Domain)

Fig. III-1-2-8 Utilization of Space in the Security Field (conceptual image)





(2) Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

In the space domain, the MOD/JSDF will further reinforce Japan's operational capabilities in the ground, maritime and air domains by actively incorporating novel forms of space utilization, including satellite constellations and providing functions such as information gathering, communications and positioning from space. At the same time, we will enhance our space surveillance capabilities and establish a SDA framework to counter threats to the stable use of outer space. Additionally, we will strengthen the resiliency of space assets, such as satellites, to ensure that missions can continue under all conditions. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will further reinforce capabilities to disrupt opponents' command and control, and telecommunication, etc.

Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF will strengthen cooperation and collaboration, including research and development, with related organizations and private businesses, including the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

See Chapter 1, Section 1 [KEY WORD] (Space Domain Awareness)

(3) Concrete Initiatives Such as Capability Enhancements

The MOD/JSDF will enhance its space operations capabilities by improving various functions utilizing the space domain, such as information gathering, communications, and positioning.

In terms of intelligence gathering, the MOD/JSDF will build a seamless information gathering system by acquiring substantial satellite imagery through Information

12 Examples include interference by killer satellites that attack other countries' satellites and jamming using electromagnetic waves from the ground.

Gathering Satellites[13] and civilian satellites including satellite constellations. In particular, to ensure the effectiveness of our stand-off defense capabilities, Japan will build satellite constellations aimed at acquiring target detection and tracking capabilities by FY2027.

Regarding communications, in November 2024, Japan successfully launched the Kirameki-3, its third X-band defense communications satellite owned and operated by the MOD for the use of information transmissions and communications in command and control. Kirameki-3 was added to the existing Kirameki-1 and Kirameki-2 satellites in order to accommodate increased communication needs and enhance resiliency. Furthermore, the MOD will procure receiving equipment and upgrade the ground station communications to broadband in order to expand the equipment and related facilities capable of communicating with Kirameki satellites. Additionally, we plan to carry out demonstration tests of jamming-resistant technologies with the next-generation defense communication satellites, the successors to the Satellites 1 and 2, whose development is scheduled to begin in FY2025. The MOD intends to include these technologies aboard the new satellites.

Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF is conducting trial operations using the U.S. satellite constellation Starlink on vessels and other platforms to improve communication environments. Additionally, the MOD/JSDF is preparing communications equipment and conducting demonstration tests to participate in PATS (Protected Anti-jam Tactical SATCOM), a U.S.-led framework for sharing satellite communication bandwidth and enabling high-resiliency communications.

In terms of positioning, many systems are equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, which are essential for accurately determining one's position and improving missile guidance precision. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will utilize the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System of the Cabinet Office,[14] whose service began in 2018, to ensure redundancy[15] as well.

Furthermore, the MOD will conduct demonstration tests of infrared sensors and related technologies using the space demonstration platform planned for JAXA's new HTV-X (H-II Transfer Vehicle), given that infrared observation from space via satellite constellations can swiftly detect and track HGVs that are increasingly being deployed by neighboring countries. In parallel, the ministry will promote research on future sensors, such as highly sensitive, wide-band infrared detection elements, while considering the potential collaborations with the United States.

See 1 (Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities)

(4) Initiatives to Ensure the Stable Use of Outer Space

Moreover, the SDA framework must be established by launching SDA satellites and strengthening the resiliency of satellites and other space assets. This is crucial for two reasons. First, some countries are believed to be developing anti-satellite weapons, which attack artificial satellites, including "killer satellites," anti-satellite missiles, and jamming weapons that interfere with electromagnetic spectrum. Second, the rapid increase in space debris from antisatellite destruction experiments made by China and Russia and the deployment of satellite constellations by each country are causing space congestion.[16]

Thus far, the MOD/JSDF have worked to ensure the stable use of outer space. As part of these efforts, they have been developing a SDA framework to monitor the operational status of satellites from other countries, as well as to assess the intentions and capabilities of suspicious satellites. Moving forward, we will continue to promote various initiatives, including the planned launch of an SDA satellite in FY2026, as well as the consideration of operating multiple SDA satellites. In addition, we will continue developing the operational foundation for space operations by building a space operations command and control system and related infrastructure.

The MOD will ensure resiliency against jamming and other interference through the demonstration tests of technology with enhanced resiliency for satellite communications and will also ensure cybersecurity towards future Japan-U.S. space-related system cooperation. In addition, the MOD/JSDF will build capabilities to disrupt C4I of opponents.

See Fig. III-1-2-9 (Initiatives for Developing the Space Domain Awareness (SDA) System (image))

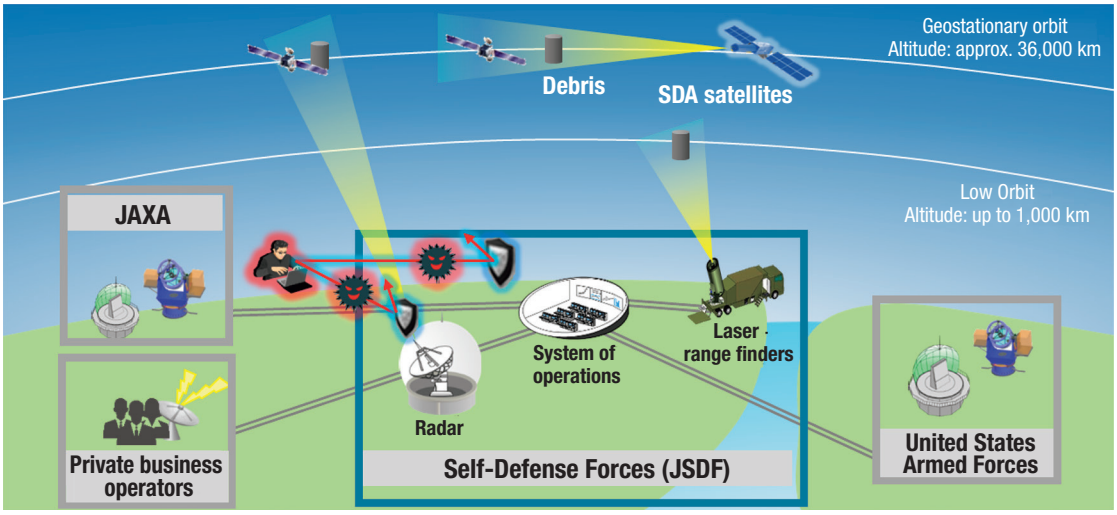
13 Information Gathering Satellites (IGS) of the Japanese Government are operated by the Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center. The MOD, along with other ministries and agencies, utilizes the imagery intelligence provided by the IGS.

14 This refers to satellites set into orbit so that the satellites are capable of staying nearly right above one specific area for a long time by tilting the orbit and adopting an elliptical orbit, while ordinary stationary satellites stay in circular orbit on the equator. Multiple satellites are usually launched since a single satellite cannot stay online for 24 hours by itself. Users are able to receive signals from such satellites without being affected by obstacles, such as mountains and buildings, since the satellites pass nearly right above the users.

15 Having a backup means to cover it and maintain its original function even if something goes wrong with a particular means.

16 China conducted an anti-satellite missile test in 2007, and Russia followed with a similar test in 2021, launching missiles from the ground to destroy satellites. These tests generated a vast amount of debris, making collision prevention and satellite protection major challenges for countries around the world.

Fig. III-1-2-9 Initiatives for Developing the Space Domain Awareness (SDA) System (image)



(5) Strengthening of Organizational Systems

In FY2024, we increased the number of ASDF Space Operations Group personnel and reinforced the system to reliably operate SDA mission equipment, strengthening the operational foundation of Space Domain Mission Units. The Space Operations Wing (provisional name) will be established in FY2025 to build a robust operational structure for SDA satellites and enhance SDA capabilities. These efforts will further strengthen our space operations capabilities.

Furthermore, the Air Self-Defense Force will be redesignated as the Air and Space Self-Defense Force (tentative name) in recognition of the growing importance of the space domain, the need to qualitatively and quantitatively enhance space operational capabilities, and the understanding that space activities are distinct from air activities and should be treated as a separate domain in the ASDF.

Furthermore, we will enhance collaboration, beginning with personnel development, through exchanges with relevant agencies, such as JAXA, as well as with the ally and like-minded countries, including the United States. This will strengthen organizational structures and the human resource base in the space domain. Additionally, we will work to secure talent by establishing a framework to effectively utilize space-related expertise accumulated across relevant ministries and agencies.

(6) Strengthening Cooperation with Our Ally, Like-Minded Countries, and Others

a. Initiatives to Enhance Cooperation with Other Countries

Strengthening cooperation with the ally and like-minded nations is essential to ensure the stable use of outer space. Promoting collaboration to reduce threats in the space domain is needed as well. In 2022, the United States led a joint proposal at the United Nations General Assembly plenary session and eleven countries, including Japan, introduced the resolution, which called for an end to destructive Direct-Ascent Anti-SATellite (DA-ASAT) missile tests. The resolution was adopted with the support of 155 countries. To avoid risks stemming from misperception or miscalculation going forward, it is necessary to strengthen communication among relevant countries and emphasize the importance of Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBM) in outer space.

b. Cooperation with the United States

To promote further cooperation between Japanese and U.S. defense authorities in space, the two countries established the Japan-U.S. Space Cooperation Working Group (SCWG) at the deputy director general level in 2015. The SCWG has engaged in extensive discussions on space cooperation, including collaboration on space policy and strategy, cooperation between Japanese and U.S. space operations units (including the sharing of SDA information and training), and discussions on satellite constellations.

Meetings of the SCWG have been held ten times through now, most recently in June 2024.

Furthermore, the governments of Japan and the United States hold the Japan–U.S. Comprehensive Space Dialogue (CSD), during which they exchange information on space policies, including security-related policies, and discuss future cooperation.

With regard to recent high-level exchanges, Japan and the United States welcomed bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including the satellite constellation to detect and track HGV threats, and the actions taken under the Combined Space Operations (CSpO) initiative,[17] at the Japan-U.S. 2+2 meeting in July 2024.[18]

17 This is a multilateral framework including the United States and other like-minded countries and intended to discuss space security. Since 2023, the MOD/JSDF has been participating as Japan's representatives.

18 Furthermore, during the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting in January 2023, both sides confirmed that they consider attacks to, from, or within space to present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance, and that such attacks, in certain circumstances, could lead to the invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

Since cooperation with the United States is essential for the ASDF to carry out its SDA missions, steps are being taken to concretize operational information sharing with the U.S. Additionally, we continue to participate in exercises, such as the Schriever Wargame, a U.S.-hosted multilateral space security tabletop exercise, and the Global Sentinel multinational exercise on SDA. Through our participation, we aim to share threat perceptions in the space domain and strengthen multilateral cooperation and expertise in SDA. Furthermore, Japan has dispatched JSDF personnel to the U.S. Space Command's Multinational Space Collaboration Office (MSC) and the like.

c. Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries, Etc.

Because space has no concept of national borders, Japan must collaborate with other countries to monitor and understand the vast space domain. Japan has been cooperating and collaborating with like-minded countries in various fields through consultations, information sharing, and participation in multilateral exercises. These efforts include strengthening relations among defense authorities, working together on SDA information, and fostering collaboration among units. Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF joined the CSpO Initiative in 2023, and, in December 2024, Japanese officials participated in the CSpO Initiative Principals' Board held in Italy. The ten participating countries confirmed opportunities for further collaboration going forward through discussions at the conference. By joining the CSpO initiative, Japan will further strengthen its relationships with the ally and like-minded countries in the space domain while actively engaging in international efforts to ensure the stable use of outer space.

Japan is strengthening its collaboration and cooperation with several countries. For example, Japan and Australia have held consultations between their defense authorities, signed the Letter of Intent concerning a Defence Space Partnership, and formed a Space Working Group (SWG) to solidify their partnership in space. Moreover, Japan is deepening space cooperation with France, such as through intergovernmental space dialogues, consultations between defense authorities, and participation in AsterX, a multilateral space exercise hosted by the French Air and Space Force. Japan is also progressing its collaboration and cooperation with the United Kingdom through consultations between their defense authorities; with Germany, via expert-level meetings and SWG meetings regarding space cooperation; with Canada, through tabletop exercises; and with India and the European Union, via dialogues on space policy.

General Ogasawara, ASDF Vice Chief of Staff, in CSpO Initiative Principals' Board (Left front) (December 2024)

Participation in the multilateral space exercise "AsterX" (March 2025) [Courtesy of the French Air and Space Force]

2 Cyber Domain

(1) Basic Concept

Cyberspace, as used on the Internet and other platforms, encompasses a variety of services and communities, which has become an indispensable part of citizen's daily lives. Furthermore, it is a critical infrastructure even for military purposes including command and control and organization's network. It is also a vital domain for the national defense to execute cross-domain operations. Therefore, cyberattacks that compromise information assets and networks in cyberspace can have a significant impact on society and pose serious threats to national security.

In the cyber domain, it is important to gather and share information from peacetime to contingencies through cooperation with other countries, relevant ministries and agencies and the private-sectors, as well as to strengthen Japan's overall response capabilities in the field of cybersecurity. In coordination with the whole-of-government efforts in the field of cybersecurity, the MOD/JSDF will promote initiatives that strengthen cooperation with related ministries and agencies, critical infrastructure operators and the defense industry, while enhancing the level of its cybersecurity.

See Part I, Chapter 4, Section 3 (Trends in Cyber Domain), Section 3-3 (Cybersecurity)

(2) Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF will coordinate with whole-of-government initiatives in the field of cybersecurity, including active

cyber defense. In doing so, the MOD/JSDF will achieve a high level of cybersecurity by establishing a posture where persistent risk management is implemented, primarily on critical information systems, etc. and significantly increasing the number of cyber workforce capable of performing such tasks as well as utilizing highly-skilled human resources from the private sector. The MOD/JSDF will protect its information systems and the like from all cyber threats with its high level of cybersecurity capabilities and also will use these capabilities to strengthen the national cybersecurity as a whole.

To this end, the MOD/JSDF will establish a posture that can protect its command and control capabilities as well as its high-priority equipment systems even under cyberattacks[19] along with a posture for supporting cyber defense for the defense industry by FY2027. Looking ahead, the MOD/JSDF will also establish a posture to support cybersecurity efforts undertaken by relevant ministries and agencies other than the JSDF and private companies.

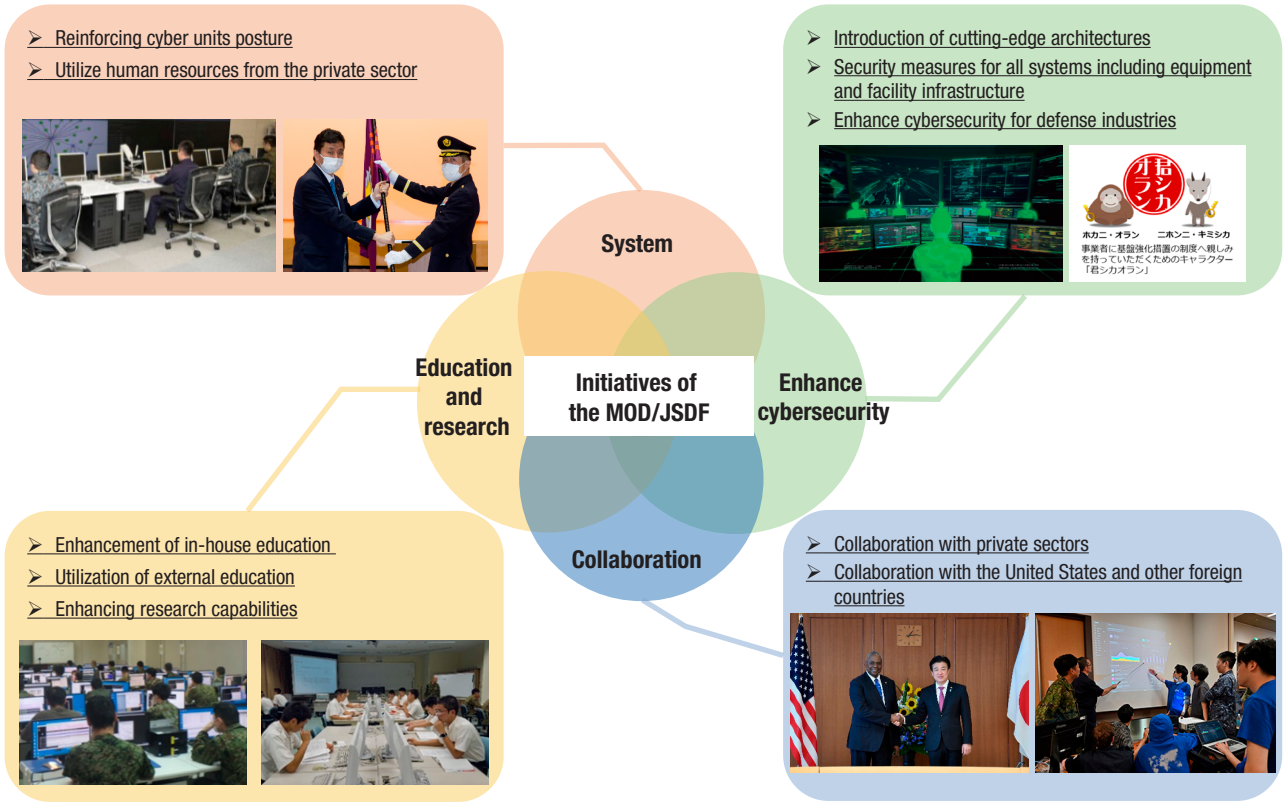
See Fig. III-1-2-10 (Comprehensive Measures to Ensure Cyber Security within the MOD/JSDF), Reference 16 (Efforts in Recent Years by the MOD on Cybersecurity)

REFERENCE: The MOD/JSDF's "I Want to Know About This!": JSDF Measures against Cyber Attacks
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/shiritai/cyber/index.html

REFERENCE: Important information about cyber security
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/cyber/index.html

19 Illegal intrusion, information theft, alteration or destruction, operation stop/malfunction of information systems, execution of unauthorized program, distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks, etc., which are made through cyberspace by abusing information communication networks, information systems, etc.

Fig. III-1-2-10 Comprehensive Measures to Ensure Cyber Security within the MOD/JSDF



a. Establishing a System for Ensuring Cybersecurity

The JSDF Cyber Defense Command was newly formed in 2022 as a joint unit of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF to respond to cyberattacks. It also provides support for training of cyber units of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, and maintains and operates the Defense Information Infrastructure (DII),[20] a common network for the MOD/JSDF. The MOD/JSDF has continued to expand the capacity of the JSDF Cyber Defense Command and other cyber units of the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF and promote the development of cyber workforce. In 2023, the MOD/JSDF strengthened its planning and drafting function for developing cyber policies by reorganizing the Information and Communications Division of the Bureau of Defense Buildup Planning to establish the Cyber Buildup and Planning Division and Councilor (Director) to the Minister's Secretariat.

In addition, since 2021, the MOD has been hiring personnel with advanced knowledge and skills as well as abundant experience and achievements in the field of cyber security as "Cybersecurity Advisor." Furthermore, The MOD/JSDF has been promoting a public-private personnel exchange system to employ people with practical experience in the private

Advertisement for Cyber Contest 2025

20 Common network for the entire JSDF, as the information and communications infrastructure necessary to perform the JSDF's duties, which is composed of data communications networks and voice communications networks and uses various lines such as micro lines owned and operated by the MOD, lines rented from telecommunications carriers, and satellite communications lines.

sector, as well as utilizing personnel from the private sector through service contracts and other means. The Ministry of Defense Cyber Contest has been held with the aim for uncovering talented individuals with cybersecurity expertise. Additionally, the MOD/JSDF has been hiring the candidates for JSDF reserve personnel equipped with cybersecurity skills.

b. Security Enhancement

As cyberattacks and other threats are becoming more advanced and sophisticated every day, MOD/JSDF has shifted its approach to information system security measures from temporary "risk elimination" to continuous "risk management," and has introduced the Risk Management Framework (RMF),which continuously analyzes and evaluates risks and implements necessary security measures even after the start of the information system operation.

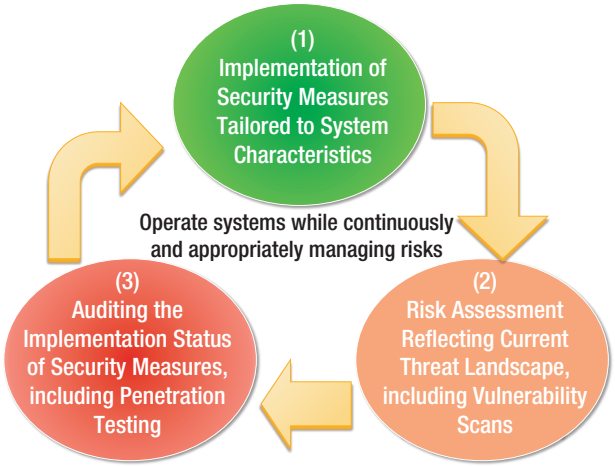
Additionally, the MOD/JSDF will shift away from the traditional mindset that perimeter security is sufficient to maintain the safety of the organization's network, and will promote the introduction of the new security controls based on the "Zero Trust" concept.[21] These will improve the cybersecurity level of the MOD/JSDF and establish a posture that can safeguard information assets against any intrusion into the organization's network.

In order to strengthen the protection posture of information systems, the MOD/JSDF will develop a cloud system that integrates and standardizes the JSDF systems, implement centralized cybersecurity measures, improve defense posture of equipment and facility infrastructure systems, enhance the threat hunting function that continuously hunts for and detects potential internal threats based on the assumption that threats have already penetrated inside the network, and develop the support system by making use of AI to enable rapid situational awareness and response to cyberattacks.

The MOD/JSDF established new information security standards—the Standards on Cybersecurity Measures for Defense Industry—in 2022. These new standards enhance cybersecurity of the defense industry by incorporating management controls set at the same level as those in the U.S. standard NIST SP 800-171.[22] In response to this, defense-related companies are upgrading their information systems and implementing other security control measures to strengthen their cybersecurity.

See Fig. III-1-2-11 (Risk Management Framework (image)), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-4 (Strengthening Defense Industrial Security)

Fig. III-1-2-11 Risk Management Framework (image)



c. Education and Research

To fundamentally strengthen the JSDF's cyber defense capabilities, it is important to develop workforce that possess sophisticated knowledge and skills about cybersecurity. Proactive development of workforce, including the expansion of education and the utilization of knowledge from private sectors, are necessary. In this context, the MOD/JSDF has developed cyber workforce through continuous and by stages assignment to the cyber units that are in charge of responding to cyberattacks, and by providing them with both in-house and external education to acquire advanced knowledge and skills.

Regarding education, the GSDF Signal School has provided cybersecurity education as a common program across all JSDF services since FY2019. Personnel have been dispatched to the U.S. National Defense University's College of Information and Cyberspace International Fellows and the U.S. Army's Coalition Cyber Operations Planner course, and the specialized course in system and cyber engineering has been established at the GSDF High Technical School. Furthermore, in March 2024, the GSDF Signal School was reorganized into the GSDF System and Signal/Cyber School, enhancing the educational infrastructure for training cyber workforce. At the National Defense Academy, cybersecurity literacy education has been enhanced, and in FY2024, the Department of Information Engineering was reorganized into the Faculty of Cyber and Information Engineering. Moreover, the cyber literacy education is promoted for non-specialist personnel in the units of each JSDF service.

In terms of research, the MOD/JSDF is strengthening the research organization of the Cyber Security Division newly established in the National Institute for Defense Studies in FY2023 and Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency's

21 The concept of maintaining the safety of the organization's information assets (data, devices, applications, etc.) by dynamically verifying and controlling the authenticity of all access from inside and outside the organization's network, without taking the security inside the network for granted.

22 Security requirements as safeguards to be implemented in DFARS issued by the U.S. DoD for defense industries handling CUIs.

Future Capabilities Development Center[23] is conducting research into cyber protection technology for equipment systems to prevent the spread of damage caused by cyberattacks and enable various equipment systems to remain in operation in the event of a cyberattacks.

(3) Cooperation with Private Companies and Other Countries, and Others

To respond to cyberattacks in a swift and appropriate manner, it is necessary to keep abreast of the latest information, including cyber-related risks, countermeasures and technological trends, through cooperation with private companies, and strategic talks, joint training and other opportunities with allies and other parties. For this purpose, the MOD/JSDF will effectively cooperate with private companies, and foreign countries, including the United States.

a. Cooperation with Private Companies and Others

In 2013, the Cyber Defense Council (CDC) was set up with its members consisting of around ten companies in the defense industry with a strong interest in cybersecurity. With the MOD serving as the hub for information sharing among companies in the defense industry, information is aggregated, and efforts are made to grasp the overall picture of cyberattacks. In addition, joint training with the defense industry is conducted once a year to enhance the cyberattack response capabilities of both the MOD/JSDF and the defense industry.

b. Cooperation with the United States

Japan is committed to further strengthening information sharing and enhancing efforts related to information security and cybersecurity with the United States.

In 2013, the Japanese and U.S. governments set up the Cyber Defense Policy Working Group (CDPWG) as a framework for policy consultations between defense authorities of the two countries. In this framework, specialized and specific considerations and exchange of views were conducted on a wide range of fields, such as the promotion of cyber policy consultations and closer information sharing.

In 2015, the Guidelines and the CDPWG Joint Statement were published. The governments of Japan and the United States agreed to establish a prompt and appropriate information sharing structure, protect critical infrastructure essential to the missions of the JSDF and U.S. forces, ensure the resiliency of their respective networks and systems, and organize educational exchanges and conduct joint exercises. In addition, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting in 2019, Japan and the United States confirmed that international law applied in cyberspace and that a cyberattack could, in certain circumstances, constitute an armed attack under Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Furthermore, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting in July 2024 and the Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting in March 2025, the two countries agreed to strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity and Japan's cooperation with the United States is to be further strengthened by such means as participation in the Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue, a whole-of-government framework by both nations, continuously holding the Japan-U.S. IT Forum, a framework between defense authorities.

In terms of operational cooperation, cyberattack response capability training has been conducted as part of the Japan-U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercise (field training exercise) and the Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Command Post Exercise to improve Japan-U.S. combined response capabilities.

c. Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries, Etc.

Japan will enhance its partnership and cooperation with like-minded countries and other partners through sharing views on threat awareness, exchanging views on response to cyberattacks, and participating in multilateral exercises.

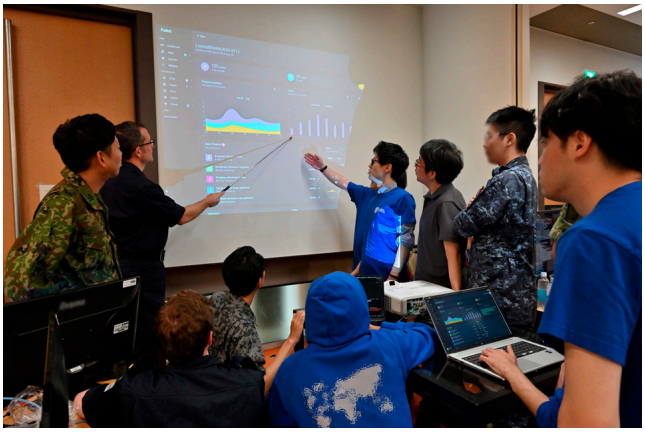
The MOD has participated in the Japan-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Cyber Dialogue, a whole-of-government framework and organized the Japan-NATO Cyber Defense Expert Staff Talks as the defense authority to exchange opinions on various issues related to cyberspace. Besides, the MOD has participated in the International Conference on Cyber Conflict (CyCon) hosted by the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) established in Estonia. The MOD has been dispatching personnel to the CCDCOE since 2019, and has officially participated in CCDCOE's activities since 2022.

In addition, Japan has held cyber dialogues between defense authorities of Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Estonia. Moreover, Japan has held IT forum with defense authorities of Singapore, Viet Nam and other countries to exchange views on initiatives in the information communications area including cybersecurity and current technological trends, and provided ASEAN countries with capacity building in the field of cybersecurity.

With the aim of strengthening the JSDF's cyber domain capabilities and cooperation with other countries, Japan has been participating in training and exercises. In FY2024, Japan took part in several multinational cyber defense exercises, including "Locked Shields 2024" a multilateral cyber defense exercise hosted by CCDCOE in April, as a joint Japan-UK team; "TechNet Augusta," a multilateral cyber competition hosted by the United States in August; "Cyber Skills Challenge," a multilateral cyber training hosted by Australia in November; "Cyber Coalition," multilateral cyber defense exercise hosted by NATO in December; and "Defense Cyber Marvel 4," an exercise hosted by the United Kingdom in February 2025. Furthermore, in February, the GSDF hosted "Cyber KONGO 2025," a multilateral cyber

23 In October 2024, the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) reorganized the Next-Generation Equipment Research Center to form the Future Capabilities Development Center.

defense training, with a total of 17 participating countries to strengthen capabilities in the cyber domain.[24]



Participation in the multilateral cyberspace defense exercise "Locked Shields" (April 2024) (participants joined the exercise online from their respective countries, and the exercise control center was located in Estonia)

3 Electromagnetic Spectrum Domain

(1) Basic Concept

Electromagnetic spectrum, used in wireless communications, radars, and other technologies, are being used for a wider range of utilizations and applications across the land, sea, air, space, and cyber domains. Therefore, securing superiority in the electromagnetic spectrum domain is extremely important for strengthening deterrence and executing cross-domain operations.

To this end, the JSDF will strengthen its capabilities in the electromagnetic spectrum domain, including effectively operating its electronic warfare capabilities and related support capabilities while degrading or neutralizing opponents' electronic jamming capabilities and communication in this area even under challenging electromagnetic environments, such as when encountering communication jamming by opponents.[25] In addition, the entire JSDF will utilize the electromagnetic spectrum more efficiently by strengthening its electromagnetic spectrum management functions.

(2) Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF will closely cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies to strengthen capabilities in the electromagnetic spectrum domain so that the JSDF can use radio waves in a stable and flexible manner while working to strengthen its electronic warfare capabilities and electromagnetic spectrum management functions and balancing civilian use of frequencies with the JSDF's use of frequencies for the command and control and intelligence gathering activities.

See Part I, Chapter 4, Section 4 (Trends in Electromagnetic Domain)

a. Enhancement of Electronic Jamming Capabilities (Communications and Radar Jamming Capabilities), etc.

It is extremely effective as a means to disrupt the use of the electromagnetic spectrum, including communications and radar of an opponent that invades Japan, and to degrade or neutralize their operational capabilities, for overcoming a disadvantage of the JSDF in capabilities in other domains.

The GSDF is deploying the Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS), which collects and analyzes radio waves information to disrupt the opponent's use of radio waves. In addition, it has begun acquiring counter air electronic warfare system designed to neutralize the enemy aircraft radar systems. Moreover, research is being conducted on low-power jamming technologies and future electromagnetic pulse (EMP) equipment technologies. The MOD/JSDF will also conduct research on directional energy technologies such as high-energy lasers and high-power microwaves (HPM) to improve the capabilities to deal with small unmanned vehicles.

In FY2025, development will begin on an upgraded type of Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS) with enhanced jamming capabilities, along with research on a shipborne laser system to counter swarms of small unmanned aerial vehicles.

Network Electronic Warfare System (NEWS)

24 The JSDF has taken part in both the "TechNet Augusta" and the "Cyber Skills Challenge" annually since 2022. The JSDF has participated in the "Cyber Coalition" for three consecutive years, making its fourth appearance. The JSDF has participated in the "Defense Cyber Marvel" every year since 2023. The JSDF has participated in the "Locked Shields" every year since 2021. In addition, the JSDF participated in the U.S.-hosted multilateral cyber competition "TechNet Indo-Pacific Multinational Capture The Flag" in 2022.

25 One of the attacks using electromagnetic spectrum is an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack, which generates instantaneous powerful electromagnetic spectrum through nuclear explosions, leading to the malfunction or destruction of electronics. Since this type of attack would impact not just the defense field but Japanese people's lives in general, the Government of Japan as a whole will deliberate on necessary countermeasures against it.

b. Strengthening of Electronic Defense Capabilities

To execute operations while degrading or neutralizing the effect of adversaries' electronic jamming, the MOD/JSDF is promoting the acquisition of F-35As fighters with superior electronic protection capability and F-35Bs fighters with their superior electronic protection capability, short takeoff and vertical landing capabilities, and continues to improve the capabilities of F-15 fighters with electronic protection capability.

c. Strengthening of Electronic Warfare Support Capabilities

In order to achieve superiority in the electromagnetic spectrum domain, it is important to gather and analyze electromagnetic spectrum information even in peacetime. The ASDF is promoting the acquisition of the RC-2 signals intelligence aircraft to enhance the capabilities to collect the necessary radio waves jamming and protection. Additionally, the MOD is developing an electronic warfare aircraft.

d. Enhancement of Electromagnetic Spectrum Management Function

To gain an advantage in operation by using electromagnetic spectrum effectively, in addition to improving electronic warfare capabilities, it is necessary to centrally grasp wave frequencies and the usage status, coordinate the use of frequencies, and appropriately allocate frequencies to the JSDF units, etc.

For this reason, the electromagnetic spectrum management function will be strengthened by understanding the electromagnetic spectrum usage status of the JSDF's equipment including communication devices, radars, and electronic warfare devices, etc, and visualizing them on monitors.

e. Human Resources Development and Research

To strengthen the JSDF's capabilities in the electromagnetic spectrum domain and to develop personnel with specialized expertise, efforts are being made to gather the up-to-date knowledge and expertise through various training programs, by dispatching personnel to participate in educational programs on electronic warfare in the United States and other means. In addition, the MOD/JSDF is enhancing resiliency by promoting the diversification of communication networks and conducting various researches in light of the protection against electromagnetic pulses.

4 Land, Maritime, and Air Domains

(1) Basic Concept

Land, maritime, and air defense capabilities form the foundation of cross-domain operations. Japan will fundamentally strengthen these forces by steadily developing vessels and aircraft and actively leveraging advanced technologies, while considering the integration of unmanned assets, in order to maintain and enhance maritime superiority[26] and air superiority.[27] To this end, we will promote the acquisition and enhancement of various types of equipment to strengthen our capabilities in the land, maritime, and air domains.

(2) Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

The GSDF is advancing the acquisition of equipment such as the Type-10 Main Battle Tank, Type-16 Mobile Combat Vehicle, and Type-19 155mm Wheeled Self-Propelled Howitzer. In addition, it will procure the Armored Modular Vehicle (AMV), a personnel carrier developed in Finland, to replace the current Type-96 Wheeled Armored Personnel Carrier. The GSDF will also procure Type-24 Infantry Combat Vehicle, Type-24 120mm Maneuver Mortar Combat Vehicle and the Common Tactical Wheeled Vehicle (Reconnaissance Combat Variant). These vehicles are domestically produced and their chassis are communized.

The MSDF will acquire advanced equipment including the new FFM frigate,[28] which features long-range missile capabilities, improved anti-submarine warfare functions, and reduced crew requirements; submarines with improved detection capabilities; supply ships with strengthened logistical support functions; and upgraded P-1 patrol aircraft with enhanced detection and identification capabilities.

The ASDF will acquire F-35A and F-35B fighter jets, and will also carry out upgrades to enhance the capabilities of F-15 and F-2 fighter aircraft.

Type-24 Infantry Combat Vehicle

26 Maritime superiority refers to the condition in which one side has a tactical advantage over the opposing force at sea and can carry out maritime operations without suffering substantial damages.
27 Air superiority refers to the condition in which one side can carry out airborne operations without suffering a significant level of obstruction by the opposing force.
28 The FFM is a new type of destroyer that combines enhanced capabilities for a wide range of missions with a more compact hull design. Its designation combines the frigate hull classification symbol, "FF," with "M," representing "multi-purpose" and "mine."

New FFM (image)

In preparation for the introduction of the F-35B by the ASDF for carrier-based operation, the destroyer JS "Kaga" conducted shipboard operation trials with the F-35B in the United States from October to November 2024. The trials were supported by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps.

5 Strengthening of Command and Control/Intelligence-related Functions

1 Basic Concept

As the character of warfare becomes more rapid and complex moving forward, it is becoming increasingly important that commanders at all levels make decisions more quickly and accurately than their adversaries, to lead and conduct operations in a dominant and advantageous manner. To this end, Japan will strengthen its command and control and intelligence-related functions by introducing technologies such as AI to build a command and control network with real-time responsiveness, resiliency, and flexibility, and by taking measures such as implementation of the rapid and reliable ISRT (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting).

Specifically, we will develop information capabilities that can respond to hybrid warfare and integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension, and establish near-real-time information gathering capabilities through means such as satellite constellations. Furthermore, in order to continuously and accurately understand the intentions and capabilities of neighboring countries and others more than ever before, we will strengthen various intelligence collection capabilities centered on the Defense Intelligence Headquarters. This will enable the effective collection, organization, analysis, sharing, and protection of information, while also fundamentally enhancing integrated analytical capabilities, including the use of geospatial information.

2 Command and Control Functions

The MOD/JSDF will strengthen its command and control functions by securing its ability to share information in real time through resilient networks in order to ensure rapid and reliable command and control. To this end, the MOD/JSDF will strengthen information sharing functions and develop the MOD Cloud (tentative name) to enable unified command and control of each JSDF service. In particular, the ASDF will carry out a large-scale transition from the Japan Aerospace Defense Ground Environment (JADGE) system to the next-generation JADGE (tentative name) to improve its resiliency, including adopting mobile terminals to allow command and control operations outside of Direction Centers (DCs), and enhance capabilities to respond to threats such as hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs). In addition, the MOD/JSDF will develop a defense information and communications infrastructure utilizing an All-Photonics Network (APN), which achieves high capacity, low power consumption, and low latency through the optoelectronic conversion technology. the MOD/JSDF will also build a platform for the use of AI within the GSDF's closed cloud network.

3 Information-related Functions, including Responses to Integrated Information Warfare

(1) Strengthening of Functions Such as Intelligence Collection and Analysis

a. Strengthening Capability to Collect and Analyze Military Intelligence

With security environment changing in a rapid and complex manner, high-quality and timely intelligence collection and analysis are essential for the Government to conduct accurate

REFERENCE: The MOD/JSDF's "I Want to Know About This!": Defense Attachés
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/shiritai/chuuzaikan/index.html

decision-making. Due to the rapid changes in international affairs and the increased activity of military operations near Japan, the MOD/JSDF plans to establish a seamless intelligence collection system by appropriately utilizing various resources.

The MOD/JSDF constantly collects information quickly and accurately on a daily basis by using various methods. Examples: (1) collecting, processing, and analyzing military communication signals and signals emanating from electronic weapons coming to Japanese airspace; (2) collecting, processing, and analyzing satellite imageries; (3) surveillance activities by ships, aircraft and other assets; (4) collecting and organizing a variety of open-source intelligence (OSINT); (5) information exchanges with defense organizations of other nations; and (6) intelligence collection by defense attachés dispatched abroad and others.

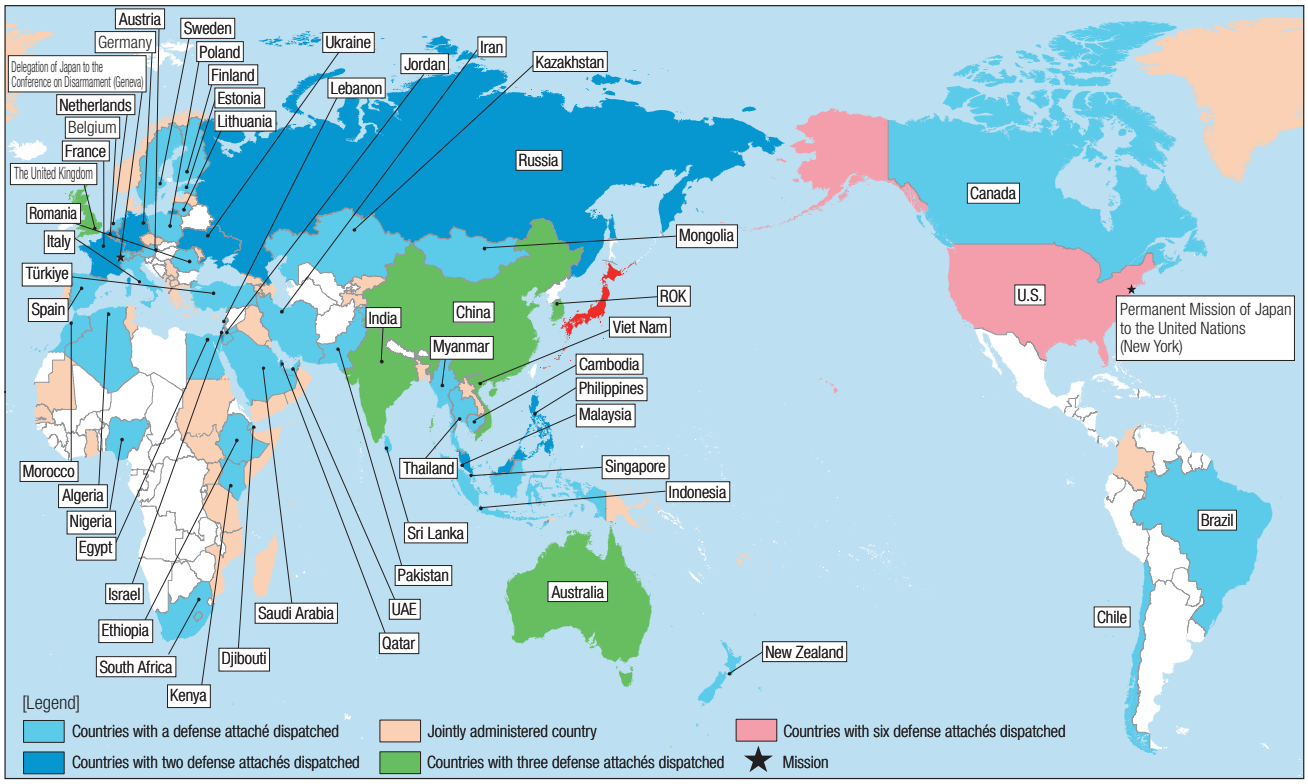
In addition to strengthening the deployment framework for defense attachés, the MOD is also working to improve the support system for these personnel. This includes improving and reinforcing pre-deployment training to enable effective intelligence gathering activities in their assigned countries, securing career paths, and strengthening the overall intelligence gathering cycle through the accumulation of relevant information and other measures. In FY2024, one defense attaché was newly dispatched to each of Estonia, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka, and an additional attaché was assigned to Viet Nam. In FY2025, one defense attaché will be newly dispatched to each of Fiji and Brunei, and an additional attaché will be assigned to each of the Philippines and France.

In addition, we will strengthen our intelligence analysis capabilities and associated functions by improving the information systems of the Defense Intelligence Headquarters as well as the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF; maintaining and upgrading various intelligence gathering assets (equipment) and the collection devices used at communication stations and coastal surveillance units; and collecting and organizing various types of intelligence materials.

Furthermore, to enable the intelligence sector to respond effectively to increasingly diverse needs, we will work to secure and develop highly capable personnel for intelligence gathering and analysis. Comprehensive measures will be steadily implemented in areas such as recruitment, education and training, and personnel assignments, in order to strengthen intelligence gathering and analysis functions in an integrated manner. Moreover, we will promote cooperation and coordination with relevant domestic intelligence agencies. Additionally, the MOD/JSDF will take necessary measures to utilize information collected by Information Gathering Satellites more effectively for its operations.

See Fig. III-1-2-12 (Dispatched Defense Attachés (image))

Fig. III-1-2-12 Dispatched Defense Attachés (image)



b. Defense Intelligence Headquarters

Established in 1997, the Defense Intelligence Headquarters (DIH) is the central intelligence agency of the MOD and the largest intelligence organization in Japan. The DIH gathers various intelligence and analyzes international and military situations and other matters related to Japan's swiftly changing security environment.

In addition to intelligence collection and analysis, the DIH

VOICE

Defense Attachés Working in Countries around the World

(What are defense attachés?)

Defense attachés are stationed in Japanese embassies and other diplomatic missions and delegations around the world to gather military information and carry out other operations. In recent years, defense attachés have been covering a wide range of operations, such as defense exchanges with countries to which they are dispatched, coordination on defense equipment and technology cooperation, and coordination on accepting Self-Defense Forces aircraft for missions and activities. Their roles are expanding year by year.

The Ministry of Defense (MOD) has been enhancing its defense attachés dispatching structure. Recently, the MOD has newly dispatched/increased defense attachés to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and regions along the coast of the South China Sea. Currently, a total of 80 defense attachés are dispatched to 53 embassies and 2 missions. (About 1.6 times as many compared to 49 defense attachés in FY2013.) Defense attachés work hard and successfully every day in many parts of the world as the security environment is becoming increasingly severe and uncertain. In recent years, in the face of clashes between Israel and Palestinian militants, the Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and military clashes in Afghanistan, Sudan, and Ethiopia, defense attachés have been conducting a wide range of information gathering activities in a timely manner using their military expertise.

The Ambassador and officials from the MOD at the Emperor's Birthday reception in the Embassy of Japan in Australia

Colonel HIGUCHI Tomoya, a defense attaché to Lebanon

In October 2024, the JSDF transported Japanese nationals and others in Lebanon to evacuate the country. In Lebanon, especially since late September of that year, the Israeli air strikes have been carried out daily in many areas, including near the Japanese Embassy in Beirut, and the sound of Israeli military's drone rotors could be heard constantly from the sky, which made us feel that danger was close at hand. While our activities were severely restricted by this situation, we collected information on the situation in each country from military attachés of each country, in particular not to miss the timing of the start of transportation, and coordinated with Lebanese Armed Forces officials and others. The situation in Lebanon and neighboring countries remains unstable, and I will continue to press ahead with our mission vigilantly.

Meeting with a United Kingdom official to discuss the transportation of Japanese nationals (this author is in the center of the picture)

Captain HAMAKAWA Sho, a defense attaché to Indonesia

Selamat Siang (Good day). I am working as a defense attaché in Indonesia. I admired my father who served as defense attaché here approximately 30 years ago and after I enlisted I pressed ahead with my mission while harboring the ambition to become the defense attaché in Indonesia. By good fortune, I received the opportunity to study abroad at the Indonesian Naval Academy in 2018 and in 2023 I fulfilled my longtime dream and became the defense attaché. I can say that one of the attractions of the Self-Defense Forces is that if you work hard with a lot of passion, you can get a job in the field you wish.

My younger brother had the opportunity to study abroad at the same academy in 2022 and I am very pleased that my family will be able to contribute to Japan-Indonesia defense cooperation.

Coordination of Super Garuda Shield (multilateral exercises)
(the author is on the far right)

Exchange of views with the Deputy Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs of Indonesia
(the author is second from the right)

Colonel NAKAZATO Yuka, a defense attaché to the United States

It was a heated presidential election. The second Trump administration was inaugurated in unusually cold weather. It has implemented a series of reforms. The citizens are hopeful and anxious about the future. It is even like being in a move where "even one person can change the world." On the other hand, you cannot explain the United States by only looking at one part of it. It has a population of approximately 300 million people, an area approximately 25 times that of Japan, and the greatest military in the world. As the defense attaché for Japan's only ally, I am required to gather big-picture and multifaceted information. I strongly feel that it is human relationships which support this information gathering. Going forward, I will continue to cooperate with my husband, who is Air Self-Defense Force personnel (currently on leave of absence to accompany his spouse), to meet and talk with many people, build relationships of trust, and press ahead with my mission.

A photograph with board members of the Air Force Defense Attaché Association (the author is in the left in the front row)

This author giving a lecture on the Japan-U.S. Alliance

is also considered in the National Defense Strategy (NDS) to play a central role in responding to integrated information warfare for the defense of Japan and is to fundamentally strengthen the capabilities to collect, analyze, and disseminate information on international military situations and other issues.

The DIH is an organization consisting of the uniformed JSDF personnel from GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF and administrative and technical officials (specialized in language, technology, administration or general office work). The JSDF personnel use the experience and knowledge gained in their own unit, etc., whereas administrative/technical officials use their expert knowledge in language, technology and other fields, to work together for their mission. Specifically, they conduct comprehensive analysis from diverse perspectives, including military, political, and economic factors, based on information received from a wide range of sources including SIGINT, IMINT, GIOINT, OSINT (newspapers, internet, etc.) and opinion exchange with relevant parties.

The DIH is also strengthening intelligence gathering and analyzing functions in space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum domains. For example, it conducts the collection and analysis of necessary information regarding trends in threats in cyberspace through such means as collecting OSINT and exchanging information with other countries.

Results of the DIH's intelligence service are provided as analysis products to the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister, the National Security Secretariat established within the Cabinet Secretariat, the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, as well as GSDF, MSDF and ASDF units in a timely and appropriate manner to support policy decision and unit operation. The DIH also actively exchanges information with relevant ministries and agencies and foreign counterparts.

c. Initiatives for Information Security

The MOD/JSDF has been working to ensure a system necessary for information security in accordance with the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets[29] and other relevant laws and in cooperation with relevant ministries, agencies and bureaus, to appropriately protect various types of highly classified information.

However, it came to light that the then Commander of the MSDF Fleet Intelligence Command intentionally disclosed specially designated secrets and other information without authorization to his former superior, who was not eligible to handle classified information, in a situation briefing conducted in 2020. In response to this, in 2023, then Defense Minister Hamada established measures to prevent recurrence, including guidelines for meeting and briefing former officials and institutionalization of security training for managers and retired officials, and made all officials thoroughly aware of such measures.

In 2022, it was revealed that the then-commanding officer of the MSDF destroyer JS "Inazuma" had designated a crew member who had not undergone the security clearance assessment for handling specially designated secrets as a specially designated secret handling personnel and allowed him/her to handle such classified information. In addition, in 2023, it was found that the commander of a unit under the command of the GSDF Northern Army divulged specially designated secret information to some personnel of the unit who were not in a position to know the specially designated secret information, when giving instructions and communicating at a training exercise.

Taking these incidents seriously, the MOD/JSDF publicly released in April 2024 the findings of the investigation and the disciplinary actions taken. At the same time, the Defense Minister issued instructions on measures to prevent recurrence, directing to conduct a review to ensure the appropriate operation of relevant regulations based on the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets across the entire MOD/JSDF. Additionally, the "Committee for the Review of Recurrence Prevention Measures Related to Leaks of Specially Designated Secrets," chaired by the State Defense Minister, began an intensive study on more effective preventive measures to further strengthen the safeguarding of classified information.

As a result of this review, 35 cases were identified in which crew members aboard destroyers had access to specially designated secrets without undergoing the required security clearance assessment. A total of 43 cases confirmed were assessed as unauthorized disclosure under the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets. This includes instances in which individuals were designated as specially designated secret handling personnel upon reassignment without undergoing the necessary assessment. Additionally, 15 cases involving procedural errors related to the handling of specially designated secrets were identified. In July of that year, the MOD publicly released the results of the investigations, along with the disciplinary actions affecting a total of 121 individuals, including the Administrative Vice-Minister.

Based on the MOD's disclosure of the incidents described above, the Boards of Oversight and Review of Specially Designated Secrets of both the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors issued strong criticism, stating that "it is evident that the MOD did not take the Board's 2023 recommendations seriously and has not earnestly engaged in the protection of specially designated secrets," and that "it is extremely regrettable that a series of incidents have occurred which severely undermine trust in Japan's information security system." The Boards further recommended that the MOD conduct a thorough investigation across the entire organization to determine if there have been any other cases of leakage of specially designated secrets.

Based on the above recommendations from the Diet's two boards, the MOD/JSDF conducted a review in August of the same year, coinciding with a period of large-scale regular

29 Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets

personnel transfers. This review examined the implementation status of security clearance assessments for personnel transferred from other government agencies. As a result, 32 cases were identified as unauthorized disclosure under the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets, and an additional 69 cases were found to involve procedural flaws in the management of specially designated secrets.

Furthermore, incidents identified as an unauthorized disclosure of specially designated secrets included cases where electronic data of specially designated secret documents had been stored on an internal Ministry of Defense network,[30] which is not authorized to handle such information.

In response to the recurring incidents, the MOD conducted an investigation with the awareness that previous recurrence prevention measures may have been superficial and failed to address the underlying issues. Based on the findings, the MOD decided to implement truly effective measures to prevent recurrence, including: (1) exploring the ideal approach to information security in a manner aligned with the realities of unit operations; (2) enhancing awareness of information security and fundamentally improving information security education; (3) improving the implementation of existing systems and revising information security systems; (4) introducing a Comprehensive Information Protection System (tentative name)[31] to minimize human error; (5) strengthening the MOD's information security framework, including establishing an external advisory panel; and (6) conducting a ministry-wide investigation into incidents involving the leakage of specially designated secrets and other related cases, along with progress monitoring.

The MOD/JSDF is committed to fundamentally reform the approach to and framework for information security, and will make effort across the organization to foster an organizational culture that ensures strict compliance with laws and regulations.

See Fig. III-1-2-13 (Recurrence Prevention Measures for Specified Secret Leaks and Related Incidents)

Fig. III-1-2-13 Recurrence Prevention Measures for Specified Secret Leaks and Related Incidents

Reconstruction of Recurrence Prevention Measures

○ A comprehensive analysis of past incidents involving the leakage of specified secrets has revealed the following causes.
(1) Inconsistencies between actual unit operations and information security measures
(2) Issues in the current approach to information security education, such as being overly generalized and uniform
(3) Inadequate implementation and insufficient utilization of the system
(4) Lack of countermeasures against human error in field-level security operations
(5) Deficiencies in the information security management structure within the Ministry of Defense

○ Given the frequent occurrence of incidents involving the protection of specified secrets within the Ministry of Defense, an investigation was conducted based on the recognition that past recurrence prevention measures may have been superficial and failed to address the fundamental issues. Based on the results of the investigation, truly effective measures were developed in formulating the recurrence prevention plan.

(1) Review Information Protection Approaches Reflecting Actual Operational Practices
A review was conducted to determine whether information security measures were misaligned with actual unit activities, and institutional reforms were implemented accordingly.

(2) Improvement of Information Protection Awareness and Comprehensive Overhaul of Training Programs
Comprehensive information protection training aligned with each participant's skill level and position, reinforced by follow-up evaluations such as confirmation tests.

(3) Improvement of the Operation of Existing Systems and Revision of the Information Security Framework
Promptly conduct suitability assessments for personnel handling specified secrets to ensure appropriate designation, while also improving the operation of periodic inspections and related procedures.

(4) Minimizing Human Error by Introducing the Comprehensive Secret Protection System (Tentative Name)
A system for centralized oversight of suitability assessments will be partially implemented during the current fiscal year to prevent the designation of unassessed personnel as specified secret-handling officials.

(5) Enhancement of the information security management structure within the Ministry of Defense
Strengthen the organizational framework through measures such as establishing a new Counsellor position within the Minister's Secretariat, assigning security oversight duties to the Minister's Secretariat Chief Record Officer, and setting up an external expert panel meeting.

(6) Response Measures in Case of a Specified Secret Breach or Related Incident
Codify fundamental measures to prevent additional leakage when a potential incident involving the unauthorized disclosure of a specified secret is identified. In the event of a leakage incident, a prompt report shall be submitted to the Commission for the Oversight of Information Protection of both the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors. The incident must also be publicly disclosed.

30 The Ministry of Defense Central OA Network System
31 A system that centrally manages security clearance assessment applications and registrations, entry and exit records for secure areas, and access logs for classified documents

(2) Responding to Integrated Information Warfare with Special Regard to the Cognitive Dimension

a. Integrated Information Warfare with Special Regard to the Cognitive Dimension

Information warfare in the international community begins even before the outbreak of conflict, as it aims to shape a favorable security environment by influencing people's perception through disinformation and strategic messaging, thereby affecting public opinion and decision-making in other countries, while also preventing external influence on one's own decision-making. In light of this situation, Japan will build a system and posture that can reliably deal with integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension.

See Part I, Chapter 4, Section 1-4 (Diffusion of Information-related Technology and Information Warfare)

b. Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

With the increasingly severe security environment and the rapid progress of technological innovation, including information technology (IT), it is important to respond to new "ways of warfare," including integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension. In particular, considering Japan's national defense in light of the situation involving Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the conflict between Israel and Palestinian armed groups, it is urgent to enhance our response to integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension. This includes the ability to detect and analyze disinformation, as well as to swiftly and accurately disseminate correct information.

In line with the MOD/JSDF's policy to develop information capabilities that can reliably respond to integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension by 2027, the DIH is taking the necessary measures at every stage of information collection, analysis, and dissemination. These measures include establishing functions for automatically collecting information from social media and other sources to assess the authenticity of information disseminated by various countries, while working in close coordination with policy and operational divisions.

In FY2024, the MOD/JSDF strengthened its information warfare structure by appointing a dedicated Defense Intelligence Officer and establishing a specialized department in the DIH for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information. Additionally, an Integrated Information Warfare Coordination Section was established within the Ministry's Internal Bureau to serve as a central command function for responding to integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension. Additionally, we have launched various initiatives, including developing functions that use AI to automatically collect and analyze open-source information and social media content, and efforts to verify information using future forecasting services related to intelligence estimation. Furthermore, the core units of the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces are being reorganized to establish new information warfare units. In FY2025, the Ground Self-Defense Force Information Operations Unit (tentative name) and the Maritime Self-Defense Force Information Warfare/Operations Command are scheduled to be established.

Moreover, we will strive to further strengthen Japan's capabilities in light of trends in the international community by sharing information and conducting joint training with our ally, like-minded countries, and others.

In addition to the various measures mentioned above, to ensure that JSDF personnel, who are the core element of our defense capability, are not misled by disinformation and prevented from making appropriate decisions and taking precise actions, each personnel member must understand the dangers of disinformation and develop an attitude that enables them to calmly perceive and objectively analyze matters on a daily basis. To that end, efforts will be made to further strengthen the information security framework by promoting the acquisition of necessary competencies and improving cyber and media literacy through educational opportunities and other means. Additionally, the MOD/JSDF will work to disseminate accurate information by, for example, publicly disclosing certain cases of disinformation about them originating from foreign sources.

See Section 1-2-5 (Responses to Integrated Information Warfare with Special Regard to the Cognitive Dimension)

6 Strengthening of Mobile Deployment Capabilities and Initiatives to Protect Citizens

1 Basic Concept

Due to Japan's geographical characteristics, such as being surrounded by the sea, having a long coastline, and having many remote islands separated from the mainland, it is necessary for not only the units regularly stationed in the region to respond in the event of an invasion, but also for additional necessary forces (such as personnel, equipment, and supplies) to be rapidly and flexibly deployed, depending on the situation, in order to prevent the approach and landing of invading forces.

To this end, the MOD/JSDF will enhance mobile deployment capabilities by reinforcing the JSDF's own maritime and air transportation capabilities, and also maximizing its use of civilian transportation capabilities, including Private Finance Initiatives (PFI).

In addition to strengthening mobile deployment capabilities, since it is essential to maintain a posture that allows for a swift response in the event of an invasion of Japan, the MOD/JSDF

Commentary

New Formation of the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group

On March 24, 2025, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) newly formed the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group as a joint unit of the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces at the MSDF Kure Regional District Headquarters (Kure City, Hiroshima Prefecture).

In order for the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) to fully defend the islands, it is necessary for them to continuously transport units and equipment from all over the country to the islands. To ensure fast and reliable transport, it is important to reinforce maritime transport capabilities in order to be able to transport heavy equipment that is not suitable for transport by aircraft and large quantities of supplies at one time.

For this reason, in the Defense Buildup Program, in addition to acquiring various transport assets, it was also decided to newly form the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group, a joint unit, with the objective of reinforcing mobile deployment capabilities to islands under a joint operation structure.

The Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group is a maritime transport unit that specializes in missions to transport the units and equipment of the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces using joint operations. The crew—Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) personnel who have knowledge of GSDF equipment and unit operations and Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) personnel who have knowledge of naval vessel operations—are required to cooperate in operating the units.

For this reason, since 2019, we have been advancing the development of core personnel. For example, GSDF personnel have been attending the same educational courses as MSDF personnel on the knowledge and skills necessary for the operation of naval vessels, running and maintenance of engines, communications, and so on, at MSDF service schools and units, in order to become core personnel of the Maritime Transport Group, or in other words "sailors."

The Maritime Transport Group is staffed with GSDF personnel from a variety of professions, including those who have previously served in missions as drivers of large vehicles, including large trucks, as well as infantry units responsible for ground combat, artillery units which operate artillery, armored units which operate tanks and other equipment, and others. Since enlisting in the GSDF, they have carved out new paths different from their previous professions, boldly embarking on education and training to become "sailors," honing the knowledge and skills necessary for unit operations, and steadily advancing preparations for the new formation of the unit.

Due to the new formation of the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group, faster and more reliable transport will become possible in the southwest region, which is dotted with many large and small islands, reinforcing our maritime transport capabilities and therefore our joint transport capabilities, and resulting in thorough island defense.

The scene at the ceremony for the new formation of the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group

The newly launched Nihonbare transport vessel (October 2024)

Newly established 8th Surface-to-Ship Missile Regiment (March 2025)

Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Kaneko at the Ominato Area Command establishment event (March 2025)

will reinforce its defense architecture by deploying necessary units especially in the southwestern region. Moreover, to facilitate smoother transportation and resupply operations by the JSDF, efforts are being made to reinforce the integrated logistics and supply systems, as well as actively promoting the expansion of usable airports and seaports, especially in the southwestern region where many remote islands are concentrated, and improving supply depots across the country.

Furthermore, the JSDF will contribute to civil protection by using their enhanced mobile deployment capabilities to evacuate residents.

See Section 3-2 (Public Infrastructure Development)

2 Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

(1) Strengthening of Mobile Deployment Capabilities

The MOD/JSDF will acquire transport vessels, transport aircraft, and transport helicopters to strengthen the JSDF's maritime and air transportation capabilities. To this end, the GSDF and ASDF appropriated budget funds in FY2024 for the acquisition of CH-47 transport helicopters and other equipment. In March 2025, to enhance mobile deployment capabilities to the southwestern region, the JSDF established the JSDF Maritime Transport Group in the MSDF Kure District (Hiroshima Prefecture) as a joint unit of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, and assigned two transport vessels. In FY2025, the JSDF will continue to promote the acquisition of transport vessels and helicopters. The ASDF is also scheduled to acquire the KC-46A aerial refueling and transport aircraft.

In addition, to supplement the JSDF's maritime transport capabilities, civilian vessels capable of transporting large volumes of vehicles and containers will be secured and utilized through Private Finance Initiatives (PFI).

(2) Strengthening Defense Posture, including in Southwestern Region

The MOD/JSDF has been advancing the deployment of units to Kyushu and the southwestern region to bolster the defense posture in the southwestern region. The GSDF established new camps on Yonagunijima Island (Okinawa Prefecture), Miyakojima Island (Okinawa Prefecture), Amami Oshima Island (Kagoshima Prefecture), and Ishigakijima Island (Okinawa Prefecture), and deployed units such as coast observation units, area security units, surface-to-ship guided missile units, and surface-to-air guided missile units.

In March 2025, the GSDF newly established the 8th Surface-to-Ship Missile Regiment at Camp Yufuin in Oita Prefecture. To build an integrated operational structure between the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade, located in areas including Sasebo City in Nagasaki Prefecture, and the V-22 Osprey, the GSDF plans to establish a new camp, tentatively named Camp Saga, adjacent to Saga Airport in July of the same year. It is planned to relocate the air transport squadron, which currently operates the Osprey temporarily stationed at Camp Kisarazu in Chiba Prefecture, to the new camp.

Going forward, in order to strengthen the defense posture in the southwestern region, the GSDF plans to reorganize the 15th Brigade, located in Okinawa Prefecture, into a division, and to establish new branch supply depots in the region.

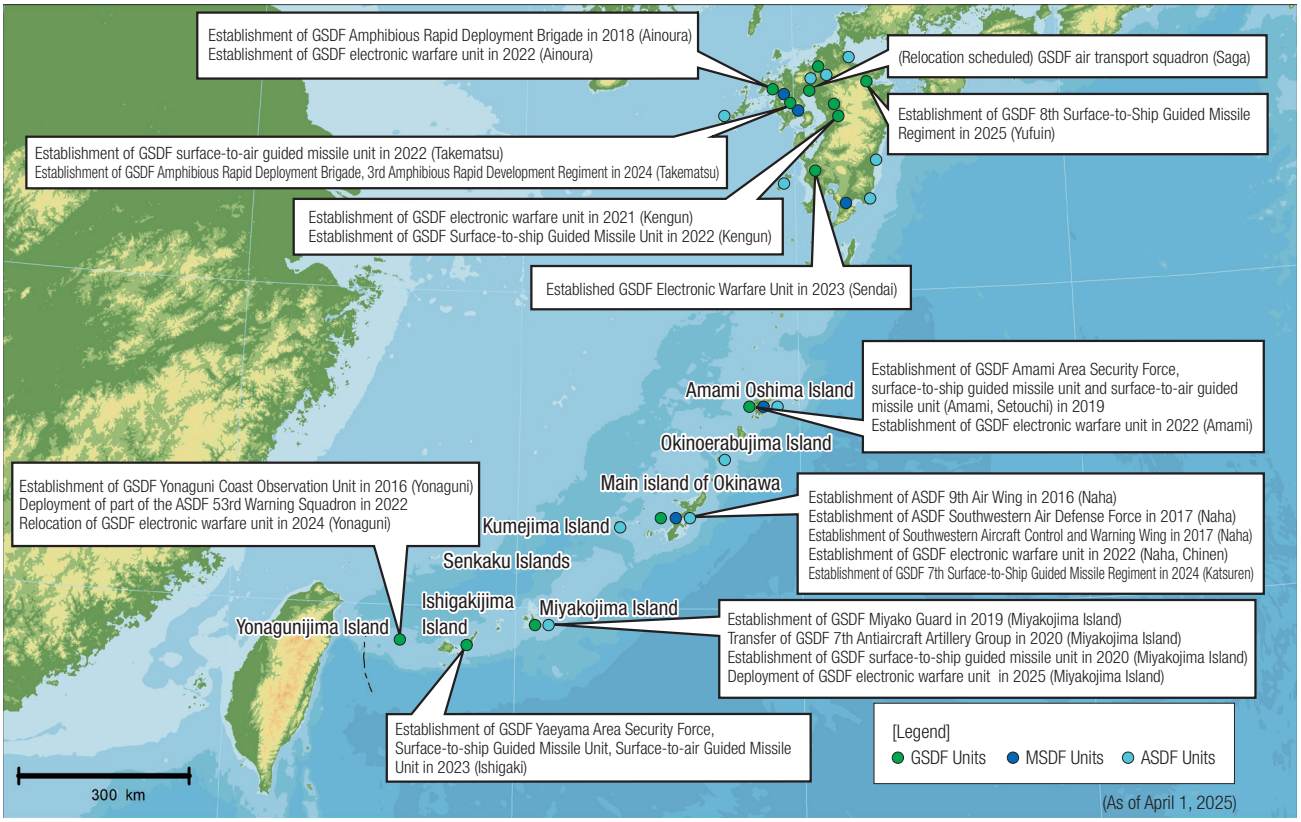
The ASDF established a provisional F-35B squadron at Nyutabaru Air Base in Miyazaki Prefecture in March 2025. The ASDF is moving forward with the deployment of a mobile warning and control radars to Kitadaitojima Island in Okinawa Prefecture to build a seamless intelligence gathering, surveillance, and monitoring posture on remote islands in the Pacific.

The MSDF integrated the Ominato Defense District into the Yokosuka Defense District in March 2025 to carry out surveillance and monitoring operations along the northern area coast and the Pacific coast more quickly and efficiently. At the same time, it newly established the Ominato Area Command under the Yokosuka District to take over responsibilities such as logistical support, coordination with local governments, and disaster relief operations in the Ominato area. In FY2025, the GSDF will reorganize the Ground Material Control Command and establish a new Ground Material Command to centrally command and control all supply depots. This is intended to strengthen the logistics support system, including transportation. The GSDF will also abolish the Ordnance

School, the Quartermaster School, and the Transport and Logistics School, and establish the Logistics School. In addition, the MSDF plans to establish a new Fleet Surface Force (tentative name) to centrally command and control surface vessel units such as the Fleet Escort Force and the Mine Warfare Force.

See Fig. III-1-2-14 (Establishment Status of Major Units in Kyushu/Southwestern Region (since 2016))

Fig. III-1-2-14 Establishment Status of Major Units in Kyushu/Southwestern Region (since 2016)



(3) Efforts on Civil Protection

a. Government Initiatives

There has been heightened public interest in civil protection efforts and expectations for the role of the MOD/JSDF, due to repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea, especially with the issuance of J-Alerts in response to ballistic missiles flying over the Japanese archipelago. Since civil protection is positioned as one of the pillars of fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities in the NDS, the MOD/JSDF is actively working on it.

In 2005, the Government established the Basic Guideline for the Protection of the People based on Article 32 of the Civil Protection Act. This Basic Guideline categorizes armed attack scenarios into four types: (1) amphibious invasions, (2) attacks by guerrillas or special forces, (3) ballistic missile attacks, and (4) air strikes. It also lays out points to consider in taking civil protection measures depending on the type of attack.

Furthermore, the government is considering the establishment of evacuation facilities equipped with the necessary functions to protect the lives and physical safety of residents in the event of an armed attack, such as a ballistic missile attack. This is not only a measure to prevent damage, but also a deterrent against ballistic missile and other attacks. In March 2024, the Government of Japan announced its basic approach to securing necessary evacuation facilities, including the establishment of "Designated Temporary Evacuation Facilities"[32] that can be used for a certain period of time as robust evacuation facilities in areas where

32 For municipalities that meet the following two requirements: (1) If a wide-area evacuation of residents and others were necessary, it would prove difficult given that the means of transportation for wide-area evacuation of residents would be limited to aircraft or ships and the evacuation destination area is located on a remote island where evacuation beyond the coastal zone is necessary when transporting by ship due to the long distance; and (2) the patterns of evacuation implementation guidelines for wide-area evacuation of all residents, etc., have been prepared and publicized and utilizing said patterns, central and prefectural governments have conducted joint civil protection exercises, such municipalities are supposed to prepare evacuation facilities in the basement of public/official facilities (used for purposes other than evacuation facilities such as meeting rooms, parking lots, etc. during normal times) with financial support from the government of Japan.

evacuation would be difficult due to significant transportation constraints and the remoteness of evacuation destinations. It also formulated formulated the "Technical Guideline for Designated Temporary Evacuation Facilities" that specify the technical specifications that such facilities should meet.

To counter invasions while protecting the lives of Japanese citizens in the event of an armed attack or similar situations, national government agencies, local governments, public institutions and private sector companies must cooperate and work together in an integrated manner.

In order to promptly evacuate residents, including those in the southwestern region, well in advance of an armed attack, the Government plans to take measures such as promptly formulating plans for smooth evacuation, securing public and private transportation, maintaining and coordinating the use of public infrastructure such as airports and seaports, securing various types of evacuation facilities and coordinating with international organizations. In addition, to enhance the effectiveness of such efforts, the Government will conduct and verify various types of training, including evacuation of residents and consider necessary measures including institutional reforms, while promoting cooperation among the national government, local governments, designated public institutions and others.

In addition to participating in and cooperating with these initiatives, the MOD/JSDF will also coordinate and cooperate for the organized implementation of civil protection measures using civilian vessels and aircraft used by the JSDF and other JSDF transport assets. The MOD/JSDF is also promoting various measures such as strengthening JSDF units and leveraging JSDF reserve personnel so that it will be able to cooperate for civil protection.

See Fig. III-1-2-15 (Actions in Case of Missiles Flying to Japan (leaflet))

Fig. III-1-2-15 Actions in Case of Missiles Flying to Japan (leaflet)

b. The MOD/JSDF Initiatives

The MOD/JSDF is to work on civil protection with various relevant ministries and agencies, including the police, fire departments, and the Japan Coast Guard, to support damage assessments, rescue lives, and assist in the evacuation of residents.

To ensure the accurate and prompt implementation of civil protection measures, it is essential to establish coordination frameworks with relevant organizations from peacetime. Accordingly, the MOD/JSDF will continue to strengthen their cooperation with local governments and other stakeholders. In addition, the government as a whole will enhance civil protection exercises with a focus on armed attack situations and other situations.

Specifically, in order to cooperate with local governments and other organizations, the MOD/JSDF established departments responsible for close communication at the major Headquarters and Commands, as well as the Provincial Cooperation Offices and assigned the Assistant Directors for Civil Protection (civilian officials) there.

Civil protection councils are established in prefectural and municipal governments for comprehensive implementation of civil protection measures, with members appointed from the JSDF and Regional Defense Bureau. Moreover, local governments are hiring retired JSDF personnel as crisis managers. These managers coordinate with the MOD/JSDF, as well as plan and implement civil protection trainings.

Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, organizes civil protection training with local governments and other entities. It also actively participates in and contribute to ones conducted by those ministries, agencies, and local governments.

See Reference 17 (Participation of the MOD/JSDF in Civil Protection Joint Training Exercises with Central and Local Government Bodies (FY2024))

An JSDF personnel member responsible for coordination with local governments and other relevant entities during the FY2024 Tottori Prefecture Joint Civil Protection Field and Tabletop Exercise (November 2024)

7 Strengthening Sustainability and Resiliency

1 Basic Concept

The MOD/JSDF has identified ensuring sustainability and resiliency as one of their top priorities through FY2027. This includes accelerating efforts to secure sufficient ammunition and fuel, increasing the number of operationally available equipment, and bolstering the resiliency of defense facilities. The quantities of ammunition and fuel, as well as the number of operationally available equipment, are key indicators of the JSDF's endurance. These factors influence the JSDF's war sustainability to repel enemy attacks and invasions and continue fighting with resilience. In order to fully defend Japan, it is necessary to enhance the JSDF's war sustainability; however, their current ability to sustain operations is not necessarily sufficient. Therefore, the MOD/JSDF will promptly increase its ammunition production capacity and establish ammunition depots to ensure an ample ammunition stockpile, as well as an adequate fuel supply. Furthermore, a system will be promptly established to ensure that all equipment, except equipment undergoing scheduled maintenance or similar procedures, remains in operational condition.

Furthermore, measures will be taken to ensure the safety of JSDF personnel and prevent the loss of operational capability in wartime. These measures include relocating major command centers to underground, reinforcing their structures, securing adequate separation distances between facilities, and consolidating facilities. Additionally, efforts will be made to improve barracks and housing and address aging infrastructure. The MOD/JSDF makes effort to maintenance and renovation of barracks and lodgings. In addition, we will enhance resilience by implementing concealment and deception measures for equipment, and promote the strengthening of facilities and infrastructure against disasters such as tsunamis.

2 Securing Ammunition

The JSDF has various types of ammunition, including rifle and handgun bullets, tank and artillery shells, and missiles for fighter aircraft and naval vessels.

However, advancement of performance and technologies of ammunition have been causing cost increase, which negatively affect securing sufficient ammunition in recent years. Additionally, when certain companies withdrew from the ammunition manufacturing business due to factors such as a decline in orders, replacement manufacturers took over production. However, this initially resulted in longer production times and increased manufacturing costs, further complicating the process of securing the necessary ammunition.

In addition to the time-consuming process of constructing ammunition depots, there is also the issue of insufficient capacity in existing depots due to the increasing size of missiles and other munitions.

The NDS, taking these circumstances into account, sets the goal of resolving the ammunition shortage by FY2027. The MOD/JSDF began the acquisition of Upgraded Type-12 SSM as high-priority stand-off missiles in FY2023. In addition, the acquisition of Tomahawk missiles will begin in FY2025, one year ahead of the original plan. To strengthen integrated air and missile defense capabilities, the necessary quantities of key missiles will be promptly acquired. This includes the upgraded Type-03 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (modified) for the GSDF, the SM-3 Block IIA and SM-6 for the MSDF's Aegis ships, and the PAC-3MSE for the ASDF's Patriot units. The required quantities of bullets, artillery shells, and other missiles will also be secured at an early stage.

Additionally, to ensure the timely and stable supply of ammunition, the MOD will support the expansion of domestic production capacity by the defense industry, including

ammunition manufacturers. Furthermore, to accommodate the growing size of ammunition and ensure adequate storage, the Ministry will promote the construction of additional ammunition storage facilities and the disposal of obsolete ammunition.

See Fig. III-1-2-16 (Primary Missile and Magazines), 1 (Strengthening of Stand-off Defense Capabilities)

Fig. III-1-2-16 Primary Missile and Magazines

BMD missile (SM-3 Block IIA)

SM-6

Intermediate-range multi-mission missiles

155mm howitzers ammunition

5.56mm fire arms ammunition

Type 03 Medium-Range SAM (modified)

Upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship missile models

Type-23 ship-to-air guided missile (image)

Type-23 air-to-ship guided missile (image)

PAC-3MSE

Magazine (an example)

AIM-120 (image)

AAM-4B (image)

3 Securing Fuel

In order to quickly and stably secure the necessary amount of fuel for the operations and actions taken by the JSDF, the MOD/JSDF will build and rent fuel tanks from the private sector. For instance, the MSDF is developing fuel tanks in phases based on criteria such as fuel usage records and existing tank capacity. To support securing fuel for naval vessels, the MSDF will also lease civilian fuel tanks capable of storing and handling fuel year-round.

4 Improving the Operational Availability of Equipment

(1) Current Status of the Operational Availability of Equipment

Self-Defense Forces equipment is generally used in harsher conditions than civilian products, and as such, it requires frequent maintenance and parts replacement. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a certain quantity of spare parts.

On the other hand, as equipment has become more advanced in performance, the unit cost of parts procurement and maintenance has risen. While the maintenance budget has also increased, these increases have not always been sufficient, resulting in equipment becoming non-operable due to parts shortages. For some equipment, parts are removed from non-operational units of the same type and reused for maintenance. This process requires twice the workload of standard parts replacement due to the need for both removal and installation, placing an excessive burden on units. Based on this, we will continue to secure a substantial maintenance budget to resolve equipment non-operational issues caused by parts shortages and to maximize the number of operationally available equipment by FY2027.

(2) Increasing the Number of Operationally Available Equipment

a. Securing Parts

While accommodating the increasing sophistication of equipment, the MOD/JSDF will secure the necessary

quantities of parts and eliminate equipment downtime caused by parts shortages. This will be achieved by ensuring sufficient funding for parts and repairs, taking into account lead times - the time required for parts delivery. To this end, we will refine supply and demand forecasting by, for example, adding a function to the supply management system that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to estimate parts demand, thereby ensuring appropriate stock levels. In addition, major supply warehouses will be automated, streamlined, and systematized to enable accurate inventory management and rapid delivery of parts in response to unit needs.

b. Promotion of Outsourcing

To increase the number of operationally available equipment, the MOD/JSDF outsources sustainment, maintenance and other operations of equipment to outside parties to make effective use of limited resources.

To promote more efficient maintenance of certain types of equipment, the MOD/JSDF is outsourcing tasks such as analyzing maintenance plans and collecting necessary data with the aim of reducing the number of inspection and maintenance items. Through these efforts, the MOD/JSDF will increase the number of operationally available equipment while reducing the burden on personnel engaged in sustainment and maintenance work and their units.

c. Introduction of Digital Transformation (DX)

To efficiently carry out various types of operations, it is necessary to drastically transform the way operations are conducted through digital transformation (DX), including the introduction of a latest digital infrastructure. To this end, the MOD/JSDF will promote the introduction of DX in the logistics support field to optimize sustainment and maintenance for equipment. Specifically, in addition to the introduction of AI-based supply management systems, the MOD/JSDF will optimize its sustainment and maintenance posture by improving the efficiency of inventory control and other aspects by using the results of demonstration tests for the introduction of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), an automatic authentication technology through radio waves to read and write information on integration circuit (IC) tags in a contactless manner to allow the inventory status of parts and other items to be grasped more accurately, as well as 3D printers, which can be used for the emergency manufacturing of equipment parts and other items.

d. Expansion of Performance Based Logistics (PBL)[33] and Other Comprehensive Contracts

After concluding a PBL contract for aircraft from FY2012, the MOD/JSDF has been expanding the scope of such contracts, including the conclusion of a PBL contract for gas turbine engines for naval vessels in FY2021. The MOD/JSDF will work to expand the scope of PBL contracts, which will increase the number of operationally available equipment, while verifying their cost-effectiveness to achieve effective and efficient sustainment and maintenance.

5 Improving the Resiliency of Facilities

(1) Current Status of and Initiatives for JSDF Facilities

Many JSDF facilities are aging, with approximately 40% constructed under outdated seismic standards. Therefore, it is necessary to upgrade these facilities to ensure the safety of personnel and to maintain their functionality even in wartime. To address this issue, the MOD/JSDF is conducting surveys of over 20,000 JSDF facilities located in 283 camp and base areas. Based on the results of these surveys, the MOD/JSDF is developing a Master Plan (MP) to guide the efficient rebuilding and improvement of facilities in accordance with established priorities.

Besides, as disaster countermeasures, flood prevention measures, slope collapse[34] prevention measures, and other measures are being taken.

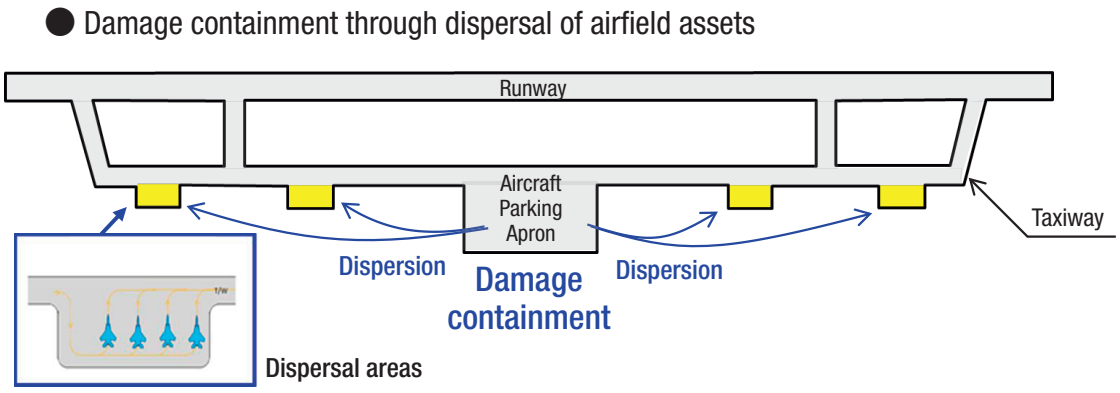
In addition to developing ammunition storage facilities, various measures are being implemented to enhance resilience, such as the dispersed placement of facilities essential for equipment operation, as well as recovery and contingency measures in the event that facilities are damaged.

Furthermore, in FY2024, the MOD established the position of Construction System Planning Division within its Internal Bureau to ensure the proper execution of the facility development budget—not only for the improvement of JSDF facilities, but also for those provided to the U.S. Forces in Japan. This initiative aims to enhance the fairness and integrity of bidding and contracting systems further.

See Fig. III-1-2-17 (Dispersal areas (image)), Part V, Chapter 2, Section 1-4 (Measures to Promote Harmony between Defense Facilities and Surrounding Areas)

33 Comprehensive contracts to improve operational availability of equipment and achieve long-term cost containment
34 A steep slope that collapses rapidly following a heavy rainfall or earthquake

Fig. III-1-2-17 Dispersal areas (image)



(2) Development of Ammunition Storage Facilities

In promoting the acquisition of various types of ammunition, including stand-off missiles, the necessary development of ammunition storage facilities will be undertaken. To this end, efforts will be made to accelerate the development of such facilities by implementing measures including the joint operation of ammunition depots by the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF; the shared use of U.S. military ammunition depots; and the dispersed placement of various types of ammunition across remote islands to ensure resiliency.

(3) Improvement of Resiliency of JSDF Facilities

To protect major equipment and command posts, etc. and ensure a tenacious fighting posture the MOD/JSDF will establish underground basing, reinforcing facilities and take measures against electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attacks, including the installation of filters on power lines. In addition, dispersal pads for fighter jets to deploy dispersedly and hardening hangars[35] are being developed.

With regard to reconstracting facilities, protective features against threats such as explosives, CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear) weapons, electromagnetic spectrum attacks, and guerrilla assaults are being equipped. In addition, alongside measures to address aging infrastructure, efforts will be made to ensure that facilities can fully function by reinforcing their structures according to their function and importance, securing safe separation distances between facilities, and consolidating facilities as appropriate. Lifelines such as electricity and water will also be upgraded through redundancy and the replacement of aging infrastructure, in coordination with facility reconstruction and improvement efforts. At the same time, base security functions will be enhanced and personnel requirements will be streamlined through the introduction of counter-drone equipment, thereby improving the resiliency of JSDF facilities.

(4) Maintaining and Strengthening the Functions of Camps, Bases, etc., that Serve as Bases for Disaster Response

To prevent the functional degradation of JSDF facilities due to potential damage from large-scale disasters, disaster prevention measures are being promoted at camps and bases where such damage is anticipated, such as from tsunamis. More specifically, measures such as locating power-receiving and -transforming equipment on high ground and installing flood barriers at entrances are being implemented. While addressing various challenges associated with climate change, the MOD/JSDF also advances the resilience of facilities such as camp and bases.

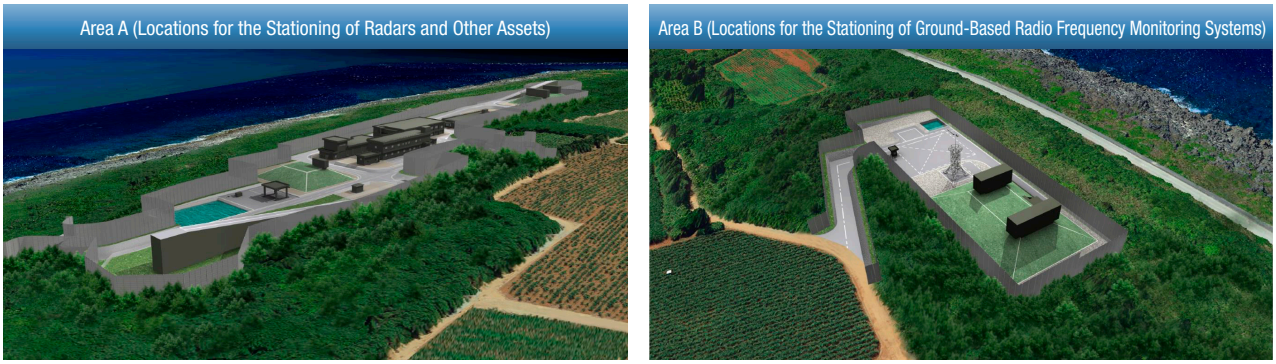
(5) Development of Facilities Required for New Unit Formation and Introduction of New Equipment

As part of facility development necessary for establishing new units and introducing new equipment, the GSDF will newly establish Camp Saga (tentative name) in FY2025, where the air transport squadron will be relocated. The MSDF will develop facilities in the Sakibe East Area of Sasebo to accommodate large destroyers and other vessels. The ASDF will develop facilities to receive F-35A fighter jets at Komatsu Air Base in Ishikawa Prefecture, F-35B fighter jets at Nyutabaru Air Base in Miyazaki Prefecture, and a mobile warning and control radars at Kitadaitojima Island in Okinawa Prefecture.

See Fig. III-1-2-18 (Facilities for Hosting Mobile Warning and Control Radars (Kitadaitō Island) (image))

35 Strengthening to withstand an attack

Fig. III-1-2-18 Facilities for Hosting Mobile Warning and Control Radars (Kitadaitō Island) (image)



Section 3 Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country

The JSDF must be strong in order to protect Japan, but national defense cannot be achieved without a whole-of-country approach. For this reason, besides the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities, Japan is developing a defense architecture for the whole country by integrating its national power, which includes its diplomatic, intelligence, economic, and technological capabilities, and systematically combining various policy means. In doing so, it is essential to strengthen such whole-of-government efforts while breaking down the stove-piping approach within the Government.

From this perspective, the National Security Strategy (NSS) calls for advancing the reinforcement of Japan's comprehensive defense architecture as a complementary initiative to the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities. It sets forth promotion of efforts in four areas: (1) research and development (R&D), (2) public infrastructure development, (3) cybersecurity and (4) international cooperation to enhance the deterrence capabilities of Japan and like-minded countries. In addition to these initiatives, continuous peacetime monitoring and surveillance, initiatives related to the space domain, and responses to large-scale disasters and the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals overseas are also efforts that require the full power of the nation. Thus, the MOD/JSDF will reinforce the defense architecture of the whole country while responding to the aforementioned efforts in close cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, local governments, and others.

1 Research and development

State-of-the-art science and technology is advancing at an ever-faster rate, making it extremely difficult to distinguish between technologies for civilian and security applications. Worldwide, innovation in civilian applications and innovation in defense applications have developed while influencing each other. Accordingly, in Japan as well, it is crucial to leverage R&D achievements being actively pursued by both the government and private sectors for defense purposes.

With this in mind, the NSS sets forth advancement of efforts in R&D fields, calling for the promotion of R&D in science and technology that contributes to the enhancement of the comprehensive defense architecture by matching R&D needs based on the views of the MOD with emerging technologies possessed by the relevant ministries and agencies.[1]

Based on this principle, research conducted by relevant ministries and agencies for civilian use that also contributes to the reinforcement of the comprehensive defense architecture will be promoted for the time being as "important technological challenges," and a matching project to be implemented from FY2024 was approved.

The relevant ministries and agencies will advance the approved projects in their initiatives, and identify and nurture projects with considerable potential to be linked to the MOD's R&D.

See Fig. III-1-3-1 (Overview of Matching Projects to be Implemented in FY2025), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 1-2-2 (Revitalization of the Defense Industry)

Fig. III-1-3-1 Overview of Matching Projects to be Implemented in FY2025

Important technological challenge	Overview of matching projects
Energy	• R&D on solar power transmission technology • R&D on high-performance energy storage technology • R&D on high-power laser technology, etc.
Sensing	• R&D on high-precision technology for PNT • Development of electromagnetic wave measurement technology for environment • R&D on to remote sensing • R&D on ultra-high sensitivity sensing technology • R&D on technology for fusing information from multiple sensors, etc.
Computing	• R&D on next-generation computing such as quantum computers • R&D on edge computing • R&D on using photonics-electronics convergence technology, etc.
Information processing	• R&D on prediction and extraction technology for big data • R&D on AI-based support for environmental and situational awareness • R&D on effective visualization technology for sensor data • R&D on biometric measurement and analysis technologies, etc.
Information communication	• R&D on high-speed, large-capacity, low-latency communication technology • R&D on high-speed optical communication devices • R&D on secure communication technology using quantum technology, etc.
Information security	• R&D on the sophistication of cyber attack observation technology • R&D on cyberspace security technology • R&D on security technology using secret computation, etc.
Material	• R&D on utilizing AI-based computational science and advanced measurement technologies for materials • R&D on materials and substances in the biotechnology field • R&D on self-repairing functional materials • R&D on advanced processing technology for heat-resistant materials, etc.
Unmanned, automation	• R&D on environmental recognition technology for drones • R&D on brain-machine interfaces • R&D on drone group control technology, etc.
Machinery (structure, design, propulsion, etc.)	• R&D on safety and reliability in harsh environments • R&D on design and manufacturing processes using numerical analysis • R&D on next-generation flight technology • R&D on satellite technology, etc.

1 Excerpt from the "Important Technological Challenges for Promoting Research and Development Contributing to the Reinforcement of the Comprehensive Defense Architecture" (August 25, 2023), compiled by the Ministerial Meeting on Research and Development and Public Infrastructure Development Contributing to the Reinforcement of the Comprehensive Defense Architecture (Chair: Chief Cabinet Secretary).

2 Public Infrastructure Development

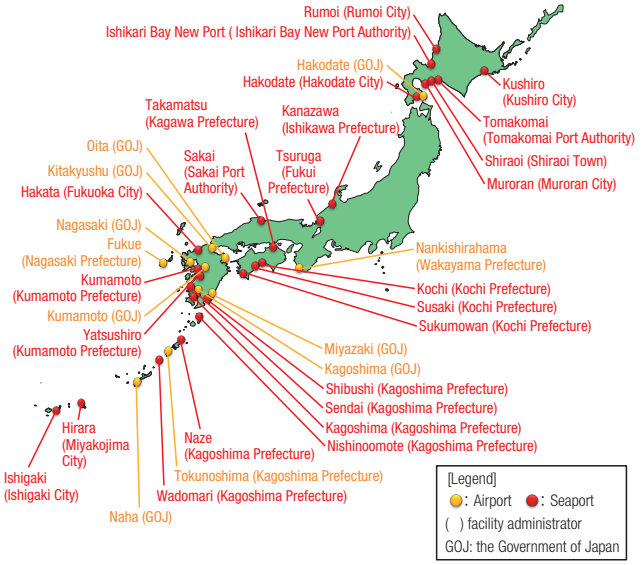
The NSS stipulates the establishment of a cross-governmental mechanism to develop and enhance the functions of public infrastructure such as airports and seaports, as well as the establishment of rules on their ordinary utilization, with the aim of enabling their smooth utilization by the JSDF and the Japan Coast Guard.

Under this policy, in order to effectively implement responses taking into account the security environment, frameworks for smooth utilization have been established between relevant ministries and agencies and each facility administrator. This ensures that the JSDF and the Japan Coast Guard can smoothly use necessary airports and seaports in peacetime, particularly on the southwestern islands but also in other regions. The airports and seaports for which frameworks have been established are designated as “Specific Use Airport and Seaport.”

At the “Specific Use Airport and Seaport,” necessary development or promotion of existing projects will be carried out, which contributes to primarily civilian use and also smooth use by vessels and aircraft of the JSDF and the Japan Coast Guard. Additionally, in order to facilitate smooth transport of JSDF personnel and supplies in peacetime, road networks will be developed to enhance accessibility between “Specific Use Airport and Seaport” and JSDF bases, etc.

See Fig. III-1-3-2 (Specific Use Airport and Seaport (as of April 1, 2025))

Fig. III-1-3-2 Specific Use Airport and Seaport (as of April 1, 2025)



3 Cybersecurity

1 The Whole-of-Government Approach

Based on the National Security Strategy (NSS), the government of Japan as a whole intends to strengthen its response capabilities in the field of cybersecurity equal to or surpassing the level of leading Western countries, including the introduction of active cyber defense in cases where there is a possibility of serious cyberattacks that cause national security concerns even if they do not amount to an armed attack.

In particular, projects are being implemented to implement policies to ensure cybersecurity of information systems of government agencies and the like. The cybersecurity budget are being increased and the National center of Incident readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC) will be fundamentally strengthened by newly assigning several senior officials and reinforcing the chain of command. In addition, regarding projects related to active cyber defense, in November 2024, a government expert panel compiled recommendations for its introduction. These recommendations included “Enhancement of Public Private Partnership,” such as mutual information sharing between the Government and private companies in the event of cyberattacks; “Utilizing I.D.C. (Information and Data under Communications),” such as analyzing I.D.C. under certain conditions; and “Remote Access and Neutralization Measures,” such as accessing the source of a cyberattack to prevent damage when an attack occurs. Cyber Response Capability Strengthening Act and necessary arrangement of relevant Acts,[2] which were compiled based on the aforementioned recommendations, were enacted in May 2025. As a result, the JSDF will become able to implement critical computing systems protection measures in case of special need to take response by the JSDF in order to prevent damage from cyber attacks targeting essential infrastructure.[3] Toward the enforcement of this legislation, the MOD/JSDF will proactively contribute to the Government’s efforts in close cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies.

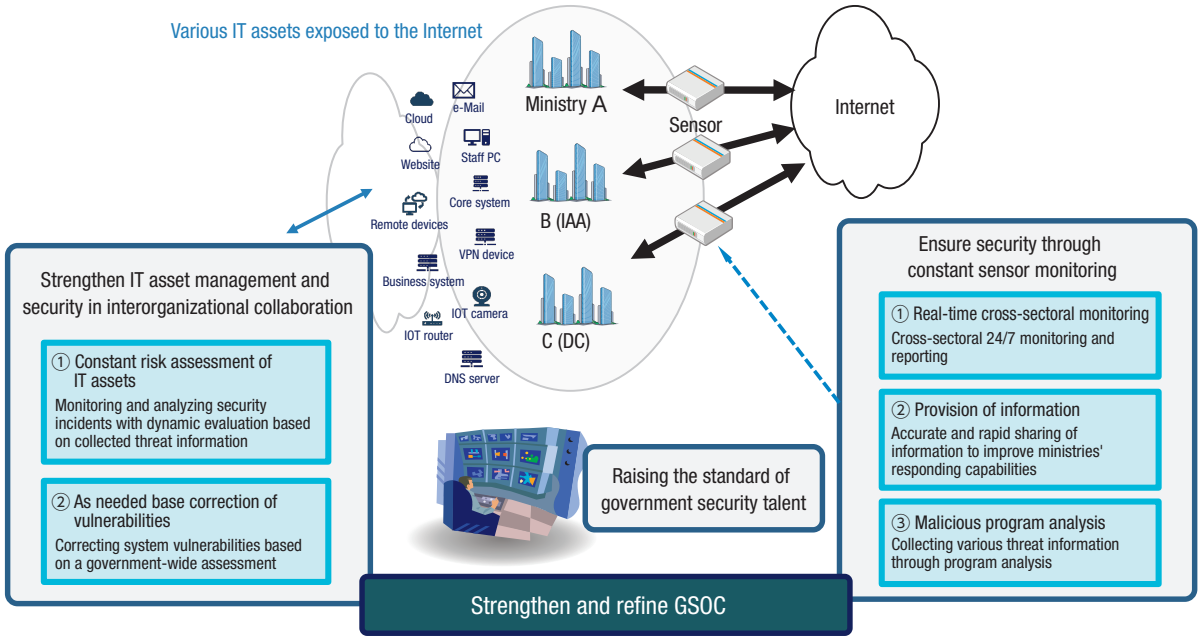
See Fig. III-1-3-3 (Strengthening Cyber Security of Government Organizations), Section 1-1-5 (Responses in the Cyber Domain), Section 2-4-2 (Cyber Domain)

2 Act on the Prevention of Damage from by Unauthorized Acts Against Critical Computers, and the Act on the Development of Related Laws Accompanying the Enforcement of the Act on the Prevention of Damage Caused from Unauthorized Acts Against Critical Computers

3 Electricity, gas, water, and other such business operators, as stipulated in the Act for the Promotion of Ensuring National Security through Integrated Implementation of Economic Measures

Fig. III-1-3-3 Strengthening Cyber Security of Government Organizations

◯Strengthen and refine the existing constant security monitoring framework (GSOC: Government Security Operation Coordination team).
◯To respond to cyber attacks, which are becoming increasingly severe in both quality and quantity, evaluate the systems of government organizations constantly and in a cross-sectoral manner, and introduce a mechanism to fix system vulnerabilities as necessary with the aim of creating information systems that are less susceptible to cyber attacks.



2 Collaboration and Cooperation with Related Organizations

Along with the National Police Agency, the Digital Agency, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the MOD/JSDF, as one of the government agencies that are members of the Cybersecurity Strategy Headquarters, contributes to the cross-government initiatives led by the NISC, including participating in cyberattack response training and personnel exchanges and providing information about cyberattacks as well as sending personnel to the Cyber Incident Mobile Assistance Team[4] (CYMAT). In addition, the MOD/JSDF is cooperating by applying the knowledge and experience of the JSDF to penetration tests of information systems of Government ministries and agencies conducted by the NISC.

4 International Cooperation to Enhance the Deterrence Capabilities of Japan and Its Like-minded Countries and Others

In order to create a security environment desirable for Japan, it is essential not only to fundamentally reinforce our own defense capabilities but also to enhance the deterrence capabilities of like-minded countries. Thus, in order to help strengthen the security and deterrence capabilities of like-minded countries, in 2023 MOFA established a new grant assistance framework, the Official Security Assistance (OSA), which is separate from Official Development Assistance (ODA). OSA is intended to respond to the security needs of like-minded countries through the provision of equipment and materials as well as development of infrastructure. The initiative is being carried out in close cooperation among relevant ministries and agencies, including not only MOFA but also the MOD.

In FY2023, it was decided to provide equipment and materials that contribute to improvement of surveillance and monitoring capabilities in the maritime security field to the armed forces of four countries: the Philippines, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Fiji. In FY2024, it was decided to provide equipment and materials that contribute to improvement of surveillance and monitoring capabilities in the maritime security field as well as air traffic control to the Philippines, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Djibouti.

See Fig. III-1-3-4 (OSA Results in FY2023-2024)

4 Team that provides technical support and advice to prevent the spread of damage, engage in recovery, investigate the cause and obviate recurrence when an information security-related event occurs in need of a unified response by the government.

Fig. III-1-3-4 OSA Results in FY2023-2024

Fiscal Year	Nation	E/N signed/ exchanged	Amount	Equipment
2023	Philippines	November 3, 2023	600M yen	Coastal surveillance radar system
	Bangladesh	November 15, 2023	5.75M yen	Patrol boat
	Malaysia	December 16, 2023	400M yen	Rescue boat
	Fiji	December 18, 2023	400M yen	Patrol boat, etc.
2024	Philippines	December 5, 2024	1,600M yen	Air surveillance radar system-related equipment, etc.
	Djibouti	December 25, 2024	1,100M yen	Coastal surveillance radar system, etc.
	Indonesia	January 10, 2025	1,000M yen	High-speed patrol boat
	Mongolia	February 10, 2025	1,300M yen	Air traffic control system

(Note) E/N is a document exchanged between the Government of Japan and the Government of the recipient country.

5 Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance from Peacetime

1 The Whole-of-Government Approach

Continuous information gathering and surveillance from peacetime, along with analysis of collected information in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, is vital for the early detection of signs of situations and for enabling swift, whole-of-government decision-making according to situations. For this reason, the Government as a whole conducts simulations and integrated training and exercises to improve the effectiveness of responses, while establishing coordination procedures, on a regular basis. In addition, with regard to the protection of critical facilities such as nuclear power plants and response to infringements that do not lead to armed attacks or Armed Attack Situations in areas surrounding remote islands, Japan conducts training and exercises between the police, the JCG, and the MOD/JSDF on a regular basis.

See Section 1-2-1 (Continuous, Persistent Information Gathering and Surveillance Surrounding Japan)

2 Reinforcing Coordination with the Japan Coast Guard

Ensuring maritime security is primarily the mission of the JCG, but in cases that cannot be handled by the JCG, the JSDF will also respond through maritime security operations and public security operations in coordination with the JCG.

In addition, in the event of an armed attack by other countries, the JSDF will respond through defense operations, which are its main duty. It is becoming even more critical to reinforce coordination between the JSDF and JCG to respond seamlessly to any circumstances. The MSDF and JCG conduct joint training on a regular basis to improve their skills and enhance their joint response capabilities.

The JCG training vessel Kojima (foreground) and the MSDF destroyer Izumo (background) during joint training with the JCG (June 2024)

Article 80 of the Self-Defense Forces Law[5] stipulates the "control of the JCG." In 2023, "control guidelines" were formulated regarding coordination between the two organizations in the event that an order is issued for defense operations, including specific procedures for control of the JCG by the Defense Minister based on the article. Following the formulation of the "control guidelines," the MOD/JSDF is working to further strengthen coordination with the JCG through joint training and other efforts.

5 Article 80, Paragraph 1 of the Self-Defense Forces Law states, "If the Prime Minister orders defense operations to all or part of the JSDF in accordance with to Article 76, Paragraph 1 (limited to the part pertaining to Item 1) or Article 78, Paragraph 1, all or part of the JCG shall be placed under the control of the Defense Minister when it is deemed that there is a special need to do so."

In October 2024, a tabletop exercise assuming an Armed Attack Situation was conducted at the MOD's Ichigaya area. The exercise verified the procedures established in the "control guidelines," including actions assumed to be carried out by the JCG under the control of the Defense Minister, such as the evacuation of residents using patrol vessels and the provision of information to ships navigating near dangerous maritime areas.

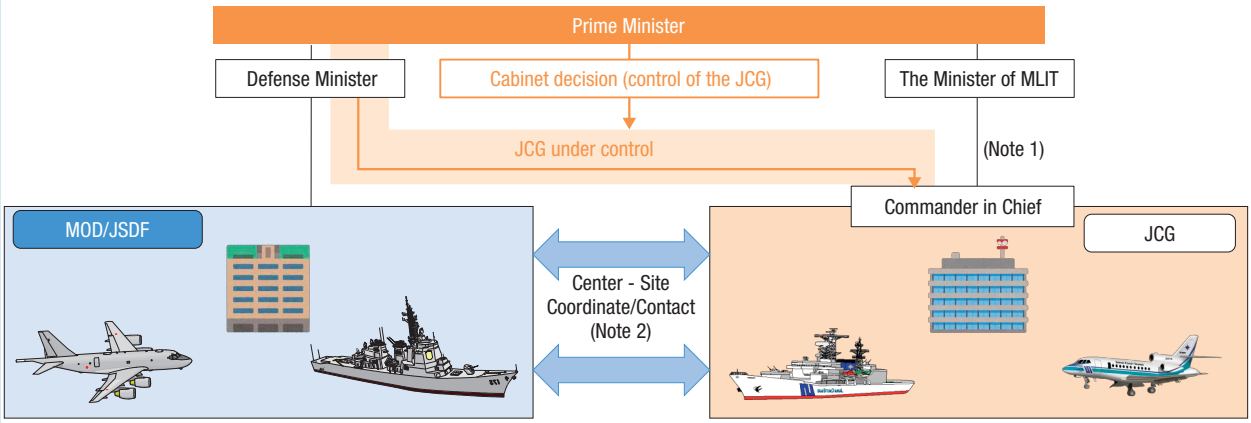
See Fig. III-1-3-5 (Guidelines for the Defense Minister's Control of the Japan Coast Guard under a Defense Operation Order in Armed Attack Situations), Part I, Chapter 3, Section 2-2-6 (2) (Military Activities in Japan's Surrounding Waters and Airspace)

Fig. III-1-3-5 Guidelines for the Defense Minister's Control of the Japan Coast Guard under a Defense Operation Order in Armed Attack Situations)

Command Procedure

●Following Cabinet decision, the JCG will be placed under the control of the Defense Minister.

Relationship between MOD/JSDF and JCG



(Notes) 1 The Minister of MLIT directs and supervises the Commandder in Chief with regard to personnel, accounting and other administrative matters.
2 The commander of the field unit of the MSDF will not command or control the field forces of the Japan Coast Guard.

Actions to be taken by MOD/JSDF and JCG (examples)

•Evacuation and rescue of residents •Provision of information to ships, evacuation support
•Search and rescue, life saving •Terrorism alert at port facilities •Response to a large-number of evacuees
(Note 3) The JCG operates as a police agency within the scope of its responsibilities as stipulated in the Japan Coast Guard Act.

6 Efforts Related to the Space Domain

1 The Whole-of-Government Approach

In 2023, based on the National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS), the Strategic Headquarters for National Space Policy formulated the Space Security Initiative for the first time, which concretized issues and policies in the field of space security, including the use of civilian technology in the defense sector and also decided on the Basic Plan of Space Policy, which reflects this initiative. Formulated based on the Basic Space Act, the Basic Plan on Space Policy is the most fundamental plan for space development and utilization in Japan and aims to strengthen the comprehensive infrastructure that supports Japan's space activities. The Space Security Initiative states that the goal of space security is for Japan, together with its allies, like-minded countries and others, to maintain the stable use of and free access to outer space, while promoting national peace and prosperity and the safety and security of its people through outer space. It also states that, based on the needs of the MOD/JSDF, government research and development will be actively linked to the fundamental strengthening of defense capabilities by using government research and also developing advanced technologies conducted by government agencies for defense purposes as well.

Subsequently, in the same year, based on the Space Security Initiative and others, a public-private council on strengthening the stability of the space system was established to first accurately identify and analyze the situation, then respond appropriately through public-private cooperation in the event

of an unforeseen space-related incident. Additionally, in March 2024, issues related to the maintenance and development of the technological, industrial and human resource base across the security and civilian sectors were examined to identify technologies for which Japan should promote development and then the Space Technology Strategy, including a technology roadmap indicating a timeline to develop such technologies, was formulated.

In addition, led by the Cabinet Office's National Space Policy Secretariat, which is in charge of planning, formulating and coordinating policies for the utilization of space development for the entire government, space policy is being promoted based on Space Activities Act,[6] Remote Sensing Data Act[7] and Space Resources Act.[8]

See Section 2-4-1 (Space Domain)

2 Strengthening of Cooperation with Related Organizations and Space-Related Industries

It is of great importance for both the lives of Japanese citizens and national defense to ensure stable utilization of space for purposes such as information gathering, communications and positioning. To this end, the MOD/JSDF is strengthening cooperation and collaboration, including research and development, with related organizations including the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and the private businesses. In doing so, the MOD/JSDF will promote investment in technological development in the private sector by further utilizing civilian technology in the defense field and enhance Japan's overall capabilities in space. In addition, in 2023, with the start of the operation of space-related systems the MOD began providing information, including orbit information on space objects, to private businesses and others that operate satellites. Furthermore, in 2023, the ASDF opened the Space Collaboration & Innovation Office in a private shared office with the aim of actively exchanging opinions with private space operators and other such purposes. The ASDF has stationed several of its personnel in this office, where they exchange views with private business operators. The knowledge gained through this is reflected in future equipment introduction and other matters.

Exchange of views with startup companies at the Space Collaboration & Innovation Office (February 2025)

7 Response to Large-Scale Disasters, etc.

1 The Whole-of-Government Approach

(1) Basic Concept

Large-scale disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons, infectious disease crises such as COVID-19 and other such issues are serious threats to the lives, health and property of Japanese citizens and require Japan to respond with all-out efforts.

In the event of a large-scale disaster, etc., the MOD/JSDF closely cooperates with the police, fire departments, JCG, local governments, and other related organizations to carry out life-saving operations, emergency reconstruction, livelihood support, and other such efforts.

At the initial stage of a disaster, the MOD/JSDF strives to promptly ascertain the damage situation and gives the highest priority to saving lives.[9] At the same time, the MOD/JSDF provides livelihood support while coordinating with local governments, relevant ministries and agencies, and others regarding division of roles, response policies, duration of operations, utilization of private-sector resources, and other matters. In doing so, if a local government's response posture is not functioning due to the effects of a disaster, the JSDF will initially provide specific support in the form of proposals, and subsequently shift to operations based on the needs of the local government. For this purpose, the JSDF is strengthening dissemination of information so that people who truly need support by the JSDF can easily access the information related to support.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-5 (Disaster Relief Dispatches and Others)

(2) Collaboration with Local Governments and Other Relevant Organization

It is important for the MOD/JSDF to strengthen collaboration with local governments and other relevant organizations under normal circumstances for the purpose of conducting disaster relief operations smoothly. For this reason, the JSDF implements various measures including: (1) Assignment of the post of Liaison Officer for Civil Protection and Disaster

6 Act on Launching of Spacecraft, etc. and Control of Spacecraft
7 Act on Ensuring Appropriate Handling of Satellite Remote Sensing Data
8 Act on the Promotion of Business Activities for the Exploration and Development of Space Resources
9 The JSDF has the "FAST-FORCE" unit on standby with a permanent state of readiness at camps and other locations throughout Japan to ensure that disaster relief operations are conducted promptly.

Management (administrative official) at the JSDF Provincial Cooperation Offices; (2) Temporary assignment of JSDF officers to the department in charge of disaster prevention at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and mutual exchange between administrative officials of both the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) Middle Army and Hyogo Prefectural Government; and (3) Recommendation of retired JSDF personnel with knowledge in disaster prevention in accordance with requests from local governments.

As of the end of March 2025, around 690 retired uniformed JSDF personnel are working in disaster prevention and crisis management sections, etc. at 493 local governments in 47 prefectures throughout Japan. Such cooperation in human resources is a very effective way of strengthening collaboration between the MOD/JSDF and local governments, and its efficacy was confirmed through responses to actual disasters. In particular, each GSDF regional army headquarters establishes a forum for interaction with senior directors for crisis management and other officials from local governments and shares information and exchanges opinions to strengthen collaboration with those local governments. In addition, the MOD/JSDF conducts disaster response training together with local governments, not only to improve disaster response capabilities but also to strengthen coordination. In the event of a disaster, they promptly dispatch liaison officers from units to local governments to facilitate smooth coordination between the local governments and the JSDF.

(3) Actions Based on the Five-Year Acceleration Measures for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Building National Resilience

In 2020, the five-year acceleration measures[10] for disaster prevention, mitigation and building national resilience were approved by the Cabinet. Based on these measures, from the perspective of maintaining the critical functions of the JSDF during disasters, the MOD is making focused and intensive efforts for strengthening infrastructure such as JSDF airfields and port facilities, developing equipment and materials necessary for restoring and utilizing JSDF facilities, and implementing earthquake proofing and aging countermeasures for these facilities.

(4) Disaster Relief Operations and Ensuring Japan's Defense Posture

In recent years, large-scale and prolonged disaster relief operations have been increasing. However, it remains essential to continue conducting training and exercises without interruption in order to maintain and improve skills and the regular missions of surveillance and monitoring, so that Japan's defense posture is not affected.

To this end, when a disaster occurs, the MOD/JSDF responds with their full capacity by making maximum use of the JSDF's capabilities for life-saving operations. As for operations such as livelihood support, the MOD/JSDF coordinates with local governments and relevant ministries and agencies to determine response policies, division of roles, and utilization of private companies, and carry out operations with an appropriate posture, scale, and duration. Going forward, disaster relief operations will continue to be conducted appropriately while ensuring Japan's defense posture.

2 Responses to Natural Disasters, Etc.

(1) Formulating Plans for Responding to Earthquakes

The MOD/JSDF has formulated the necessary plans to enable prompt and systematic disaster relief operations in the event of a large-scale earthquakes or tsunami, such as an earthquake directly under the Tokyo metropolitan area, a Nankai Trough Earthquake, or trench-type earthquakes in the vicinity of the Japan and Chishima Trenches, as expected by the Central Disaster Management Council.[11]

(2) Disaster relief for the Noto Peninsula Earthquake of 2024

On January 1, 2024, an earthquake with a maximum intensity of 7 occurred with its epicenter in the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture. In response to disaster relief requests from the governors of Ishikawa

REFERENCE: Disaster relief operations
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/saigai/index.html

REFERENCE: The MOD/JSDF's (disaster management) Twitter account
URL: https://x.com/ModJapan_saigai

10 In light of the increasingly severe and frequent occurrence of weather disasters due to climate change, the imminence of large-scale earthquakes such as a Nankai Trough earthquake, as well as the aging of infrastructure that was intensively developed from Japan's period of rapid economic growth, it is necessary to accelerate and deepen efforts for disaster prevention and mitigation as well as building national resilience. It is also essential to utilize digital technology to efficiently promote measures for building national resilience. To this end, efforts are being made for further acceleration and deepening of measures in the fields of "countermeasures against increasingly severe wind and flood damage, imminent large-scale earthquakes, etc.," "acceleration of aging countermeasures towards a shift to preventive maintenance of infrastructure," and "promotion of digitization, etc. to efficiently advance measures related to national resiliency." The scale of additional projects required in the five years through FY2025 is specified and focused and intensive countermeasures are to be taken.

11 As one of the councils in the Cabinet Office, this council comprises the Prime Minister, all cabinet ministers, representatives of designated public organizations and academic experts and is responsible for preparing the basic plan for disaster prevention, deliberation on important matters related to disaster prevention and so on.

Bathing support in Suzu City, Ishikawa Prefecture (April 2024)

and Toyama Prefectures, the MOD/JSDF carried out disaster relief operations such as life-saving activities.[12] On January 2, a Joint Task Force was organized under the command of the Commander of the GSDF Middle Army, and up to approximately 14,000 personnel were engaged in the operations. In addition to life-saving operations, the operations included medical support, transportation support, meal support, water supply support, bathing support, and road clearance to enable passage of vehicles. Efforts were made to conduct tailored operations that were considerate of disaster victims, including identifying their requests through visits to evacuation centers and operating rest facilities using PFI (Private Finance Initiative) ships. In addition, approximately 200 JSDF Reserve Personnel and JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel were mobilized to engage in livelihood and medical support activities. Furthermore, in response to a request for support, the U.S. Forces in Japan provided support for the transportation of relief supplies by air.

The MOD/JSDF shifted from a posture centered on the Joint Task Force to one centered on the GSDF Middle Army on February 2, with operations concluding on August 31 of the same year (operations in Toyama Prefecture ended on January 9 of the same year). ((1) Operations personnel (cumulative total of 1,140,000), (2) Supplies transportation (approx. 4.3 million meals, approx. 2.3 million bottles of drinking water), (3) Meal support (approx. 260,000 meals), (4) Water supply support (approx. 6,400 tons), (5) Bathing support (approx. 500,000 people))

Search for missing persons in Noto Town, Ishikawa Prefecture (September 2024)

(3) Disaster Relief in Response to Heavy Rain

a. Disaster Relief in Response to Heavy Rain on the Noto Peninsula, Ishikawa Prefecture

On September 21, 2024, due to the effects of the autumn rain front and a linear precipitation band, record-breaking heavy rain occurred centered on the Noto Peninsula of Ishikawa Prefecture. Special heavy rain warnings were issued for Wajima City, Suzu City, and Noto Town. As this heavy rain caused river flooding and landslides, in response to a disaster relief request from the Governor of Ishikawa Prefecture, the GSDF and ASDF conducted operations such as life-saving operations, road clearance, transportation of supplies, and water supply support with a maximum deployment of approximately 1,400 personnel. In October of the same year, operations in Wajima City and Noto Town were concluded. On December 15, all remaining operations in Suzu City, including ongoing bathing support, were concluded. (Cumulative total of approx. 26,000 personnel, 960 vehicles, and 120 aircraft)

b. Disaster Relief Following Heavy Rain in the City of Sakata and the Village of Tozawa, Mogami, along with Other Areas in Yamagata Prefecture

On July 25, 2024, due to the effects of heavy rain in Yamagata Prefecture, river flooding and other damage occurred. In response to a disaster relief request from the Governor of Yamagata Prefecture, the GSDF and ASDF conducted life-saving operations and other activities in Sakata City, Tozawa Village, and other areas in Yamagata Prefecture. (Cumulative total of approx. 2,300 personnel, 420 vehicles, and 10 aircraft)

Life-saving operations in Sakata City, Yamagata Prefecture

12 The disaster relief request from the Governor of Ishikawa Prefecture was made on January 1, 2024. The disaster relief request from the Governor of Toyama Prefecture was made on January 4 of the same month.

(4) Disaster Relief in Response to Landslides

On August 28, 2024, in response to a landslide that occurred in Gamagori City, Aichi Prefecture, the GSDF carried out life-saving operations and other activities following a disaster relief request from the Governor of Aichi Prefecture. (Cumulative total of approx. 100 personnel)

In addition, on October 23 of the same year, in response to a landslide that occurred in Nobeoka City, Miyazaki Prefecture, the GSDF carried out life-saving operations and other activities following a disaster relief request from the Governor of Miyazaki Prefecture. (Cumulative total of approx. 510 personnel)

Life-saving operations in Gamagori City, Aichi Prefecture

(5) Disaster Relief in Response to Bird Flu Outbreaks

Among the cases of bird flu that occurred between April 2024 and the end of March 2025, for those in which local governments were unable to respond on their own, the JSDF provided culling support at poultry farms and the like where outbreaks occurred in six prefectures (Iwate, Niigata, Ibaraki, Chiba, Aichi, and Shimane), based on disaster relief requests from the respective governors. (Cumulative total of approx. 6,500 personnel for all operations)

Culling support in response to a bird flu outbreak in Choshi City, Chiba Prefecture (January 2025)

VOICE

Voice of an JSDF member who worked on the Noto Peninsula Earthquake and the Noto Peninsula Heavy Rain Disaster

Warrant Officer DEMURA Satoshi, General Affairs Officer, Wajima Sub Base, 23rd Aircraft Control and Warning Group, ASDF

I was born in Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture and my own home and my parents' home are there. My own home and my parents' home were both damaged in the January 1, 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, and on September 21 the same year they were damaged again in the Okunoto Heavy Rain. I was shocked by the fact that the town I had been familiar with since my childhood had been hit by two disasters and now had an appearance I had never seen before. However, a strong desire welled up in me to contribute to my local community in any way I could. Regarding disaster relief operations, in the Noto Peninsula Earthquake we searched for survivors, transported supplies, supported the supply of food, and conducted public relations activities, and in the Okunoto Heavy Rain we mainly carried out public relations activities. Among these operations, the one that I remember in particular is the operation to support the supply of food in evacuation centers. In the ASDF, rations officers are specialized in cooking, but in disaster relief operations the majority of the members are comprised of people from other professions, and some of the young members were holding a knife for the first time. However, they were able to complete the mission by following the motto of "unity, cooperation, and flexibility." Furthermore, we received the feedback from the evacuated people that "the meals cooked by the personnel from Wajima Sub Base were delicious," which made us supremely happy. I felt like I was able to contribute to my local community a little.

The year 2024 was a hard year as we experienced two serious disasters and the disaster relief operations, but I was able to persevere without losing heart due to the understanding and support of my family. I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

JSDF personnel from Wajima Sub Base carrying out the operation to support the supply of food

(6) Disaster Relief in Response to Forest Fires

Among the forest and wildfires that occurred between April 2024 and the end of March 2025, for those that could not be extinguished through firefighting efforts by local governments, the JSDF conducted aerial firefighting and other activities using helicopters of the GSDF and ASDF, based on disaster relief requests from the respective governors in 14 prefectures (Hokkaido, Iwate, Yamagata, Gunma, Yamanashi, Tokyo (Izu Oshima Island), Nagano, Nara, Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Ehime, Miyazaki, and Kagoshima (Iwo-Jima Island)). In particular, for the forest and wildfires that broke out in Ofunato City, Iwate Prefecture in February 2025, which resulted in the largest burned area since the Heisei period, the JSDF responded in close cooperation with local governments and fire departments. A cumulative total of approx. 70 aircraft from the GSDF and ASDF were deployed for aerial firefighting and other operations. (Cumulative total of approx. 8,800 personnel, 1,100 vehicles, and 400 aircraft for all operations)

Aerial firefighting operation in response to a forest and wildfire in Ofunato City, Iwate Prefecture

See Reference 18 (Record of Disaster Relief (Past Five Years))

3 Transportation of Emergency Patients

The JSDF uses its aircraft such as helicopters to transport emergency patients from areas with insufficient medical facilities (transportation of emergency patients). In FY2024, out of a total of 377 cases of disaster relief, 318 cases involved the transportation of emergency patients, with operations on remote islands such as the Southwestern Islands (Okinawa and Kagoshima Prefectures), the Ogasawara Islands (Tokyo), and remote islands of Nagasaki Prefecture representing the majority of such cases.

Transport of emergency patients by ASDF aircraft in Okushiri Town, Hokkaido (April 2024)

4 Responses to Nuclear Disasters

In order to respond to nuclear disasters, the MOD/JSDF has formulated "The Nuclear Disaster Response Plan." The JSDF also participates in general nuclear disaster prevention drills jointly implemented by the government, local governments and nuclear operators, to confirm the effectiveness of municipal governments' evacuation plan and to strengthen cooperation with relevant agencies in a nuclear disaster emergency.

8 Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas

1 Basic Concept

Protection of Japanese nationals who are staying or traveling overseas is one of the most important duties of the Government.

In the event of natural disasters, turmoil and other emergencies overseas, the Defense Minister may order JSDF units to rescue or transport Japanese nationals and others overseas upon request from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and upon subsequent consultations with the Minister. For this reason, the MOD/JSDF closely cooperates with MOFA and other relevant ministries and agencies on a regular basis to ensure preparedness to be able to respond to any situations.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-7 (Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals Overseas), Reference 19 (Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas by the Self-Defense Forces)

2 Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

For prompt and appropriate implementation of rescue or transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas,

the JSDF maintains readiness to dispatch its units swiftly. Specifically, each JSDF designates the necessary personnel and units for dispatch: helicopter units and personnel for ground transportation units from GSDF; vessels such as transport vessel (including ship-based aircraft) from MSDF; and aircraft units and personnel from ASDF.

In addition, as close coordination among the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF is necessary when carrying rescue or transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, regular training is conducted to improve coordination procedures and capabilities. Such training is conducted both domestically and abroad with relevant organizations. During the annual multilateral joint exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand, a series of activities for rescue of Japanese nationals and others overseas are practiced with the cooperation of relevant ministries and agencies, the Embassy of Japan in Thailand, and others, thereby strengthening cooperation with the MOD/JSDF and MOFA.

To date, the MOD/JSDF has conducted a total of eight transportation operations involving Japanese nationals and others overseas. In 2024, one such operation was carried out, which was the transportation of Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic.

On September 27, 2024, due to a rapid deterioration in the local security situation in the Lebanese Republic, including large-scale airstrikes near the capital Beirut and ground operations in the south by Israel, the Defense Minister, upon request from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, issued an order to deploy ASDF transport aircraft to Jordan and Greece to be on standby. Following this order, on October 3 of the same year, two C-2 transport aircraft departed from Japan. On the same day, the Defense Minister, upon receiving a request from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, issued an order to transport Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic. On October 4, one of the two C-2 transport aircraft transported 16 Japanese nationals and others[13] from the Lebanese Republic to Jordan.

See Reference 20 (Record of Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas)

Japanese nationals and others being welcomed in Jordan after being transported from the Lebanese Republic

3 Initiatives to Ensure the Safety of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas in the Middle East and Africa Regions

The MOD/JSDF has utilized the operation facility in the Republic of Djibouti, which is used by the JSDF's counter-piracy unit, in situations such as the transportation of Japanese nationals and others from South Sudan in 2016 and the dispatch of an investigation team in response to the worsening situation in Ethiopia in 2021.

In light of this experience, the NSS indicates, "…while gaining understanding from the Government of Djibouti, the JSDF facility there, which has been in operation for counter-piracy activities, will be also utilized to protect Japanese nationals and others overseas." Subsequently, the Djibouti facility was again utilized in 2023 for the transportation of Japanese nationals and others from Sudan. Given these cases, the possibility cannot be ruled out that in the future, rescue or transportation of Japanese nationals overseas may be required in the Middle East and Africa. Therefore, in 2023, the Cabinet approved the "Government Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas in the Middle East and Africa."

In response, a new mission establishing temporary arrangements for the possible rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas was assigned to counter-piracy unit, such as the accumulation and management of equipment, defense cooperation and exchanges, information gathering and analysis, and other such activities utilizing the facility in Djibouti. The MOD/JSDF will take all possible measures to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals and others overseas.

See Reference 21 (Government Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas in the Middle East and Africa)

13 A total of 16 people were transported: 11 Japanese nationals, one foreign national family member of a Japanese national, and four French nationals.

Section 4 Training and Exercises to Reinforce Japan's Architecture for National Defense

1 Training to Reinforce Japan's Deterrence and Response Capabilities

In order for the MOD/JSDF to fulfil its mission of defending Japan, it is essential for all personnel and every unit, which is the core of the defense force, to maintain a high level of training and improve upon their skills on a regular basis. It can be said that a high level of capabilities and skills is the foundation of our nation's deterrence and response capabilities.

The MOD/JSDF actively conducts various high-level bilateral/multilateral training and exercises, and various exercises involving other ministries and local governments to further improve deterrence and response capabilities.

See Fig. III-1-4 (Major Training Undertaken by Japan and the Japan-U.S. Alliance)

Fig. III-1-4 Major Training Undertaken by Japan and the Japan-U.S. Alliance

1 Joint Training of the JSDF

It is of paramount importance that the JSDF be prepared to seamlessly and fully demonstrate its deterrence and response capabilities through repeated training involving joint operations of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF on a routine basis.

To this end, the JSDF has been conducting JSDF joint exercises since 1979 to rehearse joint operations by alternating between **field training exercises** and **command post exercises** almost every year. In addition, in order to respond to large-scale disasters and various other disasters in an expeditious and appropriate manner, the JSDF organizes various disaster prevention drills while also

KEY WORD **Field Training Exercise**

An exercise in which units are physically deployed and trained at a maneuver area or other such location.

KEY WORD **Command Post Exercise**

An exercise conducted primarily by staff officers at headquarters in a tabletop format.

actively participating in disaster prevention drills organized by the Japanese Government and local governments as part of its efforts to strengthen cooperation with various ministries and agencies, local governments, etc.

Furthermore, the JSDF has been conducting training regularly so that it can immediately rescue or transport Japanese nationals and others overseas, in emergency situations.

(1) Joint Exercise for Rescue (JXR)

In order to maintain and enhance its disaster response capabilities, the JSDF conducts disaster drills revolving around its command and staff activities in the event of a large-scale earthquake, the coordination between major units, and its coordination with disaster prevention organizations as well as the U.S. Forces in Japan. In the training conducted in May 2024, a trench-type earthquake in the vicinity of the Japan and Chishima Trenches was assumed. Training was conducted on the command and staff activities of the JSDF as well as cooperation with disaster-related organizations, the U.S. military, and the Australian military, aiming to enhance the disaster response capabilities of the JSDF.

(2) Remote Island Disaster Exercise (RIDEX) and Tomodachi Rescue Exercise (TREX), Japan-U.S. Bilateral Integrated Disaster Response Exercise

The JSDF conducts field training exercises on responding to sudden large-scale disasters on remote islands to maintain and enhance the JSDF's ability to respond to disasters on remote islands as well as strengthen collaboration with the U.S. Forces and relevant disaster prevention organizations. Training was conducted in December 2024 in the southwest region, as well as in January 2025 in the Kinki, Chugoku, and Shikoku regions. This training improved joint operation capabilities such as access to affected areas, and also strengthened coordination procedures with local governments and the U.S. Forces in Japan regarding various activity coordination procedures.

(3) Drills for Medical Treatment Activities Following a Large-Scale Earthquake

The MOD/JSDF participates in drills organized by the Cabinet Office involving medical treatment activities to be carried out in the aftermath of a large-scale earthquake, and maintains and enhances its disaster response capabilities by rehearsing various actions for disaster relief and coordination procedures with disaster prevention. These drills conducted in September 2024, in which field training exercises were conducted based on the hypothetical scenario of an earthquake directly under the Tokyo metropolitan area, saw participation from the MOD/JSDF and other relevant organizations (National Police Agency; Fire and Disaster Management Agency; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (including Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT)); Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; and the Japan Coast Guard, etc.), as well as several local governments (Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, and Kanagawa Prefectures).

Regional medical transportation training (September 2024)

(4) JSDF Joint eXercise Overseas (JXO)

In 2022, with the cooperation of Djibouti and Jordan, training on rescue of Japanese nationals overseas (RJNO) and others was conducted in actual operating environments in the Middle East and Africa. In this training, the cooperation with related organizations, the U.S. military, the Italian military, and the French military was strengthened regarding actions ranging from post-deployment of the dispatched Joint Task Force, to the protection and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas. Furthermore, the lessons learned from this training were utilized in the transportation of Japanese nationals and others in the Republic of Sudan in April 2023,

REFERENCE: Unit training in the JSDF
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/training/index.html

REFERENCE: Joint exercises and training
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/js/activity/training.html

REFERENCE: Overview of GSDF education and training
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/about/training/index.html

in Israel in October and November of the same year, and in the Republic of Lebanon in October 2024.

See Section 3-8 (Responses to Rescue and Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas), Chapter 3, Section 1-2-12 (15) (Jordan), Chapter 3, Section 1-2-13 (2) (Djibouti)

2 Training of Each JSDF Service

(1) Ground Self Defense Force

The GSDF conducts field training exercises at the regional army level to improve its response capabilities for various contingencies and other situations. In addition, from September to November 2024, the JGSDF Exercise 2024 was conducted with participation from GSDF units across the country. Through a series of actions rehearsed by various units from the operations preparation stage to the operations stage, the exercise aims to improve mission capabilities and operational effectiveness, and contributes to enhancing deterrence and response capabilities.

In addition, the GSDF conducts various exercises including the Fuji Fire Power Exercise,[14] parachute drop training from U.S. Air Force and other aircraft in Japan and overseas, training for amphibious operations, and live-fire training for medium-range SAM/SSM (surface-to-air missile/surface-to-surface missile) units to enhance various tactical skills necessary for joint cross-domain operations.

JGSDF Exercise 2024 (October 2024)

ANNUAL Exercise 2024 (October 2024)

(2) Maritime Self Defense Force

The MSDF conducts training between naval units, and between naval vessels, aircraft (including the ASDF) and ground units (including the GSDF), as well as mine warfare training in Japan and deployment training that leverages superior U.S. training infrastructure with the cooperation of the U.S. Navy in order to improve various tactical capabilities. In the JMSDF ANNUAL Exercise 2024 (comprehensive table top exercise) conducted in October 2024, exercises were carried out to practice procedures of logistic support required both in peacetime and contingency situations, for the completion of missions by the MSDF.

(3) Air Self Defense Force

The ASDF focuses on enhancing the professional expertise of its personnel in phases in order to fully utilize equipment with cutting-edge technologies, such as fighter aircraft, radars, surface-to-air guided missiles, etc. It also conducts unit-specific training and training on inter-unit coordination procedures involving units, such as fighter units, air warning and control units, and surface-to-air guided missile units, as well as comprehensive training that includes air transport units and air rescue units.

For example, the ASDF conducts the field training exercise Air Defense Command Comprehensive Training, in which all relevant units in Japan are mobilized, as well as PAC-3 maneuver and deployment training, overseas flight training, etc., to enhance maneuver and deployment capabilities and responsiveness. In addition, the ASDF is

REFERENCE: MSDF training and exercise
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/operation/training/

REFERENCE: ASDF exercises
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/asdf/report/cat-kunren/

14 This is also utilized as an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of recruitment and employment support by opening it to prospective recruits and supportive companies that assist with post-service re-employment, as well as by streaming the exercise online as part of proactive external communication.

strengthening its operation execution capabilities through Patriot live-fire training in the United States and training that leverages the Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center (AATTC) in the United States.

ASDF patriot live-fire exercises

2 Establishing the Respective Training Environments and Safety Management

1 Training Environment

Given the increasingly severe security situation surrounding Japan, it is important to work to establish units and other organizations and enhance the quality of the training so that the JSDF can exert its capabilities to the fullest. Because of this, JSDF training has been planned and conducted under conditions that are as close as possible to actual combat situations, yet it is necessary to further enhance the training environment in order to maintain and enhance the readiness of the JSDF. It is against this background that the MOD/JSDF is promoting initiatives to enhance the training infrastructure in Japan and abroad to conduct efficient and effective training and exercises.

As part of these efforts, the MOD/JSDF is working to expand the establishment and utilization of domestic maneuver areas in Hokkaido and elsewhere. Furthermore, the JSDF is also facilitating expanded joint/shared use of U.S. Forces facilities and areas located in Japan by the JSDF while accounting for relations with local communities. Furthermore, the JSDF will facilitate the use of places other than JSDF facilities or U.S. Forces facilities and areas, and the utilization of excellent training environments overseas, such as the U.S. and Australia, and introduce simulators actively.

Elsewhere, facilities are in the process of being established on Mageshima (Kagoshima Prefecture), where the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces will be able to conduct training and other activities. Furthermore, in order to maximize the capabilities of the JSDF in any situation, based on the belief that it is necessary to conduct training using civilian airports regularly, ASDF fighter aircraft trainings are conducted at civilian airports.

(1) Ground Self Defense Force

Maneuver areas and ranges are unevenly located and do not have sufficient space. Thus, it is challenging for the GSDF to conduct exercises with large units or artillery training with extended-range cannons for example. These constraints tend to grow as equipment is modernized. There are also constraints imposed by the urbanization of the areas surrounding maneuver areas and ranges.

Due to the circumstance, the GSDF conducts some of live-fire training of surface-to-air guided missile units and surface-to-ship guided missile units in the United States and the like, as it cannot be conducted in Japan. In addition, the GSDF is improving its tactical skills through participation in field training by utilizing excellent training bases that are not available in Japan, such as multilateral exercises overseas.

In addition, it conducts field training exercises at the division and regional army levels by maximizing the use of limited domestic maneuver areas, and also conducts more practical training outside of JSDF facilities and areas while obtaining the understanding and cooperation of local communities.

(2) Maritime Self Defense Force

The timing and location for using sea areas for training around Japan are limited by such factors as weather, ocean conditions, marine traffic, and fisheries.

Because of this, for example, training that must be conducted in relatively shallow sea areas, such as minesweeping training and submarine rescue training, is being conducted in places such as parts of Mutsu Bay and Sagami Bay. A new minesweeping exercise was conducted at the Sea of Sumounada in western Kyushu in March 2024. In addition, the MSDF is improving its tactical skills through

GSDF medium-range SAM live-fire training at McGregor Range, New Mexico, USA (October 2024)

participation in bilateral/multilateral exercises overseas, such as sending a minesweeper unit to the U.S.-hosted International Maritime Exercise-Cutlass Express (IMX-CE) held in the Middle East.

Furthermore, with the increase in the number of overseas missions, the MSDF also strives to conduct training systematically and efficiently so that a large number of units will be able to produce training results in a short amount of time. Through participation in multilateral exercises conducted overseas and entering the same training areas, and bilateral and multilateral exercises etc., when returning to base, we are working to improve efficient and effective tactical skills and strengthen cooperation and response capabilities with our ally and like-minded countries.

(3) Air Self Defense Force

Currently, since much of the training airspace surrounding Japan is not broad enough, the performance and features of aircraft cannot be fully demonstrated in some trainings. In addition, long trips to and from the training airspace are required in the case of some bases. Furthermore, in operating airports, it is necessary to take great care regarding aircraft noise in conducting early morning and nighttime flight training.

Because of this, the ASDF strives to ensure that its training is systematic and efficient. In the Iwo-To training airspace, for example, aircraft are dispatched successively from the units to conduct training intensively, focusing on training that cannot be conducted sufficiently on the mainland and other exercises. In addition, it conducts bombing and gunnery training with live ammunition by such means as joint use of USFJ bombing and gunnery areas.

Other efforts are being made to utilize the overseas training environment such as the live-fire training for Patriot missiles by anti-aircraft units in the United States.

See Reference 22 (List of Maneuver Areas), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

2 Initiatives for Safety Management, etc.

The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/JSDF constantly strives as one for safety management, such as by implementing the highest level of safety measures and precautions during routine training.

In June 2023, an incident occurred at the Hino Basic Shooting Range (Gifu Prefecture) during a live-fire training for new personnel, in which one JSDF cadet fired at three members, resulting in two members being killed in the line of duty. In April 2024, the MOD/JSDF released the results of an accident investigation, identifying the causes as follows: the JSDF cadet involved had not internalized the awareness and mindset regarding the importance of bearing arms; the personnel in charge of firearms training had not anticipated the contingency of an JSDF cadet firing at fellow unit members; and as a result, no physical separation had been maintained between the shooter, the firearm, and the ammunition, thereby allowing time for the individual to carry out the shooting act. As recurrence prevention measures, the MOD/JSDF will thoroughly enforce education, review the service discipline system, revise the ammunition issuance procedures, and ensure strict safety management such as enabling direct restraint in unexpected situations, thereby making every effort to prevent another such situation.

In April 2024, during a nighttime anti-submarine warfare training exercise, two MSDF SH-60K patrol helicopters crashed in the ocean east of Torishima Island in the Izu Islands. In July of the same year, the MOD/JSDF released the accident investigation results, stating that the cause of the accident was the difficulty in judging visual range at night and the inadequacy of lookout procedures, as well as insufficient altitude management in a complex operational environment. As recurrence prevention measures, the MOD/JSDF will thoroughly enforce lookout reporting procedures and responses, unify responsibility for altitude management and related matters under the maritime combat commander in all situations, and introduce other stricter altitude management measures, thereby making every effort to prevent another such situation.

In May 2024, during a grenade throwing training exercise at the GSDF Kitafuji Maneuver Area (Yamanashi Prefecture), an accident occurred in which one instructor was killed by shrapnel following an explosion. The MOD/JSDF released the accident investigation results, stating that the cause was a lack of understanding regarding the fragmentation characteristics of the grenade after it was thrown. As recurrence prevention measures, the MOD/JSDF will revise training manuals to ensure proper understanding of training procedures based on the fragmentation characteristics of grenades after being thrown, thereby making every effort to prevent another such situation.

In November 2024, a fire broke out on the MSDF minesweeper Ukushima while it was navigating north of Oshima off the coast of Fukuoka Prefecture for training purposes, resulting in the vessel sinking. The cause of the accident is currently under investigation.

In this way, any accident and incidents that may cause injury to Japanese nationals, damage their property, or lead to the loss of life of JSDF personnel, must be prevented at all costs. After thoroughly investigating the causes of these accidents and incidents, the MOD/JSDF will ensure that each and every member of JSDF personnel is reminded of the latest safety management guidelines. At the same time, the MOD/JSDF as a whole will make every effort to ensure safety in the operation of vessels, aircraft, vehicles, etc., through conducting safety education for JSDF personnel and the steady maintenance of equipment, etc., so as to ensure that public confidence is not undermined.

VOICE

Participating in the FY2024 Self-Defense Forces Joint Exercise for Rescue (JXR)

HIRAI Yuki, Mutual Aid Management Planning Section Chief, Mutual Aid Management Office, Fire and Disaster Management Agency

In the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, it was initially difficult to reach the disaster sites by land routes, so Self-Defense Force helicopters and ships were used to transport fire trucks and personnel by air and sea routes to reach the disaster sites. This experience has reminded me of the importance of collaborating with the relevant agencies and building a rapid transport system in the event of a contingency.

In the FY2024 Self-Defense Forces Joint Exercise for Rescue, I was able to carry out more practical transport coordination, such as conveying to the Ministry of Defense (MOD) transport needs, including the size of the units and the equipped vehicles and equipment, in order to rapidly send the Emergency Fire Response Teams to Hokkaido.

The role of the Self-Defense Forces in life-saving activities, such as providing transport support, clearing roads, and conducting large-scale searches, is becoming increasingly important for when a Nankai Trough earthquake or a trench type earthquake around the Japan Trench and the Kuril Islands Trench occurs. We will continue to strengthen collaboration between the Self-Defense Forces, fire departments, and other responding agencies, and respond to large-scale disasters with an all-Japan effort.

Transport collaboration at the time of 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

Map exercise in the Fire and Disaster Management Agency (this author is on the far right)

Chapter 2 Japan-U.S. Alliance

Section 1 Outline of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

1 Significance of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

1 Maintenance of Japan's Peace and Security

In the current international community, a robust defense system capable of responding to every contingency, ranging from all types of aggression, including the use of nuclear weapons, to coercion or intimidation by military power, is necessary to secure the peace, security, and sovereignty of the nation.

However, it is difficult even for the United States to guarantee its security on its own. Much more than that, it would be difficult for Japan to ensure its national security solely through its unilateral efforts given its population, land, and economy.

Consequently, Japan has maintained its peace, security, and independence centered on the Security Arrangements with the United States, the world's dominant military power, 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 the peace and security of the world and has strong economic ties.

Specifically, Japan and the United States will take bilateral action in the event of an armed attack against Japan, based on the provisions of Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, and Japan will provide facilities and areas for the U.S. Forces, based on the provisions of Article 6 of the treaty. If a nation plans to attack Japan, the attacker must be prepared to confront not only the defense capability of the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), but also the overwhelming military strength of the United States, due to the U.S. obligation to defend Japan in the event of an armed attack. As a result, the opposing nation clearly recognizes that it will suffer grievously if it carries out an invasion, and such desires will be abandoned at the planning stage. In other words, this serves as deterrence against attacks.

Japan intends to create a seamless posture and secure its peace and security by effectively utilizing the deterrence capabilities of the U.S. military together with Japan's own national defense architecture.

2 Maintenance of Peace and Stability in the Region surrounding Japan

Article 6 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty states that the purpose of the use of facilities and areas by the U.S. Forces in Japan is to contribute to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East. This provision is based on the recognition that the security of Japan is closely tied to the peace and security of the Far East region to which Japan belongs.

In the regions surrounding Japan, there are many states and the like with massive military power, including some that retain nuclear weapons or continue nuclear development. In addition, uncertainty over the existing order is increasing due to changes in the balance of power. The so-called gray-zone situations harbor the risk of rapidly developing into graver situations without showing clear indications.

In such security environment, the presence of U.S. forces in Japan provides deterrence against unexpected contingencies caused by various security issues or destabilizing factors, not only protecting the interests of Japan and the United States but also providing a great sense of security to the nations in the region and thus fulfilling a role of public goods.

Also, the Japan-U.S. Alliance based on the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements constitutes the foundation of the United States' commitment to the peace and stability of the region surrounding Japan. These arrangements, complemented by the alliances established between the United States and other countries in the region such as the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines, and also by the friendly relations developed with other countries, play an indispensable role in maintaining the peace and stability of the region.

3 Responding to Global Issues

The Japan-U.S. Alliance also contributes to Japan's ability to implement positive efforts to maintain the peace and security of the international community, including the promotion of multinational security dialogue and cooperation, and cooperation with the United Nations.

Currently, we are confronted with global security challenges that are difficult for any single country to tackle alone, including risks concerning stable use of the seas, outer space and cyberspace, acts of piracy, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, and international terrorism, and it is important for countries to work together from peacetime. The strong bonds forged between Japan and the United States are also playing an important role in the efforts implemented by Japan to effectively respond to such challenges.

In particular, under the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, the JSDF and the U.S. Forces are working together in peacetime in a variety of areas to strengthen their cooperation. This close coordination lays the foundation for various forms of global collaboration such as counter-piracy, undertaken by the JSDF and the U.S. Forces, and leads to enhancement of the operational effectiveness of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements.

The peace and prosperity of the international community are closely linked to those of Japan. Accordingly, by advancing initiatives for resolving global issues in cooperation with the United States, which has remarkable operational capabilities, Japan will be able to further ensure its security and prosperity.

2 Content of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation

The "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation" (the Guidelines), which show the general outline and policy direction of roles and cooperation between Japan and the United States, were formulated in 1978, and successively revised in 1997 and 2015. The current Guidelines, which were revised in 2015, update the general framework and policy direction for the roles and missions of the two countries, as well as modernizing the Alliance. The Guidelines also manifest a strategic vision for a more robust Alliance and greater shared responsibilities by enhancing its deterrence and response capabilities in all phases, from peacetime to contingencies.

The Guidelines define that Japan and the United States will work on a variety of measures during peacetime, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) activities, air and missile defense, maritime security, training and exercises, asset protection, and logistics support, and cooperate in such activities as response to a large-scale disaster in Japan to seamlessly ensure Japan's peace and security. The Guidelines also require both countries: to cooperate in international activities and promote and improve trilateral and multilateral cooperation for regional and global peace and security; to cooperate on space and cyberspace; and to develop and enhance bilateral enterprise through defense equipment and technology cooperation as well as intelligence cooperation and information security for further improving the effectiveness of bilateral cooperation.

See Reference 24 (The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation) (April 27, 2015) (tentative translation), Reference 25 (Chronology of the Japan-U.S. Alliance)

3 Policy Consultations between Japan and the United States

Japan and the United States have maintained close coordination at multiple levels, including the summit level and ministerial level, and have continually strengthened and expanded cooperative relations for the peace, stability and prosperity not only for the two countries but also for the entire international community, including the Indo-Pacific region.

Close policy consultations on security are conducted between officials in charge of defense and foreign affairs at various levels through meetings such as the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (SCC, or Japan-U.S. "2+2"), the Japan-U.S. Security Subcommittee (SSC), and the Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation (SDC). As the ministerial consultations among the top officials in charge of defense and foreign affairs of the two countries, the "2+2" Meeting represents such policy consultations, and functions as an important consultative panel.

In addition, seizing several opportunities, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) organizes Japan-U.S. defense ministerial meetings where discussions are made with a focus on the defense policies of the respective governments and defense cooperation, and furthermore, MOD officials, including Vice-Defense Minister and respective Chiefs of Staff of the JSDF, have working-level meetings and exchange opinions, etc. on a regular basis.

In order to further improve the credibility of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, the MOD is actively conducting such consultations and other activities to share information and views between Japan and the United States, and to discuss specific measures to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

1 Recent Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting

In February 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited the United States and held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Trump, who was newly inaugurated as President of the United States. The two leaders also issued a United States-Japan

Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (February 2025) [Cabinet Public Affairs Office]

Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (March 2025)

Joint Leaders' Statement. The two leaders emphasized that as Japan-U.S. cooperation for peace, the Japan-U.S. Alliance remains the cornerstone of peace, security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. In addition, in order to address an increasingly severe and complex security environment, the two leaders confirmed that they intend to further strengthen Japan-U.S. deterrence and response capabilities by enhancing defense and security cooperation, including by upgrading the respective command and control frameworks of U.S. and Japanese forces, increasing bilateral presence in Japan's Southwest Islands, increasing readiness through more realistic training and exercises, further enhancing U.S. extended deterrence, and promoting defense equipment and technology cooperation, including coproduction, co-development, and co-sustainment that bolsters allied supply chains and strengthens U.S. and Japanese defense industrial capacity, including maritime capacity. The two leaders announced their instructions to convene a Japan-U.S. 2+2 meeting at an early date to implement the above-mentioned cooperation in an expeditious manner.

2 Recent Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting

In March 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani held a Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting with U.S. Secretary of Defense Hegseth at the Ministry of Defense. The Ministers shared the views on the increasingly severe and complex security environment and confirmed that Japan and the United States would work closely with each other to further strengthen the Alliance capabilities to deter and respond in order to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." Specifically, they focused their discussions on the following: (1) With regard to upgrading respective command and control frameworks, the Ministers welcomed tangible progress, including the establishment of JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) and commencement of upgrade of U.S. Forces Japan as Joint Force Headquarters, and discussed to make continued efforts to realize further effective cooperation on bilateral activities from peacetime to contingency; (2) To work on expansion of bilateral joint presence in the southwestern region of Japan as one of the highest priorities of the Alliance, including enhancement of more advanced and practical bilateral training; (3) To mutually complement and strengthen the defense industrial base of Japan and the U.S. with regard to defense equipment and technology cooperation by accelerating initiative on missile co-production such as AMRAAM and co-sustainment of vessels and aircraft of U.S. forces towards the next iteration of Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS), while effectively utilizing its framework. In addition, the Ministers concurred that they will continue to advance multilateral cooperation including information sharing and operational collaboration with regional partners namely Australia, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, with Japan and the U.S. at the center of such cooperation.

In addition, in order to maintain deterrence and mitigate the impact on local communities, the Ministers reiterated the vital importance of the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, such as the return of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma including construction of relocation facilities of Futenma Relocation Facility at Henoko in accordance with the Okinawa Consolidation Plan and other existing bilateral arrangements, as the only solution that avoids the continued use of MCAS Futenma. The Ministers also concurred to advance cooperation to prevent recurrence of incidents and accidents involving U.S. forces in Japan.

See Fig. III-2-1-1 (Major Consultations on Policies Held between Japanese and U.S. Government Officials concerning Japan-U.S. Security Issues), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-3-2 (1) (Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS)), Section 2 (Strengthening the Joint Deterrence and Response Capabilities of Japan and the United States), Reference 26 (Japan-U.S. (Minister-Level) Consultations (Since 2021)), Reference 27 (Joint Statement of the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (U.S.-Japan "2+2")), Reference 28 (Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (the Japan-U.S. "2+2") (Outline) (July 2024))

Fig. III-2-1-1 Major Consultations on Policies Held between Japanese and U.S. Government Officials concerning Japan-U.S. Security Issues

Consultative Forum	Participants		Purpose	Legal Basis
	Japanese Side	U.S. Side		
Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (SCC) Security Consultative Committee (Japan–U.S. "2+2")	Minister for Foreign Affairs, Defense Minister	U.S. Secretary of State, U.S. Secretary of Defense (Note 1)	Study of matters which would promote understanding between the Japanese and U.S. Governments and contribute to the strengthening of cooperative relations in the areas of security, which form the basis of security and are related to security	Established on the basis of letters exchanged between the Prime Minister of Japan and the U.S. Secretary of State on January 19, 1960, in accordance with Article IV of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty
Security Subcommittee (SSC)	Participants are not specified (Note 2)	Participants are not specified (Note 2)	Exchange of views on security issues of mutual concern to Japan and the United States	Article IV of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and others
Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation (SDC) (Note 3)	Director-General of the North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director-General of the Bureau of Defense Policy, Ministry of Defense, and Representative of Joint Staff	Assistant Secretary of State, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Representative from: the U.S. Embassy in Japan, USFJ, Joint Staff, USINDOPACOM	Study and consideration of consultative measures to Japan and the United States including guidelines to ensure consistent joint responses covering the activities of the JSDF and USFJ in emergencies	Established in the 16th Security Consultative Committee on July 8, 1976 as a subentry under the Committee Reorganized in the Japan-U.S. vice-ministerial level consultation on June 28, 1996
Japan-U.S. Joint Committee (JC)	Director-General of North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director-General of the Bureau of Policies for Regional Society, Ministry of Defense, and others	Deputy Commander of USFJ, Minister at the U.S. Embassy, and others	Consultation concerning implementation of the Status of Forces Agreement	Article XXV of the Status of Forces Agreement

(Notes) 1 The U.S. side was headed by the U.S. Ambassador to Japan and the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command before December 26, 1990.
2 Meetings are held from time to time between working-level officials of the two Governments, such as officials corresponding in rank to vice-minister or assistant secretary.
3 A Council of Deputies consisting of Deputy-Director General and Deputy Assistant Secretaries was established when the SDC was reorganized on June 28, 1996.

Section 2 Strengthening the Joint Deterrence and Response Capabilities of Japan and the United States

Japan's NDS and the United States' National Defense Strategy are well aligned in prioritizing the prevention of unilateral changes to the status quo by force through integrating all approaches and means. Accordingly, from the viewpoint of reinforcing readiness and resiliency, imposing costs on opponents, and deterring invasion against Japan, Japan will further deepen discussion with the United States on their respective roles, missions, and capabilities, and further reinforce the joint deterrence capabilities of both countries in an integrated manner.[1]

Specifically, Japan will further deepen cooperation with the United States to smoothly implement allied cross-domain operations including space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum ones as well as to improve interoperability. Regarding Japan's counterstrike capabilities, Japan will work with the United States to establish a cooperative posture, including information gathering, in order to employ their joint capabilities more effectively. Furthermore, the bilateral collaboration will be reinforced in such areas 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.

In order to effectively realize the division of roles and missions between Japan and the United States in light of the fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities, Japan will ensure close operational coordination with the United States through Japan-U.S. bilateral planning. In addition, Japan will work to improve allied response capabilities, including readiness and interoperability of the Alliance, through more advanced and practical exercises and training.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that U.S. 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.

In order to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts as well as to deter various contingencies from occurring, Japan further expands and evolves operations such as bilateral flexible deterrent options (FDO)[2] and joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) as joint measures between Japan and the United States in peacetime. In order to effectively conduct these operations, Japan will actively make efforts such as promoting participation of like-minded countries and others as well as having the JSDF protect assets, namely U.S. vessels and aircraft.

Furthermore, as part of efforts to strengthen allied deterrence and response capabilities, Japan will on a regular basis increase joint/shared use of Japanese and U.S. facilities, promote mutual deployment of both countries' units to the other country's facilities for training, and make other efforts.

1 Cooperation in the Space and Cyber Domains

The National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) states that Japan and the United States will further deepen efforts to enhance cooperation and interoperability for the smooth implementation of Japan-U.S. joint cross-domain operations, including in the space, cyber, and electromagnetic spectrum domains.

In particular, it was confirmed at the 2023 Japan-U.S. SCC ("2+2") that both sides consider that attacks to, from, or within space present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance, and affirmed that such attacks, in certain circumstances, could lead to the invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. In April 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara received a courtesy call from General Stephen N. Whiting, Commander, U.S. Space Command, and both parties confirmed that the two countries would accelerate cooperation between their respective defense authorities, including Space Domain Awareness (SDA), toward strengthening capabilities in the space domain amid the increasingly severe security environment.

Furthermore, in December of the same year, the U.S. military newly established the United States Space Forces – Japan (USSPACEFOR-JPN) at Yokota Air Base (Tokyo) to provide expertise on space domain-related matters to all the U.S. Forces in Japan and to facilitate coordination with relevant Japanese ministries and agencies, including the MOD/JSDF.

Moreover, through working groups on the electromagnetic domain between the Japan-U.S. defense authorities as well as other means, the two countries are strengthening bilateral cooperation in the electromagnetic domain.

In addition, Japan and the United States exchange information on topics such as the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the area of security as well as multilateral challenges.

See Chapter 1, Section 1-1-4 (Responses in the Space Domain), Chapter 1, Section 1-5 (Responses in the Cyber Domain), Chapter 1, Section 1-1-6 (Responses in the Electromagnetic Spectrum Domain)

1 It should be noted that there is no change in the facts that all activities of the JSDF will be conducted pursuant to The Constitution of Japan, domestic laws and regulations, etc. under the independent judgments of Japan as a sovereign nation, and that the JSDF and the U.S. force will each act according to their own independent chain of command.

2 Deterrent measures that can be flexibly selected

2 Integrated Air and Missile Defense

Regarding the response to airborne threats coming to Japan, such as ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and aircraft, Japan-U.S. bilateral response capabilities have been enhanced by conducting Japan-U.S. bilateral joint air defense exercises in addition to sharing operational information and establishing response procedures. In addition, Japan and the United States are cooperating in the event of North Korea's repeated ballistic missile launches by utilizing the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM).

In the Missile Defense Review (MDR) released in 2022, the United States clearly indicated the importance of cooperation with allies, including Japan.

See Chapter 1, Section 1-1-3 (Responses to Missile Attacks)

3 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Activities

With regard to joint ISR activities, it is important to implement such activities broadly in the Asia-Pacific region with cooperation between Japan and the United States to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities of both countries.

The expansion of these bilateral ISR activities will function as deterrence, and will also ensure information superiority over other nations and enable the establishment of a seamless cooperation structure throughout all phases from peacetime to contingencies. At the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee ("2+2") held in July 2024, both sides confirmed steady progress in Japan-U.S. cooperation on intelligence collection, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). The two sides also recognized the achievements of the Bilateral Information Analysis Cell (BIAC) and concurred to strengthen and expand BIAC through continued discussions on future cooperative efforts.

4 Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and other Forces

Article 95-2 of the Self-Defense Forces Law states that the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) is authorized to protect the assets for the U.S. Forces and other forces engaged in activities to help defend Japan in cooperation with the JSDF. In 2024, the JSDF vessels provided protection for the U.S. Forces vessels four times during intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance activities, including the surveillance of ballistic missiles; Protection during bilateral/multilateral exercises was provided from JSDF vessels to the U.S. Forces vessels and from JSDF aircraft to the U.S. Forces aircraft, six and three times respectively.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-8 (Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and other Forces), Chapter 3, Section 1-2-1 (Australia), Reference 23 (Track Record of Asset Protection for the U.S Forces and Other Forces (JSDF Law Article 95-2))

5 Logistics Support

Japan-U.S. cooperation is also being steadily promoted through logistics support based on the Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) signed in 1996 and revised in 1999 and 2004. The Agreement is designed to positively contribute to the smooth and effective operation under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and to initiatives for international peace taken under the leadership of the United Nations (UN). Its scope of application includes various occasions such as bilateral training and exercises in peacetime, disaster relief activities, international peace cooperation assignments, international disaster relief activities, and armed attack situations. If either the JSDF or the U.S. Forces request the other party to provide supplies or services, the Agreement, in principle, allows the requested party to do so.[3]

Following the passage of the Legislation for Peace and Security in 2015, the new Japan-U.S. ACSA was signed in 2016, ratified by the Diet in 2017, and entered into force. This enabled the same framework as the pre-existing Japan-U.S. ACSA, such as settlement procedures, to be applied to the provision of supplies and services that had become possible under the Legislation for Peace and Security, so that food and fuel have been provided to the U.S. Forces engaged in information collection and other activities.

See Fig. III-2-2-1 (Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA))

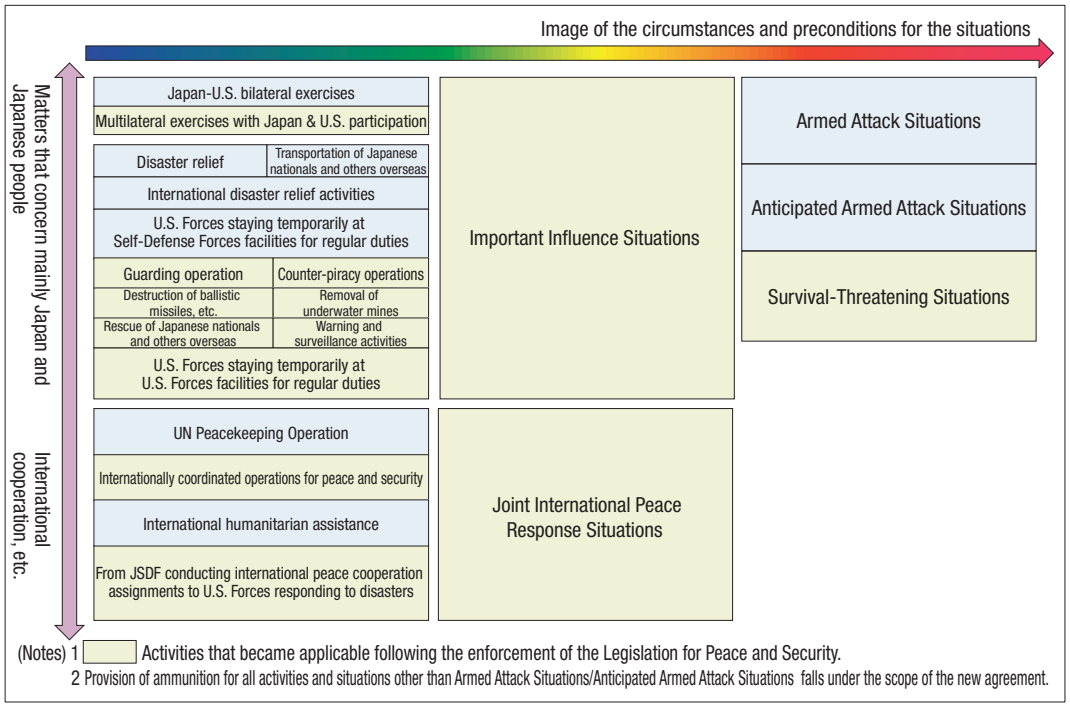
3 The categories of supplies and services as provided under the Agreement include: food; water; billeting; transportation (including airlifts); petroleum, oils, and lubricants; clothing; communications; medical services; base support; storage services; use of facilities; training services; spare parts and components; repair and maintenance services; airport and seaport services; and ammunition (provision of weapons is not included).

Fig. III-2-2-1 Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)

Significance of reciprocal provision of supplies and services

In general, supplies and services necessary for unit operations are replenished by the units themselves. However, in such cases where allied nations are operating together, the reciprocal provision of supplies and services on site would enhance the flexibility of the operations.

Scope of the Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)



(Notes) 1 Activities that became applicable following the enforcement of the Legislation for Peace and Security.
2 Provision of ammunition for all activities and situations other than Armed Attack Situations/Anticipated Armed Attack Situations falls under the scope of the new agreement.

6 Bilateral Training and Exercises

Japan-U.S. bilateral training and exercises in peacetime not only contribute greatly to maintaining and enhancing bilateral response capabilities by improving interoperability, including mutual understanding of tactics and communication, but are also beneficial for improving tactical skills for each participant. In particular, the knowledge and techniques that the Japanese side learns from the U.S. Forces, which have vast experience in actual fighting, are invaluable and greatly contribute to improving JSDF capabilities.

In addition, conducting bilateral training at effective times, places, and scales demonstrates the unified commitment and capabilities of Japan and the United States, which has a deterrent effect. In light of these perspectives, the MOD/JSDF is continuing its initiatives to enrich the contents of bilateral training and exercises.

See Section 6 (Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises), Reference 29 (Record of Main Japan-U.S. Bilateral Exercises in FY2023)

7 Extended Deterrence

Extended deterrence refers to a certain country's provision of deterrence capabilities to an ally or other entity. Japan is the recipient of extended deterrence provided by the United States, including nuclear deterrence.

The Japanese and U.S. governments established the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD) in 2010 as an enduring venue to discuss ways to sustain and strengthen extended deterrence. The EDD was held at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming in the United States in June 2024, and in Japan in December 2024.

In addition to the EDD, which had previously been conducted at the working level, a Japan-U.S. ministerial meeting on extended deterrence was held in July 2024 alongside the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting. At the meeting, both sides welcomed the convening of the first-ever ministerial-level meeting focused specifically on extended deterrence and the ongoing deepening of discussions aimed at strengthening extended deterrence. Both sides

also held in-depth discussions on enhancing cooperation to further reinforce extended deterrence and issued the Joint Statement of the U.S.-Japan ministerial meeting on extended deterrence. Moreover, in December of the same year, the Japanese and U.S. governments formulated the "Government of the United States of America- Government of Japan Guidelines for Extended Deterrence," which reinforce consultation and communication related to extended deterrence, strategic messaging to maximize deterrence, and measures for U.S. extended deterrence, bolstered by Japan's defense capabilities.

Going forward, based on these Guidelines for Extended Deterrence, Japan and the United States will continue their efforts to enhance U.S. extended deterrence through various high-level consultations such as the EDD and Japan-U.S. ministerial meeting on extended deterrence.

8 Joint/Shared Use

The expansion of joint/shared use of facilities and areas also means increasing bases for the JSDF's activities such as maneuver areas, ports, and airfields, which in turn enables closer operational coordination, enhanced interoperability, and improved flexibility and resiliency during bilateral activities. The JSDF has only a limited number of facilities in Okinawa, including Naha Air Base of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF), and most of them are located in urban areas, which results in operational limitations. The joint/shared use of facilities and areas of the U.S. Forces in Japan (USFJ) in Okinawa will greatly improve the JSDF's training environment in Okinawa, and facilitate implementation of bilateral training and exercises and enhanced interoperability between the JSDF and the U.S. Forces. It will also improve readiness and contribute to ensuring the safety of local people in case of a disaster.

Thus, while taking into account the JSDF defense posture in the regions, including the southwestern Islands, and relations with local communities, Japan and the United States are proactively engaged in consultations, and specific initiatives are steadily progressing. In addition, the development of training ranges in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands (Tinian Island) for shared use by the JSDF and the U.S. Forces is under consideration.

Moreover, securing ammunition storage is an important issue for acquiring the various types of ammunition necessary to ensure and maintain sufficient war fighting sustainability, and specific coordination has begun for additional joint/shared use of ammunition storage by the JSDF within the Kadena Ammunition Storage Area, a facility and area of the USFJ.

Section 3 Reinforcement of the Alliance's Coordination Functions

1 Establishment of the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM)

In 2015, based on the "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation" ("the Guidelines" hereafter), the Japanese and U.S. governments established the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) in order to seamlessly and effectively implement a well-aligned Japan-U.S. response to address any situation that affects Japan's peace and security or any other situation that may require an Alliance response.

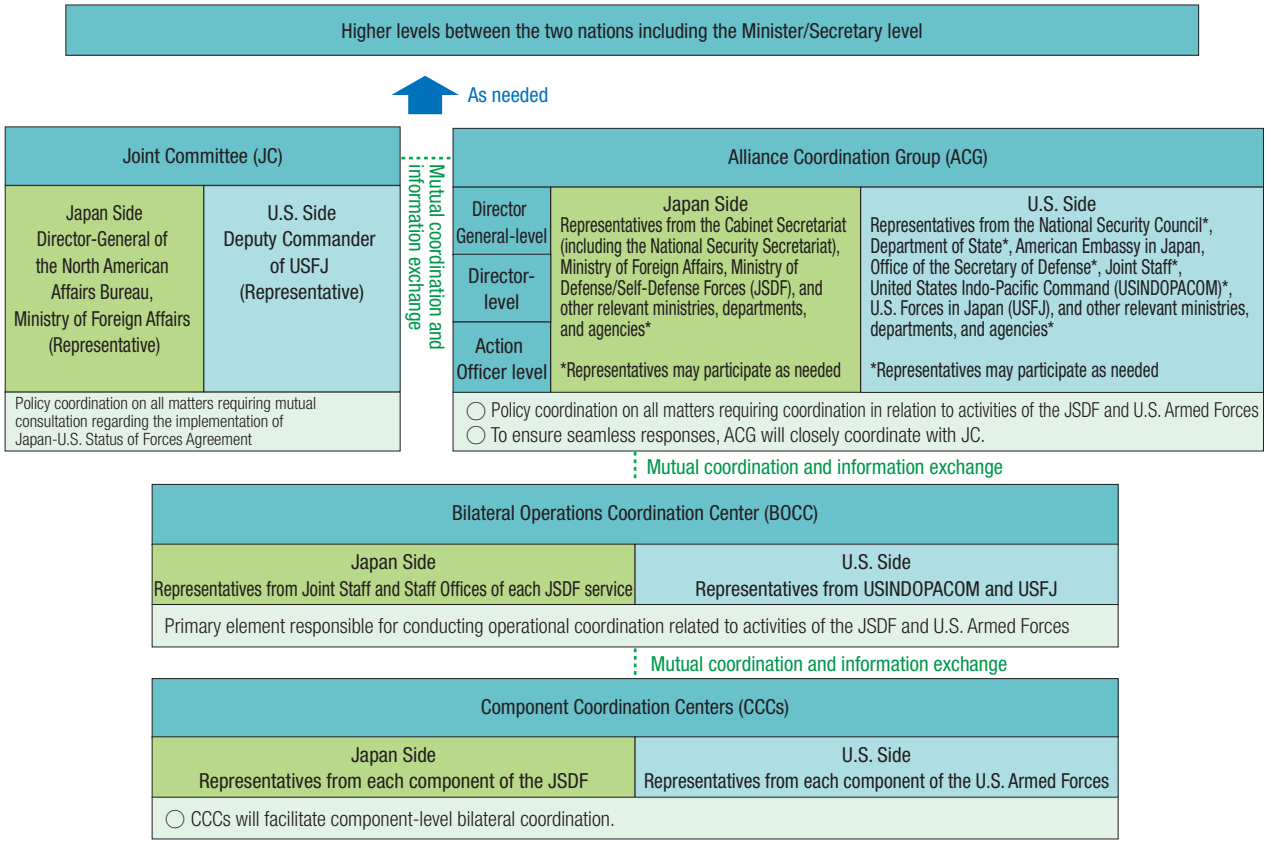
Based on the framework shown in Fig. III-2-3-1, the ACM coordinates policy and operational aspects related to activities conducted by the JSDF and the U.S. Forces in all phases from peacetime to contingencies. This mechanism also contributes to timely information sharing as well as to the development and maintenance of common situational awareness.

The characteristics of the mechanism include that (1) it is the standing mechanism utilizable from peacetime; (2) it can be utilized for large-scale natural disasters in Japan as well as for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and globally; and (3) it enables whole-of-government coordination while ensuring the involvement of relevant Japanese and U.S. organizations. These characteristics enable the Japanese and U.S. governments to respond appropriately and promptly when the need for coordination arises.

Since the establishment of the ACM, Japan and the United States have been utilizing the ACM to coordinate closely, including in response to the 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake[4] and the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake,[5] the ballistic missile launches by North Korea, and Chinese activities in the waters and airspace around the Senkaku Islands.

The National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) calls for Japan to further upgrade the overall coordination functions between Japan and the United States centered on the ACM and to promote closer operational coordination by leveraging

Fig. III-2-3-1 The Framework of Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM)



4 A series of seismic activities that occurred mainly in Kumamoto Prefecture in April 2016.
5 A series of seismic activities that occurred mainly in the Noto Peninsula in January 2024.

the ACM and others to enhance collaboration with like-minded countries and others centered around the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

See Fig. III-2-3-1 (The Framework of Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM))

2 Strengthening Bilateral Command and Control (C2)

At the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. "2+2") held in July 2024, the United States expressed its intent to reconstitute the U.S. Forces in Japan as a joint force headquarters in order to facilitate deeper interoperability and cooperation on bilateral activities in peacetime and during contingencies. The Japanese and U.S. governments agreed to establish working groups and to advance discussions on matters such as the counterpart relationship between the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC) and the U.S. Forces, while recognizing as one of the principles that the ACM remains the mechanism that facilities bilateral policy and operational coordination related to activities conducted by the U.S. Forces and the JSDF in all phases from peacetime to contingencies. Based on this, in September of the same year, a working group was established to enhance the Japan-U.S. command and control framework.

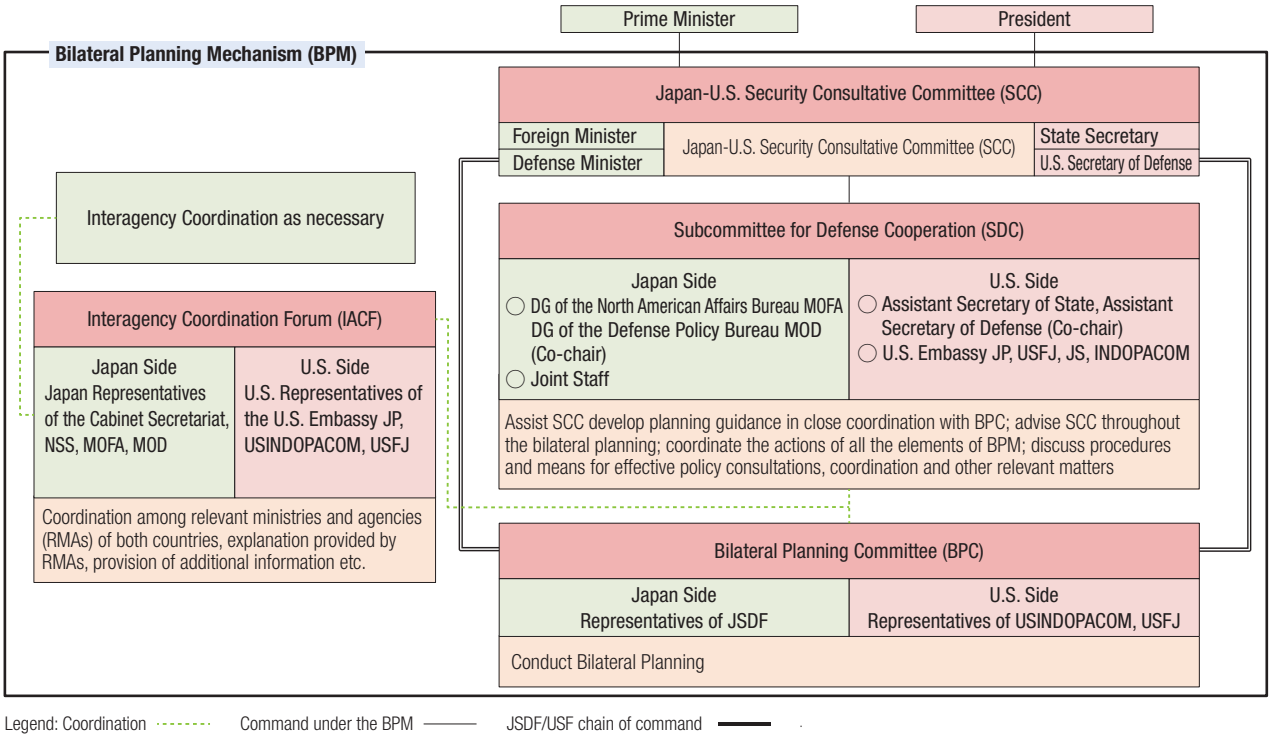
At the end of March this year, USFJ commenced its upgrade as a joint force headquarters (JFHQ) to enhance operational coordination capabilities with Japan. In alignment with the establishment of JJOC, USFJ created a new element – the JJOC Cooperation Team (JCT) – which is focused on further strengthening operational cooperation. This initial phase lays the groundwork for deepening interoperability and cooperation on joint bilateral activities in peacetime and contingencies as well as allowing closer communication through the new element. The upgrade of USFJ as a JFHQ will proceed in a step-by-step manner after consideration within U.S. The details of coordination and process of cooperation will continue to be discussed through the bilateral C2 working group.

3 Closer Operational Coordination

Based on the Guidelines, the Japanese and U.S. governments recognize the importance of collocating operational coordination functions. The JSDF and the U.S. Forces exchange personnel to ensure robust information sharing, to facilitate smooth coordination, and to support international activities.

Based on the Guidelines, the Japanese and U.S.

Fig. III-2-3-2 The Framework of the Bilateral Planning Mechanism (BPM)



governments established the Bilateral Planning Mechanism (BPM) in 2015 for the purpose of implementing the development of bilateral plans in peacetime in line with the Guidelines to enable effective bilateral responses to contingencies relevant to Japan's peace and security. In the development of bilateral plans, the BPM functions to ensure Ministerial-level directions and supervision and the involvement of relevant government ministries and agencies, as well as conducting coordination for various forms of Japan-U.S. cooperation conducive to the development of bilateral plans. The Japanese and U.S. governments are supposed to conduct bilateral planning through the BPM.

See Fig. III-2-3-2 (The Framework of the Bilateral Planning Mechanism (BPM))

VOICE

What I Learned Through My Japan-U.S. Coordination and Interpreting Work/What I Learned Through the Mansfield Program

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Since 2023, I have been working in the Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation Division of the Bureau of Defense Policy, where I engage in coordinating Japan-U.S. consultations and interpreting for senior officials. Consultations between Ministry of Defense and U.S. government/military officials are held frequently at various levels, including defense ministerial meetings. Building trust with each other is key to deepening the Japan-U.S. Alliance. In interpreting for the Defense Minister and other senior officials, I strongly feel that it is the words I interpret that directly reach the U.S. side and that I am playing an important part in strengthening the Alliance. I hope to contribute to the process of strengthening the Alliance by coordinating and providing accurate interpretation to achieve smooth consultations while building trust with U.S. officials.

VORNDRAN Kelly, Fellow, Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation Division, Bureau of Defense Policy

Being welcomed as a Mansfield Fellow into Ministry of Defense offices to work directly alongside my Japanese colleagues has been an invaluable experience. I have seen and been inspired by the dedication my colleagues have to supporting and strengthening the U.S.-Japan Alliance in order to bolster our respective national security. Furthermore, I have been impressed by the sheer breadth and depth of the Alliance across all domains and at all levels. From the experience of directly supporting a joint bilateral exercise, KEEN SWORD 25, to learning about Japan's ongoing efforts to reinforce its own defense capabilities by acquiring counterstrike capabilities and strengthening its defense industrial base, it is clear that the Alliance is only becoming stronger and more resilient. I am excited to use the experience and knowledge I have gained as a Mansfield Fellow to better support the U.S.-Japan Alliance's efforts to enhance interoperability, understanding, and readiness.

One of the authors providing an interpreting service

The authors working together in the same division

Section 4 Reinforcing the Foundation for Allied Response

1 Information Security and Cybersecurity

In order to further reinforce information sharing at all levels, Japan will fundamentally reinforce efforts related to information security and cybersecurity so that Japan and the United States can fully employ their capabilities. At the July 2024 Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. "2+2") meeting, the two sides emphasized that cybersecurity and information security form the foundation of the Alliance and discussed promotion of cooperation to strengthen response capabilities in the cyber domain in order to improve the Alliance's deterrence capabilities.

2 Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation

In order to ensure the Alliance's technological edge, interoperability, readiness, and warfighting sustainability, Japan will further reinforce defense equipment and technology cooperation through joint analysis and joint research in cutting-edge technology, joint development and production of defense equipment, improvement in mutual interchangeability, shared use and reinforcement of various networks, expansion of production and maintenance capabilities of U.S. military equipment in Japan, and reinforcement of supply chains. Japan proactively promotes cooperation in defense equipment and technology with the United States based on the mutual cooperation principle under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between Japan and the United States of America, while bearing in mind the maintenance of the technological and industrial bases.

In view of the progress in technology cooperation system between Japan and the United States, the improvement of technological level, and other factors, Japan decided to transfer its military technology to the United States regardless of the Three Principles on Arms Exports and related guidelines. In 1983, Japan signed the Exchange of Notes concerning the Transfer of Military Technologies to the United States of America,[6] which was later superseded by the Exchange of Notes concerning the Transfer of Arms and Military Technologies to the United States of America signed in 2006 and 2024.[7] Under these frameworks, Japan has decided to provide the United States with 20 items of arms and military technologies, including military technologies related to joint technological research on BMD. In addition, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting in 2022, Japan and the United States concluded the framework Exchange of Notes on Cooperative Research, Development, Production and Sustainment as well as Cooperation in Testing and Evaluation. Based on this Exchange of Notes, Japan will advance cooperation with the United States on emerging technologies. Both countries consult with each other at forums such as the Systems and Technology Forum (S&TF) and conduct cooperative research and development regarding the specific projects agreed upon at these forums. In 2023, the Defense Science and Technology Cooperation Group (DSTCG) was newly established to focus on discussion about technology policy between ATLA and OUSD (R&E). Furthermore, Japan concluded a Reciprocal Defense Procurement Arrangement[8] with the United States in 2016, and the defense ministers of the two countries later signed a Reciprocal Defense Procurement Memorandum of Understanding (RDP MOU)[9] at the Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting. The MOU promotes measures based on reciprocity (providing information necessary to tender bids for businesses of the other country, protecting submitted corporate information, waiving restrictions on participation by businesses of the other country, etc.), concerning the procurement of equipment by Japanese and U.S. defense authorities. The expiration of the Arrangement and the MOU was extended in 2021.

At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" and the Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting in 2023, the Ministers signed a framework for (1) accelerating joint research and development[10] and (2) strengthening supply chain cooperation,[11] and also (3) confirmed substantial progress in the framework for streamlining foreign military sales (FMS).

At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in April 2024, it was announced that the Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS) would

6 Exchange of Notes concerning the Transfer of Military Technologies to the United States of America
7 Exchange of Notes concerning the Transfer of Arms and Military Technologies to the United States of America
8 Exchange of Notes between Japan and the United States of America concerning Reciprocal Defense Procurement
9 Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Ministry of Defense of Japan concerning Reciprocal Defense Procurement
10 Memorandum of Understanding for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation Projects between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Department of Defense of the United States of America
11 Security of Supply Arrangement between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Department of Defense of the United States of America

be launched. This forum is based on the existing Japan-U.S. Systems and Technology Forum (S&TF) to restructure developmentally. DICAS aims to identify priority areas for cooperation in joint development, joint production, and joint sustainment through discussions at the Forum, taking into account the production circumstances of the defense industries in both countries, with the goal of meeting mutual and long-term demand for critical capabilities. The DICAS Forum was convened in June, October, and December of the same year.

Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-3 (Deepening Relationships with the United States Regarding Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation) explains the production, sustainment and maintenance of common equipment (F-35 fighter aircraft and Ospreys) between Japan and the United States.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-1 (Systems Regarding Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology), Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-3 (Deepening Relationships with the United States Regarding Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation), Reference 30 (Japan-U.S. Joint Research and Development Projects)

Section 5 Efforts Concerning the Stationing of the USFJ

1 Significance of the Stationing of the USFJ

1 Significance of the Stationing of the USFJ

Given the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, it is necessary to maintain the presence of the USFJ and its readiness to make rapid and agile actions in case of emergency in Japan and the surrounding areas even in peacetime, so that the Japan-U.S. Alliance based on Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements functions enough as a deterrent power that contributes to the defense of Japan and the peace and stability of the region. Therefore, Japan accepts the stationing of the U.S. Forces based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and it is a cornerstone of Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements.

Also, it is essential to realize the stable stationing of the USFJ in order to make a swift joint response to an armed attack on Japan based on Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. In addition, the actions of U.S. Forces for the defense of Japan are conducted not only by the USFJ but also by timely reinforcements. The USFJ is supposed to be the basis for them.

While Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty stipulates the duty of the U.S. to defend Japan, the U.S. is granted the use of facilities and areas in Japan based on Article 6 for the purpose of maintaining the security of Japan and international peace and security in the Far East. Therefore, though the duties of each side are not the same, they are balanced overall.

2 Measures concerning the Stationing of the USFJ

The Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)[12] stipulates matters pertaining to USFJ facilities and areas and the status of the USFJ, including the furnishing of facilities and areas for use by the USFJ (USFJ facilities and areas), and satisfying the labor requirements of the USFJ. In addition, the Supplementary Agreement on the Environment[13] enhances cooperation for environmental stewardship relating to the USFJ, and the Supplementary Agreement on Civilian Component[14] clarifies the scope of the civilian component, etc.

(1) Furnishing of USFJ Facilities and Areas

Japan furnishes USFJ facilities and areas under the provision of the SOFA, in accordance with agreements reached through the Joint Committee between the governments of Japan and the United States.

The Government of Japan concludes lease contracts with owners of private and public lands on which USFJ facilities and areas exist in order to ensure the stable use of these facilities and areas. However, if there is no approval by the landowners, the Government obtains usage rights[15] under the Act on Special Measures for USFJ Land Release,[16] by

12 Agreement Under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan

13 Agreement Between Japan and the United States of America on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship Relating to the United States Armed Forces in Japana, Supplementary to Agreement Under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan

14 Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States of America on Cooperation with regard to Implementation Practices Relating to the Civilian Component of the United States Armed Forces in Japan, Supplementary to Agreement Under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan

15 The term “title” means a legal cause that justifies a certain act.

16 Act on Special Measures for USFJ Land Release, Incidental to the Agreement Under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan

compensating any loss by the landowners.

There are some facilities and areas temporarily furnished to the USFJ in accordance with the SOFA when the U.S. Forces use JSDF facilities for a limited period, for example, during Japan-U.S. bilateral exercise.

(2) Satisfying Labor Requirements of the USFJ

The SOFA stipulates that the manpower (labor) required by the USFJ shall be satisfied with the assistance of the Government of Japan.

As of the end of FY2024, there were 25,683 USFJ local employees (hereinafter referred to as the "USFJ employees") at USFJ facilities and areas throughout Japan, working as clerks at headquarters, engineers at maintenance/supply facilities, members of security guards and fire departments on base, and sales staff at welfare/recreational facilities. They support the smooth operations of the USFJ.

The Government of Japan hires these USFJ employees in accordance with the provisions of the SOFA. The MOD supports the stationing of the USFJ by performing administrative work for personnel management, payment of wages, health care, and welfare, etc.

(3) Supplementary Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship

In 2015, the governments of Japan and the United States signed the Supplementary Agreement on the Environment, which came into force on the same day. This supplementary agreement represents an international commitment with legal binding force and sets forth provisions concerning the issuance and maintenance of the Japan Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS) and the establishment and maintenance, etc., of procedures for access to USFJ facilities and areas in the event of actual occurrence of an accident (leakage) that affects the environment and in the event of a field survey (including cultural property survey) related to the return of a facility or area.

See Part V, Chapter 2, Section 2-2 (Initiatives Related to USFJ Facilities/Areas)

(4) Supplementary Agreement on Civilian Component

In 2017, the governments of Japan and the United States signed the Supplementary Agreement on Civilian Component, which came into force on the same day. This Supplementary Agreement clarifies the scope of the civilian component, which is addressed only by a general provision in SOFA, in addition to developing criteria used in evaluating contractor employee positions for eligibility to receive designation as members of the civilian component, and stipulates the procedures for notification and review, etc., together with the exclusion of ordinary residents from the civilian component.

3 USFJ-Related Costs

USFJ-related costs include Host Nation Support, or HNS (cost sharing for the stationing of USFJ),[17] costs for implementing the stipulations of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) Final Report to mitigate the impact on the people of Okinawa, as well as costs for implementing measures that contribute to mitigating the impact on the local communities associated with the initiatives for the realignment of the U.S. Forces.

4 HNS (Cost Sharing for the Stationing of USFJ)

HNS (Cost Sharing for the Stationing of USFJ) plays an important role to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements. Due to soaring prices and wages in Japan since the mid-1970s, and changes in the international economic situation, Japan began to bear labor costs such as welfare costs for USFJ local employees in FY1978. Then in FY1979, it started to bear costs for the Facilities Improvement Program, or FIP.

In addition, as labor costs soared due to changes in economic conditions surrounding both countries, there arose a concern that the employment stability of the employees would be undermined, and then the activities of the USFJ could be affected. Therefore, in 1987, Japan and the United States concluded an agreement that sets forth special measures regarding Article 24 of the SOFA (the Special Measures Agreement, or SMA)[18] as exceptional, limited, and provisional measures relating to the cost sharing principle of the SOFA.

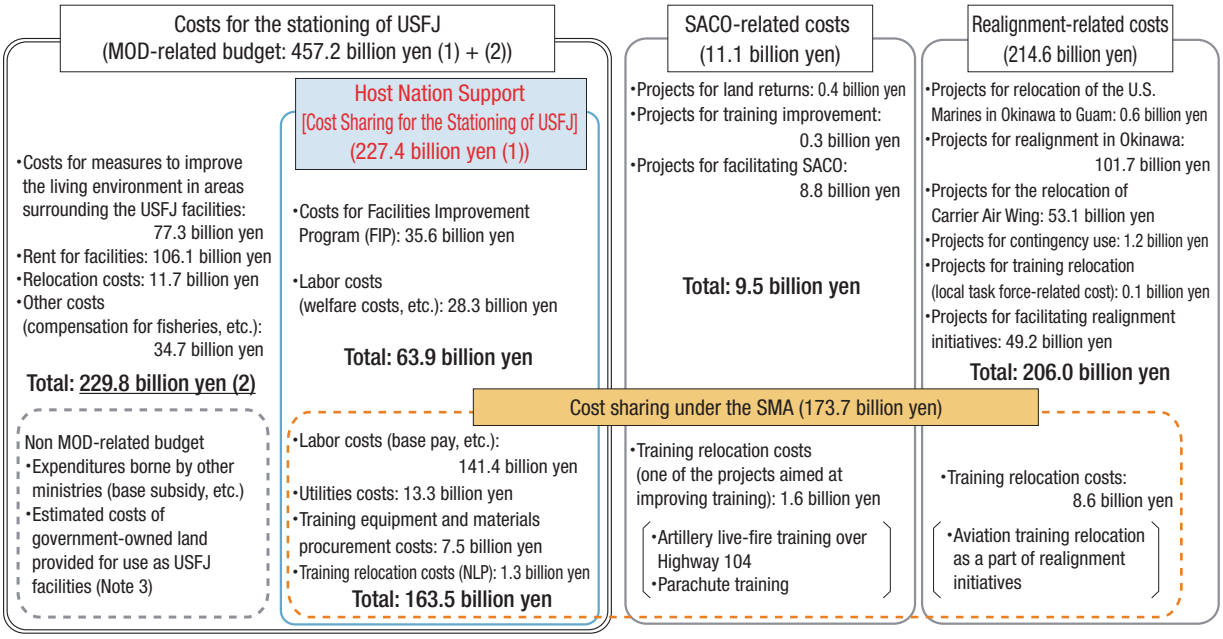
Based on this SMA, Japan started to bear labor costs of eight categories such as the adjustment allowance (currently replaced by the regional allowance). As the SMA was revised later on, the costs shared by Japan have covered labor costs including base pay, and utilities costs from FY1991, training relocation costs from FY1996, and training material and equipment procurement costs from FY2022.

See Fig. III-2-5-1 (USFJ-Related Costs (Budget for FY2025)), Fig. III-2-5-2 (Japan's Cost Sharing Under the SMA for HNS (Cost Sharing for the Stationing of USFJ), etc.)

17 Based on the consensus that these costs will build the foundation to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a result of the negotiations over this SMA (Act on New Special Measures for Article 24 of the SOFA), the Japanese side has decided to refer to this budget by a Japanese phrase that points to its goal of enhancing Alliance readiness and resiliency.

18 Agreement between Japan and the United States of America concerning Special Measures relating to Article XXIV of the Agreement under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan

Fig. III-2-5-1 USFJ-Related Costs (Budget for FY2025)



(Notes) 1 Training relocation costs under the SMA extend into HNS (Cost sharing for the stationing of USFJ) as well as SACO-related costs and the realignment-related costs.
2 The SACO-related costs refer to the costs for implementing the contents of the SACO Final Report to reduce the impact on the people of Okinawa, while the realignment-related costs refer to the costs relating to the measures that contribute to reducing the impact on local communities as a part of the realignment initiatives. On the other hand, since HNS (Cost sharing for the stationing of USFJ) is Japan's voluntary effort to bear some costs in light of the importance of ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, its nature is different from the SACO-related costs and the realignment-related costs, and is categorized separately.
3 The costs for the stationing of USFJ include the MOD-related budget, other ministry-related budgets (base subsidy, etc.: 39.9 billion yen, FY2024 budget) and the estimated costs of government-owned land provided for use as USFJ facilities (164.5 billion yen, FY2024 estimate).
4 Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Fig. III-2-5-2 Japan's Cost Sharing Under the SMA for HNS (Cost Sharing for the Stationing of USFJ), etc.

SMA	Effective Period	Five years (FY2022 to FY2026)
	Labor Costs	23,178 people out of all the workers.
	Utilities Costs	23.4 billion yen for FY2022 and FY2023, 15.1 billion yen for FY2024, and 13.3 billion yen for FY2025 and FY2026.
	Training Equipment and Materials Procurement Costs	Up to 20 billion yen over the five years will be borne for costs related to the procurement of training equipment and materials that will contribute not only to the readiness of the USFJ, but also to the enhancement of interoperability between the JSDF and USFJ.
	Training Relocation Costs	While maintaining the current framework and standards, Alaska will become a permissible training relocation site for the Aviation Training Relocation program. The annual training relocation costs funded by Japan will be approximately equal to the budget amount FY2021, which is approximately 11.4 billion yen.
FIP		Up to 164.1 billion yen over the five years, with focus on projects that contribute to the readiness and resiliency of the USFJ.

2 Efforts for the Realignment of the USFJ

1 USFJ Realignment Plan

(1) Background and Overview

"The United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" (Roadmap) was set forth in 2006. Subsequently, the following factors were set forth: (1) the necessity of implementing measures to realize visible mitigation of the impact on Okinawa promptly and steadily; (2) the necessity of balancing the Realignment Plan and the strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region, which was set out in the U.S. Defense Strategic Guidance released in 2012; and (3) the reduction in the cost associated with the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps to Guam demanded by the U.S. Congress. The Realignment Plan was coordinated during the 2012 Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee ("2+2" Meeting) in light of those factors.

The 2006 Roadmap stated that among the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) stationed in Okinawa, the main focus of the relocation to Guam would be the command elements. However, the United States decided to alter the composition of the units and to deploy the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF), consisting of command, ground, aviation and logistics support elements, in Japan, Guam, and Hawaii, as well as in Australia as a rotational unit. In addition, the governments of Japan and the United States decided to delink both the relocation of U.S. Marine Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam and the resulting land returns south of Kadena Air Base from the progress on the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF).

See Reference 31 (United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation (tentative translation))

(2) Readjustment of the USFJ Realignment Plan

In order to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance in response to the increasingly severe security environment, during the "2+2" Meeting in 2023, Japan and the United States decided to optimize the posture of the U.S. forces by further enhancing the force posture of the USFJ to have more versatile, resilient, and mobile capabilities, and by readjusting the Realignment Plan that was adjusted in 2012. Specifically, it was agreed that the 3rd Marine Division Headquarters and the 12th Marine Regiment will remain in Okinawa, and that the 12th Marine Regiment will be reorganized into the Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) by 2025.

In readjusting the Realignment Plan, the basic tenets of the current Realignment Plan are being maintained, and maximum consideration is being given to mitigating the impact on Okinawa. Specifically, Japan and the United States have confirmed that (1) the number of U.S. Marine Corps personnel in Okinawa after the realignment will continue to be approximately 10,000; (2) the realignment will not affect the lands scheduled to be returned in the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, nor will it affect the progress of the FRF at Camp Schwab; and (3) there will be no change in the commencement of the relocation of Marines Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam, which will begin in 2024.

Combined with the enhanced capabilities and posture of the JSDF, this initiative will greatly enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Japan will continue to hold close consultations to further optimize the posture of the USFJ.

2 Progress of the Realignment of the USFJ

Various efforts have been made for the realignment of the USFJ, including the relocation of carrier-based aircraft from Naval Air Facility Atsugi (Kanagawa Prefecture) to MCAS Iwakuni (Yamaguchi Prefecture), and the relocation of KC-130 air refueling aircraft from MCAS Futenma (Okinawa Prefecture) to MCAS Iwakuni, as well as their rotational deployment to Kanoya Air Base of the Maritime Self-Defense Force (Kagoshima Prefecture).

The MOD is continuing promotion of efforts to improve the JSDF facilities on Mageshima (Nishinoomote City, Kagoshima Prefecture) that will be used for field-carrier landing practice (FCLP), return of land south of Kadena Air Base including MCAS Futenma, and relocation of U.S. Marine Corps personnel stationed in Okinawa to Guam.

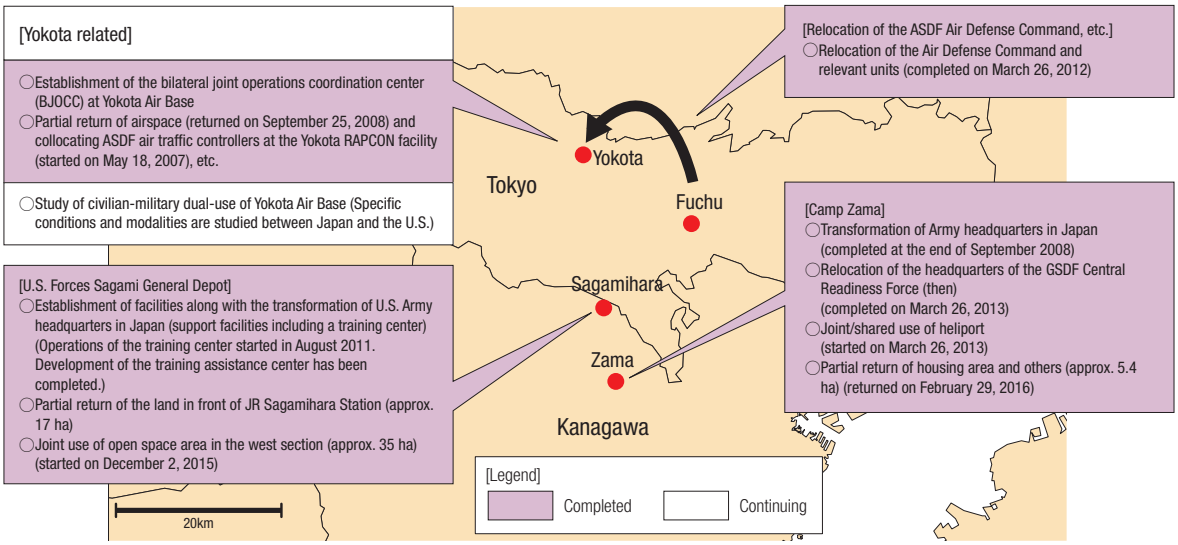
See Fig. III-2-5-3 and 4 (Progress of Force Structure Realignment of the USFJ and JSDF Described in "the United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" (1) and (2))

REFERENCE: Policies regarding U.S. Forces in Japan
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/zaibeigun/index.html

REFERENCE: Facility development on Mageshima
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/chouwa/mage/index.html

Fig. III-2-5-3 Progress of Force Structure Realignment of the USFJ and JSDF Described in "the United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" (1)

1 Realignment in the Kanto Area



2 Realignment in Okinawa

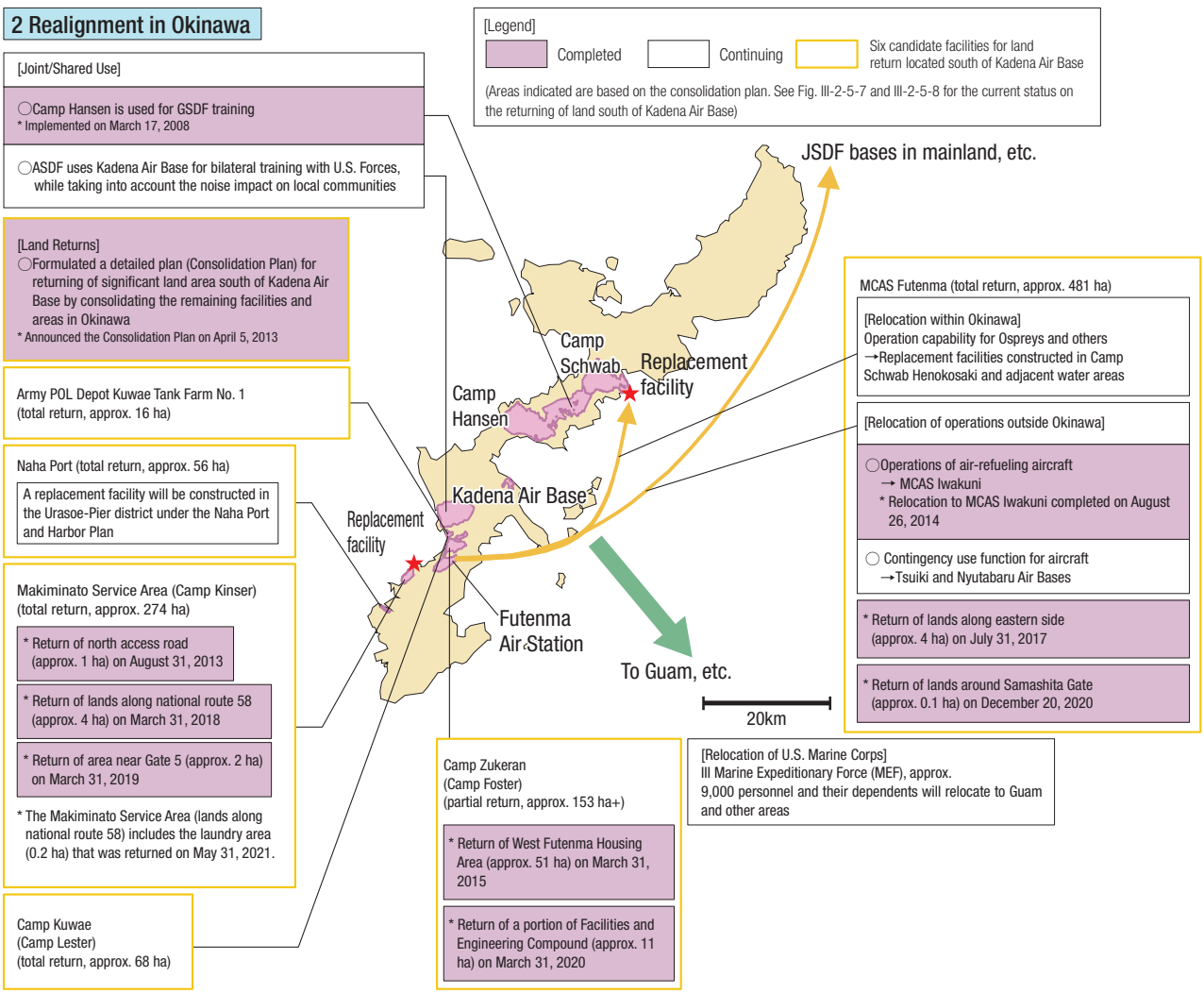
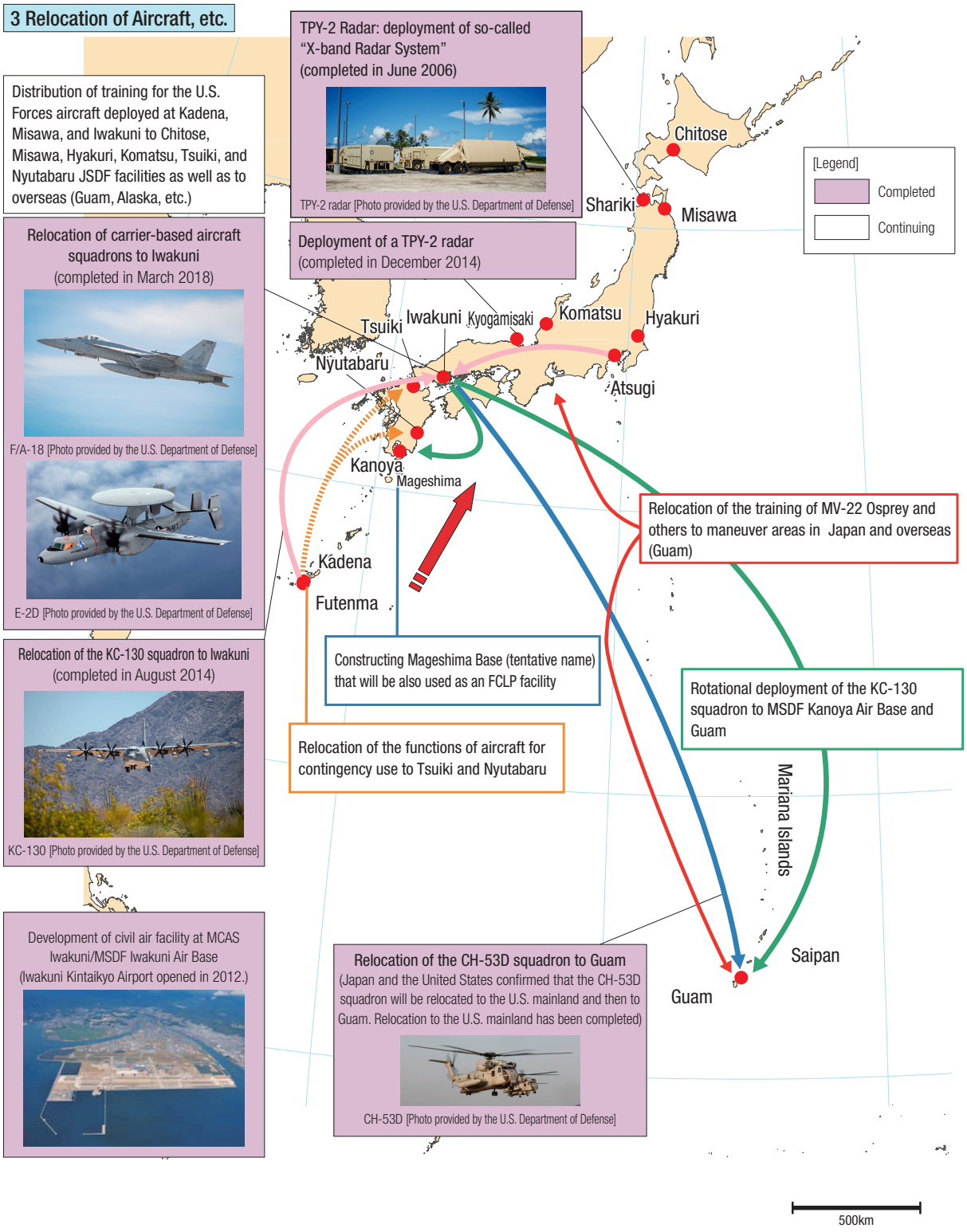


Fig. III-2-5-3-4 Progress of Force Structure Realignment of the USFJ and JSDF Described in "the United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" (2)



3 Field-Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP)

The 2006 Roadmap prescribes that a bilateral framework to conduct a study on a permanent FCLP facility is to be established with the goal of selecting a permanent site at the earliest possible date. The MOD has acquired most of the land on Mageshima, and has been explaining the facility development to the local communities of Kagoshima Prefecture, Nishinoomote City, Nakatane Town, and Minamitane Town.

The United States also welcomed the Government of Japan's decision to develop JSDF facilities on Mageshima in the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting joint statement issued in 2022.

In January 2023, the MOD released the environmental impact assessment report prepared based on the view of the Governor of Kagoshima Prefecture, who had taken into account the opinions of the mayors of Nishinoomote City, Nakatane Town and Minamitane Town, and others, and started the construction work within Mageshima.

In March of the same year, construction work also began on the maritime area around Mageshima, and the development of facilities are steadily progressing in close cooperation with local municipalities.

4 Relocation and Return of MCAS Futenma

Although over 25 years have passed since Japan and the United States agreed on the total return of MCAS Futenma, it has not been achieved yet.

The fundamental idea shared by the Government of Japan and the people of Okinawa is that it is imperative not to allow MCAS Futenma to remain indefinitely at its current location, which is in the vicinity of houses and schools, in the center of Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture.

The Government of Japan's view is that the current plan to relocate MCAS Futenma to Henoko, Nago City is the only solution that avoids continued use of the Air Station. This has been confirmed by the Japanese and U.S. governments on repeated occasions, joint statements at Japan-U.S. summit meetings and the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meetings.

In order to achieve the total return of MCAS Futenma as early as possible, the Government of Japan will continue to make all efforts while providing careful explanations to local residents in Okinawa building upon years of persistent dialogue.

The return of MCAS Futenma is expected to eliminate danger in the area and to contribute to the further growth of Okinawa, including Ginowan City, through the reuse of the area (approximately 476 ha, a land area around 100 times larger than Tokyo Dome).

(1) Relocation of MCAS Futenma and Mitigation of the Impact on Okinawa

The relocation of MCAS Futenma holds more significance than merely moving the facility from one location to another. Rather, it involves reduction in the base's functions and area in Okinawa, and contributes greatly to mitigating the impact on Okinawa.

a. Distribution of Functions Offered by MCAS Futenma

The relocation of MCAS Futenma involves the return of the entire area by relocating three functions: (1) operation of MV-22 (Osprey) and other aircraft, (2) operation of air refueling aircraft, and (3) accepting transient aircraft in contingencies. Of these three functions, (2) and (3) involve relocation out of Okinawa Prefecture, while (1) involves relocation to Camp Schwab.

The relocation of (2) operation of air refueling aircraft to MCAS Iwakuni was completed in 2014. With regard to (3) accepting transient aircraft in contingencies, Japan and the United States agreed in 2018 to develop facilities that would be necessary for relocating the function to ASDF Tsuiki Air Base (Fukuoka Prefecture) and ASDF Nyutabaru Air Base (Miyazaki Prefecture). By March 2023, construction was completed except for the runway extension at Tsuiki Air Base. Offshore construction to extend the runway at Tsuiki Air Base commenced in September 2024.

b. Reduction in Area

The area required for the land reclamation to build the FRF is approximately 152 ha, less than one-third of the approximately 476 ha of MCAS Futenma, and the FRF will be equipped with a significantly shorter runway at 1,200 m (1,800 m including the overruns) compared to the current runway length of 2,740 m at MCAS Futenma.

c. Reduction in Noise and Risks

Two runways will be constructed in a V-shape, which enables the flight path for takeoff and landing to be located over the sea, in line with the requests of the local community. In MCAS Futenma, flight paths used daily for training and other purposes are located over residential areas, whereas flight paths in the FRF will be changed to over the sea, thereby reducing noise and risks.

For example, while more than 10,000 households are located in areas requiring housing noise insulation near MCAS Futenma, there will be zero households requiring such insulation around the FRF.

(2) Background Concerning the Futenma Replacement Facility

a. Consideration of Relocation Site

Considering the occurrence of the U.S. Forces helicopter crash in Ginowan City in August 2004, bilateral discussions on the realignment have been made towards realizing the relocation and return of MCAS Futenma at the earliest possible date in order to resolve the concern of the residents living in the vicinity.

The Japan-U.S. "2+2" joint statement compiled in October 2005 calls for locating the FRF in an L-shaped configuration. However, after that, based on consultations and agreement with the local governments including Nago City, it was

decided to stipulate in the May 2006 Roadmap that the FRF be located in a V-shaped configuration. With regard to construction of this replacement facility, a Memorandum of Basic Understanding was exchanged between then Governor of Okinawa Inamine and then Minister of State for Defense Nukaga in the same month.

After the change of government in September 2009, the Exploratory Committee for Okinawa Base Issues was established. After reviews conducted by the Committee, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting held in May 2010, the governments of Japan and the United States confirmed the intention to locate the FRF in the Camp Schwab Henokosaki area and the adjacent waters. Subsequently, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting held in June 2011, it was decided that the runway would take a V shape.

During the deliberation process which led to these conclusions, first of all, it was determined that, from a security perspective, the deterrence of the U.S. Forces, including that of the U.S. Marine Corps stationed in Okinawa that is located in a crucial area for the security of Japan, cannot be lessened while there remains instability and uncertainty in the security environment in East Asia.

Furthermore, concern was expressed that the functions of the U.S. Marine Corps, such as mobility and readiness, would be weakened if the helicopter units stationed at MCAS Futenma were to be detached from the other Marines units stationed in Okinawa and moved abroad or out of the prefecture. This is because the U.S. Marine Corps conducts integrated operations of air, ground, logistics support, and command elements.

Therefore, it was concluded that the FRF had to be located within Okinawa Prefecture.

b. Beginning of Landfill Work

An environmental impact assessment was conducted for approximately five years from 2007 for the FRF Project. For this assessment, the MOD received 1,561 opinions from the Governor of Okinawa, made all the required revisions, and appropriately reflected them in the content of the environmental impact assessment report.

The Director General of the Okinawa Defense Bureau submitted the landfill permit request on public waters to Okinawa Prefecture in March 2013, and then Governor of Okinawa Nakaima approved this in December 2013.

After the construction began, then Governor of Okinawa Onaga revoked the landfill permit, which led to litigation between the Government of Japan and Okinawa Prefecture. However, landfill work began in the waters of the Henoko side in December 2018. By the end of September 2023, the progress of landfill work in the waters of the Henoko side had reached approximately 99.5%, indicating that the construction is largely complete (as of March 2025).

c. Consideration on Soil Improvement Work, Etc.

Regarding the soil foundation of the landfill area, a study was conducted on the stability of seawalls and other structures in the waters of Oura-wan area in light of the results of a boring survey, etc. As a result, through soil improvement work via prevailing and adequately proven construction methods[19] used for construction projects such as Haneda Airport, Kansai International Airport, and Naha Airport, it was confirmed that the soil foundation would be sufficiently strong to meet the required stability, thereby ensuring that it is possible to complete a landfill and construct an air base there properly. This was also confirmed by the Technical Review Committee that has been held since September 2019 consisting of experts in the fields of geotechnical, structural, hydraulic, and pavement engineering.

In addition, in December 2019, the Okinawa Defense Bureau announced that, based on the results of studies conducted to date, it would take nine years and three months from commencement to completion of construction according to the revised plan. Around 12 years would be required to complete the admin procedures described in the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, and the cost of the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Construction Project was estimated at about 930 billion yen.

Similarly, in terms of the environment, the Environmental Monitoring Committee, comprising experts in various fields related to the natural environment and others, which was held from January to April 2020, confirmed that the degree of impact on the environment caused by the change in the plan would be the same or less than that before the change.

d. Landfill Permit Revision Request on Public Waters

As explained above, hearing experts' insights on the environment and other aspects, after due consideration, in April 2020, the Okinawa Defense Bureau submitted to the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture the Landfill Permit Revision Request given the additional implementation of the soil improvement work, etc.

However, in November 2021, the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture disapproved the Permit Revision Request on the grounds that surveys of the soil foundation and environmental protection measures at the planned landfill area were inadequate. In response, in December 2021, the Director General of the Okinawa Defense Bureau filed a request for review with the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism under the Administrative Complaint Review Act. In April 2022, the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism determined revocation of the disapproval by the Governor of Okinawa, and also issued an instruction for correction against Okinawa Prefecture based on the Local Autonomy Act to approve the Permit Revision Request.

In response to this determination and the directive for correction, in August the same year, the governor of Okinawa Prefecture filed lawsuits with the Fukuoka High Court, Naha

19 The standard methods are the sand compaction pile method, the sand drain method, and the paper drain method. Among examples of projects in which these methods were used is the construction work to expand Haneda Airport.

Branch to revoke the government's involvement. As for these lawsuits, in August 2023, the Supreme Court decided against the Okinawa Governor's petition to accept the appeal regarding the determination, and in September the same year, the Supreme Court issued a judgment to dismiss the Okinawa Governor's appeal regarding the directive for correction, and accordingly the judicial judgment that the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's directive to approve the Permit Revision Request was legitimate was finalized.

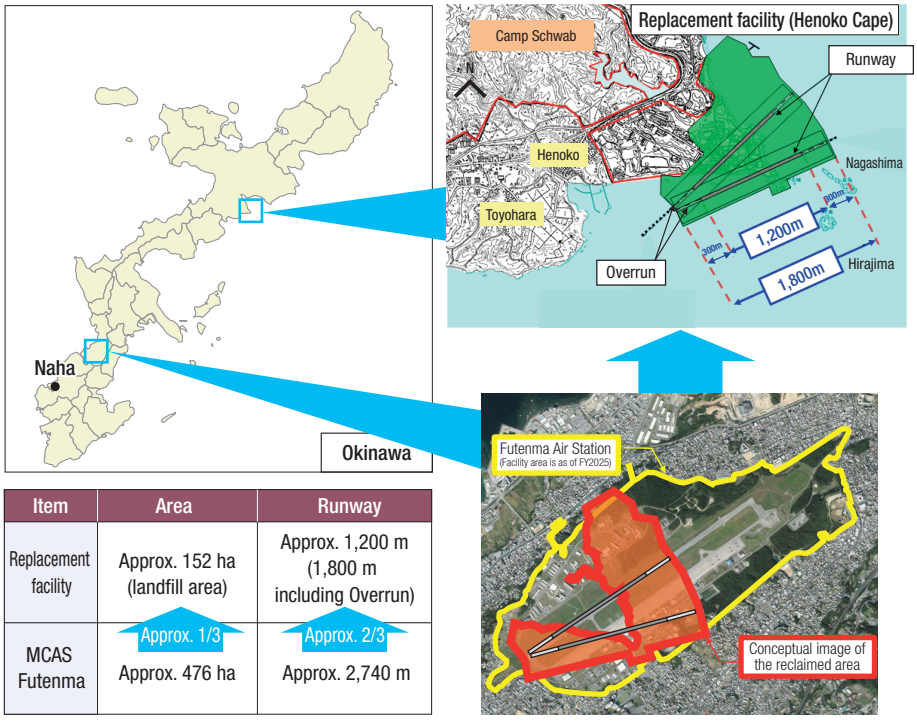
Based on this judgment, in the same month, the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism issued a recommendation and instruction under the Local Autonomy Act to the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture to approve the Permit Revision Request, but the approval remained pending.

Therefore, in October the same year, the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism filed a subrogation lawsuit with the Fukuoka High Court, Naha Branch for substituted execution under the Local Autonomy Law. Subsequently, in December the same year, a judgment was made ordering the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture to approve the Landfill Permit Revision Request by a deadline, but since no disposition of approval had been made by that deadline, the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism issued approval under the law. In the same month, the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture filed a petition for acceptance of an appeal to the Supreme Court regarding this lawsuit, but, in February 2024, the Supreme Court decided to reject the petition, whereupon the judgment of the Fukuoka High Court, Naha Branch ordering the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture to approve the Landfill Permit Revision Request became final.

In addition, in September 2022, due to dissatisfaction with the determination of the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Okinawa Prefecture filed a lawsuit with the Naha District Court to revoke the determination based on the Administrative Case Litigation Act. In January 2025, however, the Supreme Court refused the Okinawa Prefecture's petition to file a final appeal in this lawsuit, thereby finalizing the judicial judgment that the prefecture's appeal was illegitimate. Accordingly, all pending lawsuits between the Government of Japan and Okinawa Prefecture have been concluded.

See Fig. III-2-5-5 (Comparison between the Replacement Facility and MCAS Futenma (image)), Reference 32 (Background of the Futenma Replacement Facility), Reference 33 (Estimated Timelines for the Return of Facilities and Areas South of Kadena)

Fig. III-2-5-5 Comparison between the Replacement Facility and MCAS Futenma (image)



Item	Area	Runway
Replacement facility	Approx. 152 ha (landfill area)	Approx. 1,200 m (1,800 m including Overrun)
	Approx. 1/3	Approx. 2/3
MCAS Futenma	Approx. 476 ha	Approx. 2,740 m

(Note) Based on photos provided by Ginowan City

(3) Construction Based on the Plan after Approval of the Landfill Permit Revision Request

a. Status of Construction

Since the approval of the Landfill Permit Revision Request in December 2023, the Okinawa Defense Bureau has been sequentially advancing seawall and landfill construction on the Oura Bay side. Soil improvement work commenced in December 2024, meaning that construction work is steadily progressing toward the total return of MCAS Futenma.

See Fig. III-2-5-6 (Progress Status of Construction Work Related to the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Project)

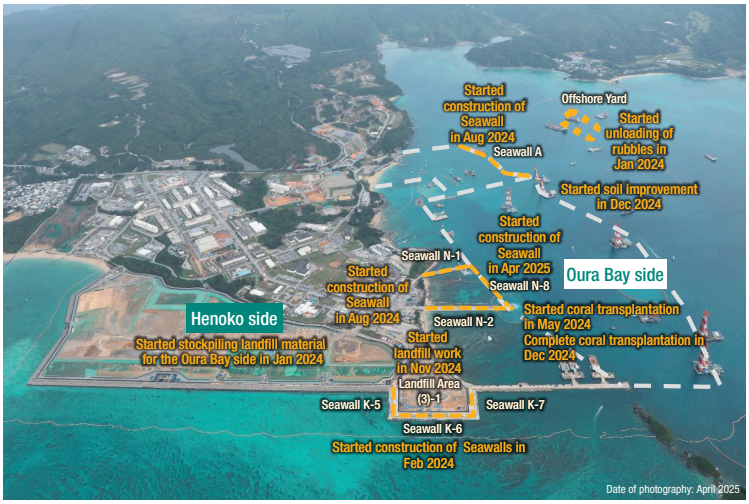
Fig. III-2-5-6 Progress Status of Construction Work Related to the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Project

Henoko side

- Landfill work at Henoko side started in December 2018.
- Approx. 3.18 mil CBM of landfill was complete for an entire volume of approx. 3.19 mil CBM (99.5% complete) as of the end of September 2023
- Temporarily stockpiling landfill material which would be used for landfill work at Oura Bay side started in January 2024.

Oura Bay side

- In January 2024, construction at Oura Bay side (construction of offshore yard) started.
- In February, construction of seawalls in landfill area (3)-1 started.
- In May, coral transplantation started.
- In August, construction of Seawalls A, N-1 and N-2 started.
- In November, landfill work in landfill area (3)-1 started .
- In December, complete coral transplantation and soil improvement work started.
- In April 2025, construction of Seawall N-8 started.



b. Environmental Conservation Initiatives

The environmental impact assessment report stated that because coral inhabiting the landfill area would be lost due to the landfill work, coral would be transplanted to the extent possible as a preservation measure. The transplantation of the coral to be preserved was completed in December 2024 with the permission of the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture. The FRF Project expands a scope for preservation to be more careful in transplanting coral compared to landfill work to construct the second runway at Naha Airport.[20] Land hermit crabs designated as a national natural treasure, as well as shellfish and crustaceans listed as endangered species, have also been appropriately moved to a surrounding location suitable for habitat in time for the construction. Furthermore, as part of measures for habitats that will be lost due to the landfill work, measures have been taken to transplant coral grown in land-based facilities to the waters surrounding Oura Bay and expand the growth area of seagrass beds.

In addition, various environmental protection measures have been implemented in anticipation of dugongs entering Oura Bay. Specifically, habitat status surveys using aircraft, feeding trails surveys, and vocalization monitoring using underwater recording devices are conducted to understand the habitat status of dugongs. Additionally, surveillance vessels are deployed during daily construction operations to monitor and watch for any dugongs approaching the work area.

c. Consideration for Surrounding Residents

To share the Government of Japan's and Nago City's understanding of the impact of the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Construction Project on residents' living environment and economic activities and to implement coordinated measures, the Council on the Impact of the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Construction was newly established in May 2024, with its second meeting

REFERENCE: Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/zaibeigun/frf/index.html

REFERENCE: Soil Improvement for the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility Construction Project
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/news/2024/12/27e_02.pdf

20 Specifically, in relation to the construction of the second runway at Naha Airport, around 37,000 clusters of small corals were transplanted. If the same standard as the one applicable to the construction of the alternative facility had been applied, the number of clusters of small corals transplanted would have been around 170,000.

held in February 2025. The Council discussed the impact of the replacement facility construction, measures addressing Camp Schwab-related issues, urban development plans for Nago City including the three Kube districts and other relevant topics.

With the goal of achieving the earliest possible total return of the MCAS Futenma while continuing to provide detailed explanations to local residents, the construction work will proceed steadily toward relocation to Henoko, with due consideration for the natural environment and the living environment of local residents.

5 Return of Land Areas South of Kadena Air Base

The 2006 Roadmap stated that, following the relocation to the FRF, the return of MCAS Futenma, and the transfer of III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) personnel to Guam, the remaining facilities and areas on Okinawa will be consolidated, thereby enabling the return of significant land areas south of Kadena Air Base.

Subsequently, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting in 2012, it was decided to delink the progress on the relocation to the FRF from both the relocation of the III MEF personnel from Okinawa to Guam and the resulting land returns south of Kadena Air Base. In addition, with regard to the land to be returned, it was agreed to conduct consultations focusing on three categories, namely (1) land eligible for immediate return; (2) land eligible for return once the relocation of functions is completed; and (3) land eligible for return after the relocation abroad.

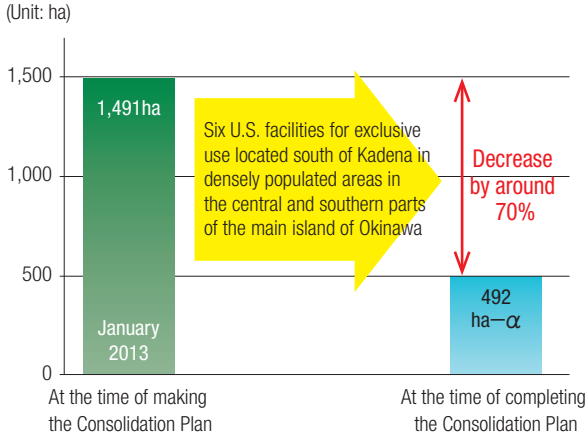
(1) Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa

Since the change of administration at the end of 2012, Japan and the United States have continued consultation under the basic policy to dedicate all strength toward mitigating the impact of the U.S. Forces on Okinawa communities. Japan strongly requested an early return of land areas south of Kadena Air Base, including Makiminato Service Area (Camp Kinser) in Urasoe City of which Okinawa has particularly made a strong request for the return and coordinated with the United States. As a result, both countries announced "the Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa (Okinawa Consolidation Plan)" in 2013, which stipulated the return schedule, including the specific years of return.

The return of all land according to the plan will enable the return of approximately 70% (approximately 1,048 ha, the equivalent of 220 Tokyo Domes) of six USFJ facilities for exclusive use[21] located in densely populated areas in the central and southern parts of the main island of Okinawa. In the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, it is confirmed between Japan and the United States that this plan will be implemented as soon as possible, and that the Government will continue to make the utmost efforts to return the land south of Kadena Air Base, at an early date.

See Fig. III-2-5-7 (Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa)

Fig. III-2-5-7 Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa



(2) Progress in the Return of Land

Since the announcement of the Okinawa Consolidation Plan in 2013, efforts have been made to return the land. By March 2020, the return of all areas eligible for immediate return upon completion of necessary procedures based on the Okinawa Consolidation Plan (shown in red in Fig. III-2-5-9) was realized. The use of returned lands is being promoted incrementally. For example, at the former site of the West Futenma Housing Area, which was returned in 2015, the construction of Okinawa Health Medical Center was promoted based on the request of the local community. Relocated to its new premises, the University of the Ryukyus Hospital opened in January 2025, and the Faculty of Medicine completed its move in March of the same year. Based on the joint use of portion of land on Camp Zukeran and under the project for measures targeting areas surrounding defense facilities, Ginowan City developed the access road (Kiyuna Road 23) which opened for use in February of the same year, linking the district's former site with national route 58. Returns have been realized ahead of schedule in the Okinawa Consolidation Plan for some areas where there were strong demands for return by the local community. This has resulted, for example, in the opening of the entire stretch of Ginowan City road 11 in 2021 on land along the east side of MCAS Futenma, which has improved local traffic. Furthermore, in 2022, then Prime Minister Kishida visited the Lower Plaza Housing area (Okinawa City, Kitanakagusuku Village) of Camp Zukeran and announced that Japan and the United States will agree to open the area as a green space for public use ahead of its return to Japan, and its public use began in 2024 as the "Lower Plaza Green Square."

21 Naha Port, Makiminato Service Area, MCAS Futenma, Camp Zukeran, Camp Kuwae, and Army POL Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1

Commentary

About the Soil Improvement Work for the Futenma Air Station Replacement Facility (FRF) Construction Project

Q: Is the soil improvement work started from December last year in the FRF construction project unprecedentedly difficult?

A: In soil improvement for this project, all aspects including its construction method, scale and construction depth have a history of successful construction results, and therefore are not unprecedented. Firstly, with regard to the construction method, we are employing a standard one with a long history of numerous successful construction results, which was used in Haneda Airport, Kansai International Airport, and Naha Airport. Regarding the scale of the soil improvement, fewer sand piles will be used than in the Haneda Airport re-expansion project or the Kansai International Airport construction project. Furthermore, in this project, sand piles are driven up to 70 meters below sea level. To date, Japanese companies have a track record of construction up to 65 meters below sea level in Yokohama and 70 meters below sea level in South Korea. In this project as well, we have been driving sand piles up to 70 meters below sea level without any problem from March 2025 onward. Through this soil improvement, we will be able to ensure sufficient stability for the seawall and other structures, allowing us to complete the reclaimed land and construct the air station without any problems.

Q: Will any soft ground remain at deeper places than 70 meters below sea level where the soil improvement will not be carried out?

A: The cohesive soil deeper than 70 meters below sea level identified in the ground on the Oura Bay side is classified as “very hard cohesive soil” to “hard cohesive soil.” The results of the soil surveys to date have confirmed that the layer of cohesive soil is present until approximately 90 meters below sea level at its deepest depth, but when we used calculations to find the scope of the soil improvement necessary to ensure the stability of the seawall and other structures, soil improvement deeper than 70 meters below sea level is not necessary. These designs for the soil improvement and associated works in this project are based on the standards supervised by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and used at many offshore airports on reclaimed land, such as Haneda Airport and other airports, and their validity was confirmed by a technical review committee consisting of experts established by the Okinawa Defense Bureau.

Q: Have you made the plan after conducting sufficient soil surveys at the sites where a layer of cohesive soil exists down to approximately 90 meters below sea level?

A: Based on the soil surveys, etc. carried out so far, the soil improvement and associated works were designed after the types and strength of soil were sufficiently ascertained at sites including those which you have indicated. Specifically, in this project, we carried out boring surveys and other surveys from 2014 to 2018 at a total of 76 sites, and based on the results of those surveys we created a 3D model of the layers of soil on the Oura Bay side and carried out detailed organization and analysis, taking into consideration the areal spread of the soil and other factors, to ascertain the stratigraphic composition, soil strength, and other matters on the Oura Bay side. We have used this 3D model and other tools to sufficiently ascertain the types and strength of soil at sites where a layer of cohesive soil is present until approximately 90 meters below sea level as well. These methods are based on standards supervised by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, and the technical review committee has also confirmed that they are appropriate. Furthermore, the technical review committee has obtained data which can be applied to a wide range of ground types from the experts, and we have received the opinion that very little new information could be obtained even if we spent additional money and time carrying out further surveys at these sites, and that we also have sufficient information of the terrain, so no addition is necessary.

Work vessels working on the soil improvement work on the Oura Bay

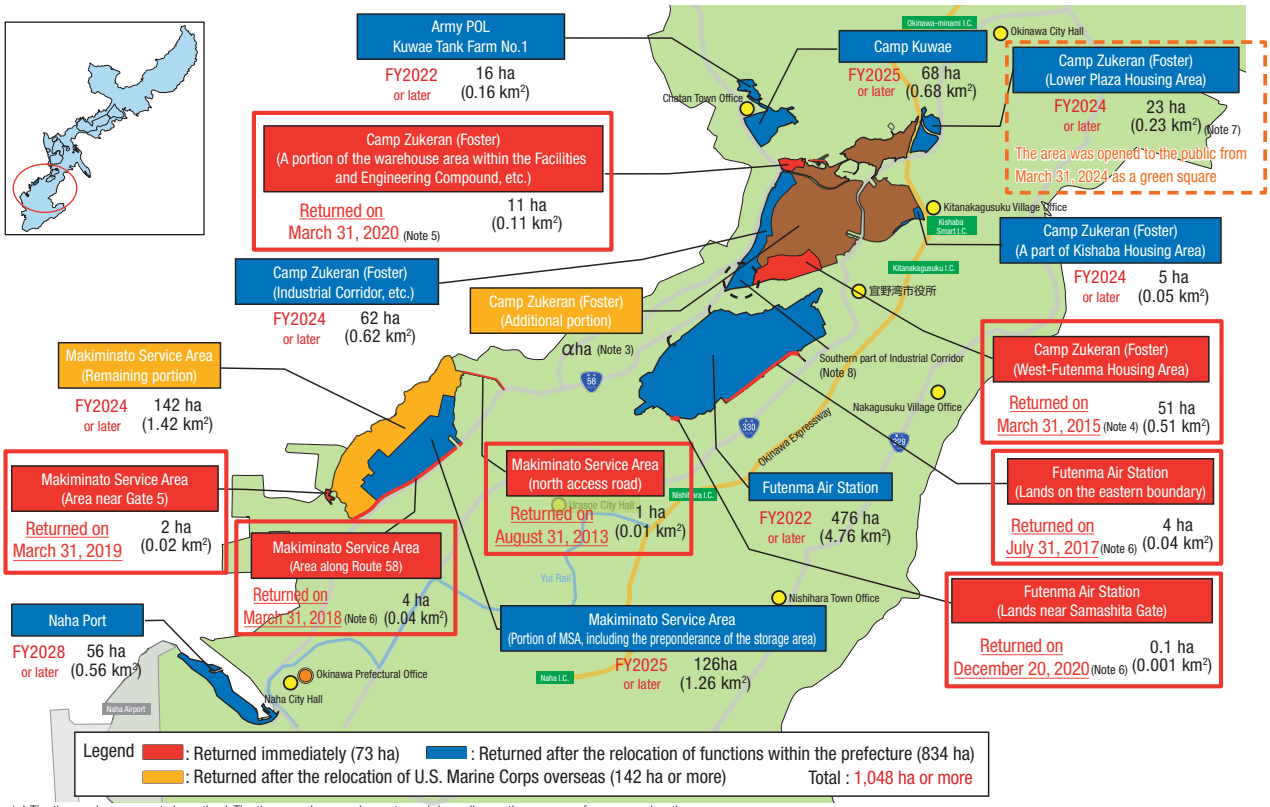
All-out initiatives are being continuously made by the Government to steadily implement the return of land areas south of Kadena Air Base under the Okinawa Consolidation Plan in a manner that visibly mitigates the impact on Okinawa.
See Fig. III-2-5-8 (Results of the Return of Land Areas South of Kadena Air Base), Fig. III-2-5-9 (Return of Land Areas South of Kadena Air Base (image)), Reference 33 (Estimated Timelines for the Return of Facilities and Areas South of Kadena)

Fig. III-2-5-8 Results of the Return of Land Areas South of Kadena Air Base

Category	Name	Returned	Transferred	Area (ha)
Areas eligible for immediate return in the consolidation plan	Makiminato Service Area (north access road)	August 2013	August 2013	Approx. 1
	Camp Zukeran (West Futenma Housing Area)	March 2015	March 2018	Approx. 51
	Makiminato Service Area (area near Gate 5)	March 2019	March 2021	Approx. 2
	Camp Zukeran (a portion of the warehouse area of the Facilities and Engineering Compound)	March 2020	(Note)	Approx. 11
Areas eligible for return after relocation of functions within Okinawa in the consolidation plan but returned in advance as a result of a separate Japan-U.S. agreement	MCAS Futenma (Lands along the east side)	July 2017	March 2019	Approx. 4
	Makiminato Service Area (Lands along national route 58)	March 2018	September 2019	Approx. 3
	MCAS Futenma (Lands near Samashita Gate)	December 2020	December 2020	Approx. 0.1
	Makiminato Service Area ((Lands along national route 58) laundry area)	May 2021	May 2021	Approx. 0.2

(Note) Scheduled transfer in the future

Fig. III-2-5-9 Return of Land Areas South of Kadena Air Base (image)



(Notes) 1 The time and year seem to be optimal. The time may, however, be postponed depending on the progress of overseas relocation.
2 The area of each land is an approximate figure and may be slightly modified based on the results of future surveys. Total may not match due to rounding off of each figure to the nearest unit (ha).
3 Studies will be made in the process of developing a master plan to determine the feasibility of additional land returns.
4 The area to be returned at Camp Foster (West-Futenma Housing area) was listed as 52 ha in the Consolidation Plan, but it was revised to 51 ha according to actual measurements.
5 The area to be returned at Camp Foster (a portion of the warehouse area of the Facilities and Engineering Compound, etc.) was listed as 10 ha in the Consolidation Plan, but it was revised to 11 ha based on the area to be returned in the JC agreement of September 2013.
6 MCAS Futenma (lands along the east side and near Samashita Gate) and Makiminato Service Area (lands along national route 58) were returned ahead of schedule as a result of a separate Japan-U.S. agreement. Note that the Makiminato Service Area (lands along national route 58) includes the laundry area (0.2 ha) that was returned on May 31, 2021.
7 Japan-U.S. Joint Committee agreed in May 2022 that the two countries will prepare the transformation of the Lower Plaza Housing Area of Camp Foster into a green square for public use before the return, agreed on the joint use of the area for public use as the green square in January, 2024. The area was opened to the public on March 31, 2024.
8 Efforts will be made for the return of the southern part of Industrial Corridor as early as possible with gradual return in mind

Commentary

Relocation of the U.S. Military's Naha Port Facility

The U.S. military's Naha Port Facility (Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture) is a port facility of the U.S. Army of approximately 56 ha and located in Naha Port near Naha Airport. In the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, it is to be returned after its functions have been relocated to a replacement facility of approximately 49 ha constructed in the Urasoe Pier area (Urasoe City, Okinawa Prefecture). Given its geographical location, there is great potential for utilization of the site, and it has been hoped that its return will contribute to the development of Okinawa Prefecture as a whole.

In this context, in October 2022, it was confirmed the development of a replacement facility would proceed in coordination with the relevant authorities, including the relocation site of Urasoe City and Okinawa Prefecture, and in April 2023, the Japanese and U.S. governments reached an agreement on the location, shape, and facility layout plan of the replacement facility, making it possible to start the construction. Currently, in parallel with the environment impact assessment procedures, we are proceeding the processes necessary for the relocation, including the boring surveys.

The promotion of Urasoe City, the designated relocation site, is also important. In April and November 2024, the Council on the Promotion of the Tedako Town Urasoe in Relation to the Naha Port Facility Relocation was held to hold consultations on the promotion of Urasoe City, and it was reaffirmed that the national government and local communities would work together in promoting the development of Urasoe City. The Ministry of Defense (MOD) will continue to make every effort to realize the early return of the Naha Port Facility.

The current Naha Port Facility and the position of the replacement facility at the relocation destination

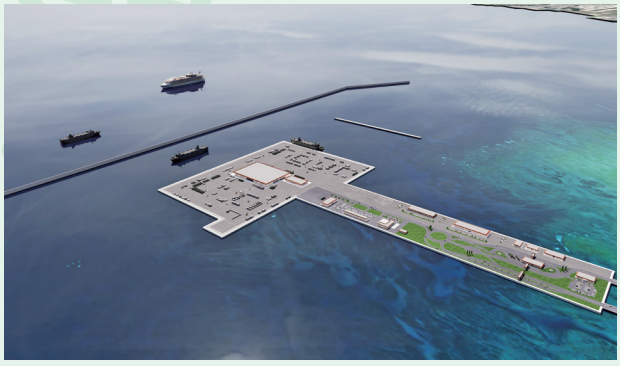


Image of the Naha Port Facility replacement facility

6 Relocation of the Marines Corps to Guam

In December 2024, it was announced that a detachment of approximately 100 Marines had started to relocate from Okinawa to Guam as the first phase of relocating U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa to locations outside Japan. The continued steady progress of the efforts necessary for the relocation to Guam, which led to the announcement that the move had started, is highly significant—particularly in mitigating the impact of bases on Okinawa.

(1) Size of Relocation

The roadmap announced in 2006 stated that approximately 8,000 personnel of the III MEF and their approximately 9,000 dependents would relocate from Okinawa to Guam by 2014, but at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting in 2012, the composition of the units to be relocated to Guam and the number of personnel were reviewed. As a result, the MAGTF is to be located in Japan, Guam, and Hawaii, with approximately 9,000 personnel relocated to locations outside of Japan. Meanwhile, the end-state for the U.S. Marine Corps presence in Okinawa is to be consistent with the level of approximately 10,000 personnel envisioned in the Roadmap.

Also in December 2024, the MOD and the U.S. Marine Corps announced that a detachment of approximately 100 logistics support Marines from III MEF began relocating from Okinawa to Guam. It has been confirmed between Japan and the U.S. that relocations will take place in a phased approach going forward, and over 4,000 Marine Corps personnel will relocate from Okinawa to Guam. The Government of Japan will continue to cooperate with the U.S. Government to ensure the relocation to Guam.

(2) Costs of the Relocation

Under the Roadmap, the two sides reached an agreement that, of the estimated US$10.27 billion (in U.S. fiscal year 2008 price) cost of the facilities and infrastructure development costs, Japan would provide US$6.09 billion, including US$2.8 billion in direct cash contribution, while the United States would fund the remaining US$4.18 billion. In February 2009, the Japanese Government and the U.S. Government signed the "Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States of America Concerning the Implementation of the Relocation of the III MEF Personnel and Their Dependents from Okinawa to Guam" (the Guam International Agreement)[22]. The Agreement legally guarantees and ensures actions taken by Japan and the United States for projects to which Japan provides direct cash contributions.

As part of measures based on this Agreement, the Government of Japan has been providing cash contributions to the U.S. Government in relation to the projects for which Japan has provided financial support since FY2009.[23]

Subsequently, at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting held in April 2012, the unit composition and the number of personnel to be relocated to Guam were adjusted and it was agreed that the preliminary cost estimate by the U.S. Government for the relocation was US$8.6 billion (in U.S. FY2012 price). With regard to Japan's financial commitment, it was reaffirmed that it was to be the direct cash contribution of up to US$2.8 billion (in U.S. FY2008 price) as stipulated in Article 1 of the Guam International Agreement. It was also confirmed that Japan's equity investment and loans for family housing projects and infrastructure projects would not be utilized.[24]

Moreover, it was stipulated that any funds that had already been provided to the U.S. Government under the Guam International Agreement would be counted as part of the Japanese contribution. Furthermore, as a new initiative, a portion of the direct cash contribution of US$2.8 billion mentioned above would be used to develop training areas in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as shared-use facilities by Japan and the United States. In addition, it was agreed that the remaining costs and any additional costs would be borne by the United States, and that the two governments were to complete a bilateral cost breakdown.

At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" Meeting in October 2013, a Protocol Amending the Guam International Agreement was also signed to add the stipulations concerning the development of training areas in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the use of these training areas by the JSDF. The limit on Japanese cash contributions remains unchanged at US$2.8 billion (in U.S. FY2008 price).

(3) Environmental Impact Assessment

As for the environmental impact assessment for Guam, the required procedures were conducted to reflect the revisions to the project made by the adjustments to the plan for realignment, and the assessment was completed in August 2015.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Joint Military Training Environmental Impact Statement (CJMT-EIS), is now being implemented.

(4) Progress of the Guam Relocation Project

The U.S. Government is currently developing facilities in

22 Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States of America Concerning the Implementation of the Relocation of III Marine Expeditionary Force Personnel and Their Dependents from Okinawa to Guam

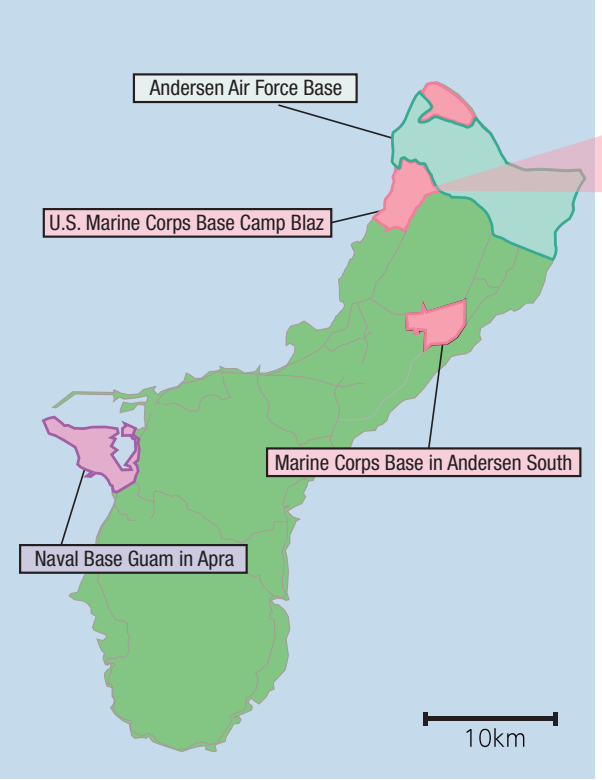
23 As for projects for which Japan provides financial support, cash contributions totaling approximately 373 billion yen (including the use of interest generated from the funds provided) have been provided to the U.S. side as of January 2025.

24 In line with this, the special provisions for the operations of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (investment and loan) that had been prescribed by the Act on Special Measures concerning Smooth Implementation of Realignment of United States Forces in Japan were abolished by an act revising part of the act that was enacted on March 31, 2017.

each area of Guam. To date, out of the projects funded by the Government of Japan, a base administrative building, a medical clinic and other facilities have been completed.

See Fig. III-2-5-10 (Progress of the Guam Relocation Project (image))

Fig. III-2-5-10 Progress of the Guam Relocation Project (image)



Administrative building established at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz

Barracks under construction at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz

Major projects funded by Japan for the Guam relocation project

U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz	Base management office, barracks, fire station, etc.
Marine Corps Base in Andersen South	Training areas
Andersen Air Force Base	Infrastructure development (site preparation, etc.)
Naval Base Guam in Apra	Headquarters building, medical clinic, etc.

Commentary

Commencement of the Relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa to Guam

In December 2024, we announced that a detachment of approximately 100 logistics support Marines from III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) had started to relocate from Okinawa to Guam as the first phase of the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa outside Japan. Before commencement of the relocation, in January 2023, Camp Blaz was reactivated in Guam as the first new Marine Corps base in 70 years and it has started in order to serve as the main base of activities for the Marine Corps personnel relocating from Okinawa.

Furthermore, in order to put in place a posture for accepting the Marine Corps personnel, the Government of Japan is also providing some of the funds for the relocation, and Japan and the U.S. have been jointly developing the facilities on Guam Island. At the time of commencement of the relocation, the base administrative building and fire station at Camp Blaz and the HQs building and medical clinic in the Apra area of Naval Base Guam had been completed. When developing the facilities, we have cooperated with the authorities in Guam to proceed while respecting the culture and history of Guam, and a monument has been constructed where the remains of some Chamorro people, the indigenous people of Guam, discovered during the construction work inside Camp Blaz, are buried.

In this way, we are steadily advancing the initiatives necessary for the relocation to Guam, and it is highly significant that we have reached the milestone of commencement of the relocation.

It has been confirmed between Japan and the U.S. that the relocation will take place in a phased approach going forward, and over 4,000 Marine Corps personnel will relocate from Okinawa to Guam. We will cooperate with the U.S. side to steadily implement the relocation to Guam, while keeping in mind the need to balance reinforcement of the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance with mitigation of the impact of the bases on Okinawa and other local communities.

Scene at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz reactivation and naming ceremony (January 2023)

7 Other Realignment Initiatives

(1) Aviation Training Relocation (ATR)

Based on the decision that U.S. aircraft from three USFJ facilities and areas – Kadena, Misawa (Aomori Prefecture) and MCAS Iwakuni – would participate for the time being in bilateral training at JSDF facilities, the Aviation Training Relocation[25] (ATR) has been underway since 2007. The MOD has been improving its infrastructure, as required, for the training relocation.

The ATR contributes to enhancing interoperability between the two countries, and also to relocating part of air-to-ground training conducted by using Kadena Air Base. Thus, this training relocation will help noise abatement around Kadena Air Base, thereby contributing to the mitigation of the impact on Okinawa.

In addition to assisting the USFJ, the MOD/JSDF is making efforts to ensure the safety and security of the local community, such as the establishment of a liaison office, facilitating communication with related government agencies, and response to requirements from the local community. These efforts have been contributing to successful training relocation.

See Fig. III-2-5-11 (Overview of the Background to the Aviation Training Relocation)

Fig. III-2-5-11 Overview of the Background to the Aviation Training Relocation

Time of reaching agreements	Overview
May 2006	In the "Japan-U.S. Roadmap for Realignment Implementation," it is confirmed that U.S. aircraft from three USFJ facilities and areas-Kadena, Misawa and MCAS Iwakuni-would participate in bilateral training with the JSDF at JSDF facilities in Chitose, Misawa, Hyakuri, Komatsu, Tsuiki, and Nyutabaru.
January and October 2011	At the Joint Committee, both governments agreed to include Guam as a new training relocation site and to expand the scale of training.
March 2014	At the Joint Committee, both governments agreed to add air-to-ground training using the Misawa Air-to-Ground Range (Misawa City and Rokkasho Village in Aomori Prefecture).
July 2023	At the Joint Committee, both governments agreed to include Alaska as the relocation site.

(2) Training Relocation for MV-22 (Osprey) etc.

The Government of Japan and the United States Government decided in the "2+2" joint statement of 2013, to utilize the opportunities to participate in various operations in mainland Japan and across the region to reduce the amount of time that MV-22s are deployed and used for the training in Okinawa, so that training outside of Okinawa Prefecture, including mainland Japan, can be increased while maintaining the deterrence of the Alliance. Based on the above, both governments have been moving forward with conducting training of the MV-22 deployed at MCAS Futenma outside of Okinawa Prefecture and so on.

In 2016, it was agreed at the Joint Committee to relocate the training activities of Tilt-Rotor/Rotary Wing aircraft, such as AH-1, CH53, and the MV-22 that are currently deployed at MCAS Futenma, out of Okinawa Prefecture at Japan's expense in order to further promote training outside of Okinawa and mitigate the impact of training activities there.

From the date of the agreement up to March 2025, a total of 23 exercises have been conducted in Guam as well as in Japan at the maneuver areas in Hokkaido, Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Gunma, Kanagawa, Niigata, Shizuoka, Shiga, Kagawa, Nagasaki, Oita, Kumamoto, Miyazaki, and Kagoshima prefectures.

The Government plans to continue decreasing MV-22's amount of time deployed and training in Okinawa by relocating the exercises to mainland Japan and Guam, and will continue to promote initiatives that contribute to further mitigating the impact on Okinawa.

Furthermore, with regard to the safety of MV-22s, prior to the deployment of MV-22s to MCAS Futenma in 2012, the Government established an analysis and assessment team composed of aircraft pilots and experts from inside and outside the Government and confirmed the safety of MV-22 by conducting its own survey, etc. In addition, when Japan made the decision to introduce Ospreys in 2014, the Government reconfirmed their safety by collecting and analyzing all kinds of technical information, not only in the preparation phase, but also after the decision of introduction was made.

Moreover, since 2016, the Government has dispatched GSDF Osprey personnel to the U.S. Marine Corps' training programs, in which they pilot and maintain the aircraft. The Government has reaffirmed that the Osprey is a reliable aircraft that allows for stable maneuvering and maintenance.

Additionally, the U.S. Air Force CV-22s (Osprey) have the same propulsion system as the MV-22 and both aircraft also have the basic structure in common. Therefore, the safety of both aircraft is at the same level.

The accident investigation report released in August 2024 concerning the November 2023 crash of a U.S. Air Force CV-22 states that the cause is a malfunction in the left propeller rotor gearbox (PRGB) and errors in the pilot's decision-making. It was concluded that implementing a range of safety measures targeted at the cause of the accident would prevent and respond to similar accidents; accordingly, Osprey operations have continued. Based on the U.S. Government's latest analysis, it was announced in December 2024 that new safety measures would be implemented to further enhance safety. This is intended to further enhance safety by introducing additional safety measures for PRGBs that have not yet accumulated sufficient flight hours, premised on various safety measures for continuous prevention of and response to accidents similar to the November 2023 crash of a U.S. Air Force CV-22. This initiative is expected to further bolster accident prevention and response capabilities.

25 USFJ aircraft conduct bilateral and other training at JSDF facilities, etc.

The MOD has repeatedly affirmed the safety of Osprey and considers there to be no issues. Nonetheless, the MOD has confirmed, at all levels in Japan and the United States, that flight safety remains the top priority for Osprey flight operations in Japan, and that Japan and the United States will continue to cooperate and take all possible measures to ensure safety.

See Part V, Chapter 2, Section 1-4-2 (3) (Crash of the U.S. Osprey), Reference 34 (Chronology of Osprey Deployment by the U.S. Forces)

(3) Usability of Osprey Deployed by the U.S. Forces in Case of Disaster

In the aftermath of the devastating typhoon that hit the central part of the Philippines in 2013, 14 MV-22 aircraft, deployed in Okinawa, were dispatched for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities to support Operation Damayan. The MV-22s were deployed promptly to affected areas that were difficult to access, and transported several hundred isolated victims and about six tons of relief materials in a day. In 2014, an MV-22 aircraft deployed in Okinawa was dispatched for search and rescue activities when a passenger ship sank in an accident off the coast of Jindo in the ROK. Furthermore, in response to the large earthquake that hit Nepal in 2015, four MV-22s deployed in Okinawa were dispatched to the country to transport personnel and supplies.

In Japan as well, when the Kumamoto Earthquake occurred in 2016, MV-22s were dispatched to deliver daily necessities to the disaster-stricken areas.

In this manner, the MV-22 is capable of conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities immediately and over a large range when large-scale disasters occur because of its high performance and multifunctionality. It has also been used for disaster prevention drills since 2014. Like the MV-22, the CV-22 can conduct humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities, including search and rescue missions, both immediately and over a large range, in the case of a large-scale disaster.

As such, it is expected that the superior capabilities of the Osprey deployed by the U.S. Forces can be showcased in a variety of operations in the future as well.

8 Initiatives for Smooth Implementation of the Realignment of the USFJ

In order to smoothly implement the realignment of the USFJ based on the May 2006 Roadmap, the Act on Special Measures on Smooth Implementation of the Realignment of United States Forces in Japan (USFJ Realignment Special Measures Act)[26] was enacted in August 2007. Realignment grants, Special Subsidy Rates for Public Projects, and other systems were established based on the law.

In addition, under the U.S. Forces realignment, some USFJ facilities and areas will be returned, and the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa will be relocated to Guam. Since these developments may affect the employment of USFJ employees, the Government of Japan will take measures to include education and skills training, which is to help retain their employment.

The act revising part of the USFJ Realignment Special Measures Act including a 10-year extension of the time limit to March 31, 2027 was enacted on March 31, 2017.

See Reference 35 (Outline of the Act on Special Measures on Smooth Implementation of the Realignment of United States Forces, etc. in Japan)

3 Measures Concerning the Stationing of the USFJ

1 Optimization of the Posture of the USFJ

(1) Reorganization of the Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) of the U.S. Marine Corps Forces in Okinawa

As part of the optimization of the posture of the USFJ, the 12th Marine Regiment located at Camp Hansen in Kin Town, Okinawa will be reorganized into the 12th MLR by 2025. As part of this effort, the unit was renamed in 2023. While the 12th Marine Regiment mainly has artillery firepower as an artillery unit, the reorganized MLR will have a variety of capabilities, including anti-ship strike capabilities with anti-ship missiles, air defense capabilities, logistics support capabilities, and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.

(2) Establishment of the Composite Watercraft Company at Yokohama North Dock

In April 2023, the U.S. Army's Composite Watercraft Company was established at Yokohama North Dock to strengthen the maritime mobility of the U.S. Forces in emergency situations, including disasters, and it began operations as the 5th Transportation Company in February 2024. The established company will contribute to strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance transportation capabilities in Japan and improve the mobility of the U.S. Forces in the region.

2 Stationing of the U.S. Forces in Okinawa

In comparison to areas such as the U.S. mainland, Hawaii, and Guam, Okinawa is located closer to potential conflict

26 Act on Special Measures concerning Smooth Implementation of Realignment of United States Forces in Japan

areas that could affect Japan's peace and security, including the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, but at the same time has the advantage of having a certain distance from these areas that would not heighten military tension there unnecessarily. In addition, Okinawa, comprising a large number of small islands, is located roughly in the center of the Southwestern Islands having a total length of some 1,200 km and close to key sea lanes for Japan, which depends on marine transportation for over 99% of its overall international trade. Furthermore, its location is extremely important from the perspective of security, as Okinawa serves as a strategically important target for neighboring countries in both making access to the Pacific from the continent and rejecting access from the Pacific to the continent.

Thus, the stationing of the U.S. Forces in Okinawa, including the U.S. Marine Corps, which can deal with a wide range of missions with high mobility and readiness, along with the above-mentioned geographical characteristics, further ensures the effectiveness of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, strengthens deterrence, and contributes greatly not only to the security of Japan but also to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

On the other hand, Okinawa has many USFJ facilities and areas such as air bases, maneuver areas, and logistics facilities. As of January 1, 2025, approximately 70% of USFJ facilities and areas (for exclusive use) are concentrated in Okinawa Prefecture, occupying approximately 8% of the land area of the prefecture and approximately 14% of the main island of Okinawa. Therefore, it is necessary to make utmost efforts to mitigate the impact on Okinawa, while also considering the above-mentioned security standpoints.

(1) Initiatives for Realignment, Consolidation, and Reduction of USFJ Facilities and Areas in Okinawa

When Okinawa was returned to Japan in 1972, the Government of Japan provided 83 facilities and areas covering approximately 278 km^2 for exclusive use as USFJ facilities and areas. On the other hand, USFJ facilities and areas were strongly requested to be realigned, consolidated and reduced, on the grounds that they seriously affect the lives of people in Okinawa Prefecture.

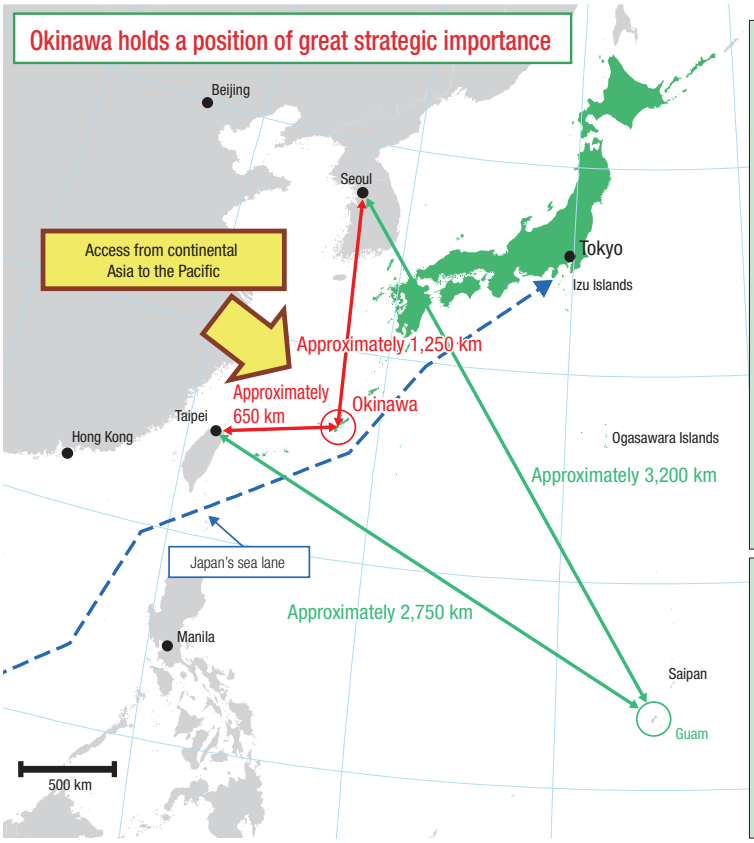
Both countries have continued their initiatives to realign, consolidate, and reduce USFJ facilities and areas, centering on those subject to strong local requests, and, in relation to the so-called 23 issues,[27] it was agreed in 1990 that both sides would proceed with the required coordination and procedures toward the return of land. Moreover, it was agreed in 1995 that efforts would also be made to resolve the so-called Three Okinawa Issues: the return of Naha Port (Naha City), the return of Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield, and the relocation of artillery live-fire training over Highway 104.

Subsequently, in response to an unfortunate incident that occurred in 1995, as well as the refusal of the then Governor of Okinawa to sign land lease renewal documents under the Act on Special Measures for USFJ Land Release, the Government of Japan decided to devote even greater initiatives towards realignment, consolidation, and reduction, believing that the impact should be shared by the whole nation. In order to hold consultations on issues related to USFJ facilities and areas in Okinawa, the Government of Japan established the Okinawa Action Council between the central government and Okinawa Prefecture, as well as the SACO, and the so-called SACO Final Report was compiled in 1996.

See Fig. III-2-5-12 (The Geopolitical Positioning of Okinawa and the Significance of the U.S. Marine Corps Stationed in Okinawa (image)), Fig. III-2-5-13 (Location of Major U.S. Forces Stationing in Okinawa (As of March 31, 2024)), Reference 36 (Outline of 23 Issues)

27 In 1990, the governments of Japan and the United States agreed to proceed with the land restitution process for 23 issues, focusing on those with strong local demand.

Fig. III-2-5-12 The Geopolitical Positioning of Okinawa and the Significance of the U.S. Marine Corps Stationed in Okinawa (image)



Geographical Advantage of Okinawa

- ○ The main island of Okinawa is located roughly in the center of the Southwestern Islands and also close to key sea lanes (Note 1) for Japan, and thus its location is extremely important from the perspective of Japan's security.
- ○ Okinawa is located close (but not overly so) to potential conflict areas that could affect Japan's peace and security, including the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait.
  → Okinawa is located at a distance that makes it possible to expeditiously send units to potential conflict areas and at the same time has sufficient distance so as not to heighten military tension unnecessarily and is not overly close in terms of protecting units.
- ○ In the eyes of neighboring countries, Okinawa's location is strategically important in both enabling access to the Pacific from the continent and rejecting access from the Pacific to the continent.

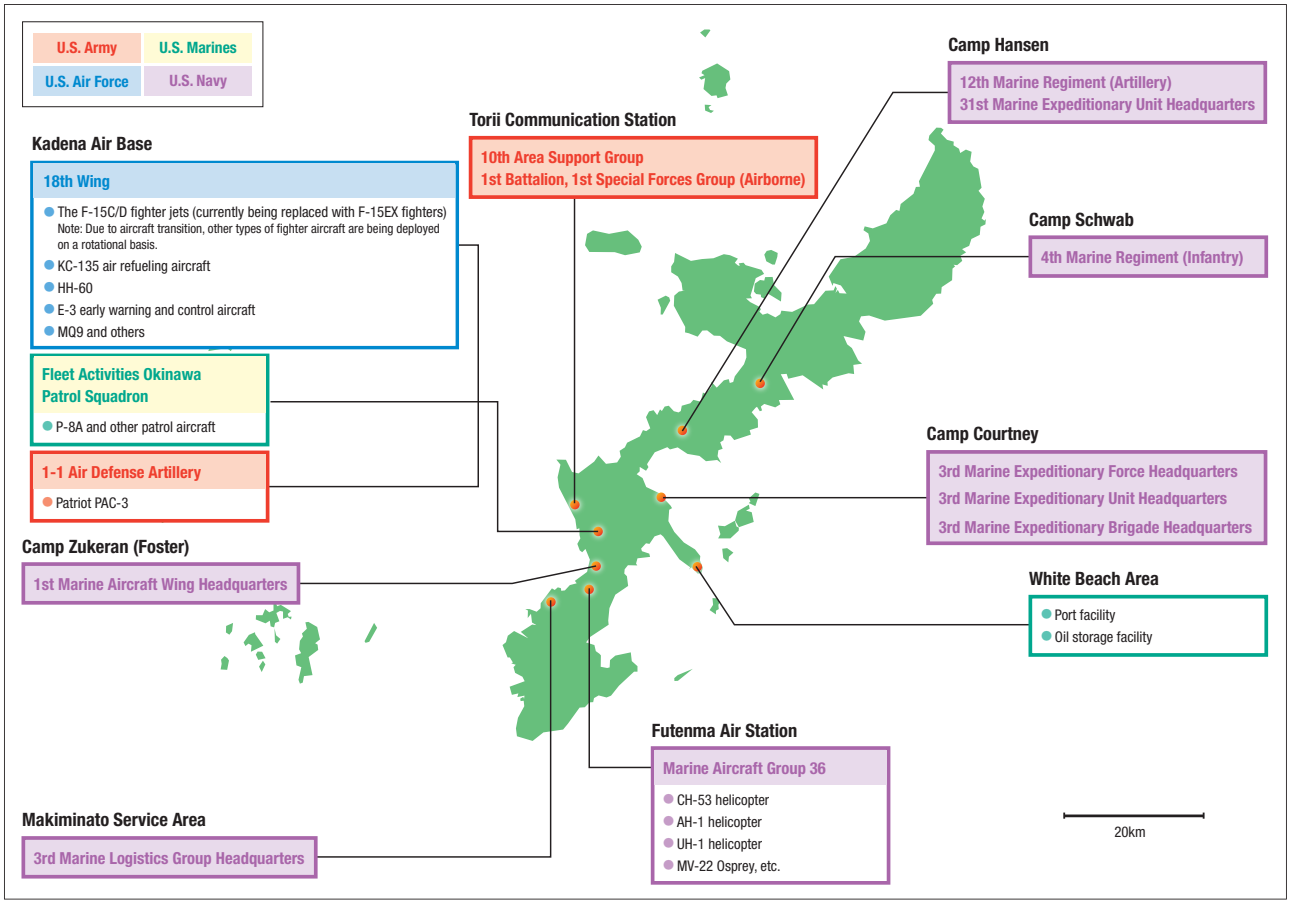
(Note) 1 Japan is dependent upon marine transportation for at least 99% of the total volume of its trade.

The Significance & Roles of the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa

The stationing of the U.S. Marine Corps,(Note 2) which is capable of high mobility and rapid response and also has readiness for a wide variety of missions ranging from armed conflicts to natural disasters, in Okinawa, which features such geographical advantages plays an important role in ensuring not only the security of Japan but also the peace and safety of East Asia.

(Note) 2 The Marine Corps constantly utilizes all combat elements (land, sea and air) during its drills and deployments, so it is suited to providing a rapid response in the event of any kind of situation.

Fig. III-2-5-13 Location of Major U.S. Forces Stationing in Okinawa (As of March 31, 2024)



(Note) Based on information on the U.S. Forces Japan website and other sources.

(2) Outline of the SACO Final Report

The SACO Final Report stipulates the return of land, the adjustment of training and operational procedures, noise mitigation, and the improvement of operational procedures regarding the SOFA, and also refers to the related facilities and areas covered. The land to be returned based on the implementation of contents included in the SACO Final Report represents approximately 21% (about 50 km^2) of USFJ facilities and areas in Okinawa at that time, exceeding the amount of land returned during the period between the reversion of Okinawa and the implementation of the SACO Final Report, which is roughly 43 km^2.

See Fig. III-2-5-14 (Facilities and Areas Related to the SACO Final Report (image)), Fig. III-2-5-15 (Changes in Number and Area of the USFJ Facilities and Areas (Exclusive Use) in Okinawa), Reference 37 (The SACO Final Report (tentative translation)), Reference 38 (Progress of the SACO Final Report), Reference 39 (Consultative Bodies on the Mitigation of Impact of Bases on Okinawa)

Fig. III-2-5-14 Facilities and Areas Related to the SACO Final Report (image)

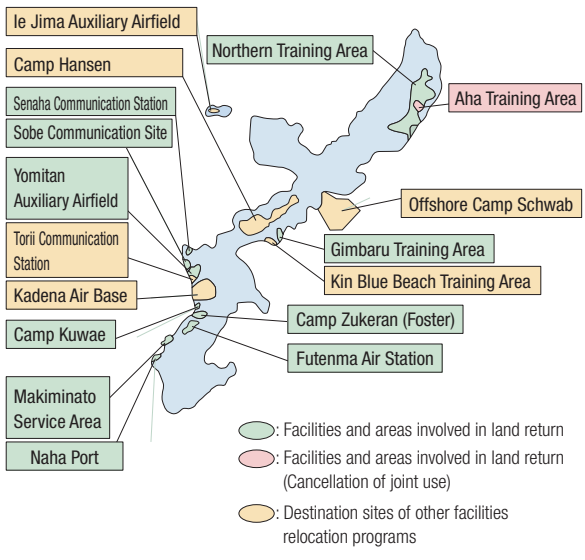
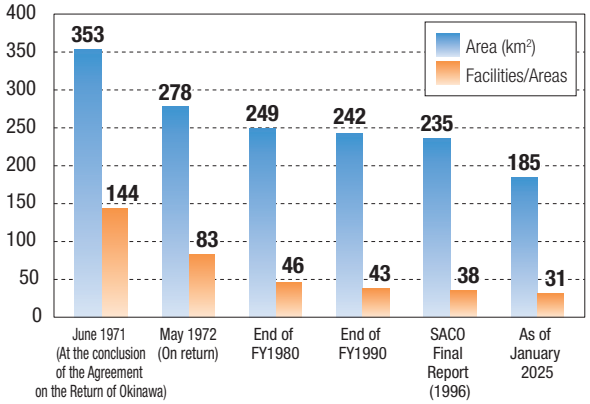


Fig. III-2-5-15 Changes in Number and Area of the USFJ Facilities and Areas (Exclusive Use) in Okinawa



(3) Return of a Major Portion of the Northern Training Area

The condition for returning the Northern Training Area was to relocate seven helipads in the area to be returned to the preexisting training area. However, the Government of Japan reached an agreement with the U.S. side to give considerations for the natural environment and to relocate not all seven but the minimum number of six helipads necessary, and proceeded with the construction work. The relocation of the helipads completed in December 2016, and the return of approximately 4,000 ha, a major portion of the Northern Training Area located in the villages of Kunigami and Higashi, was achieved based on the SACO Final Report.

The returned land accounts for approximately 20% of USFJ facilities and areas (for exclusive use) in Okinawa. The return is the largest one since the reversion of Okinawa to the mainland, and had been an issue for 20 years since the SACO Final Report in 1996.

Based on the Act on Special Measures Concerning Promotion of Effective and Appropriate Use of the Lands in Okinawa Prefecture Previously Provided for Use by the Stationed Forces, the MOD took measures to remove obstacles (such as soil contamination survey, etc.) so that the landowners, etc., could use returned lands effectively and appropriately, and transferred the land to the landowners in December 2017. In addition, in July 2021, the northern part of the main island of Okinawa, including the returned lands, was inscribed in the World Heritage List as part of the Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island natural site.

3 The USFJ in Kanagawa Prefecture

(1) Deployment of U.S. Aircraft Carrier to Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka

The presence of the U.S. Pacific Fleet plays an important role in ensuring maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region as well as regional peace and stability. The U.S. aircraft carrier provides the core capabilities of the Fleet.

The U.S. Navy affirms that it will continue to ensure that all of its nuclear-powered vessels anchoring in Japan's ports, including the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier[28] which is forward-deployed at Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka (Kanagawa Prefecture), adhere to the relevant safety policies. For example, the nuclear reactors will normally be shut down while the vessels are anchored, and repair of the nuclear reactors and refueling will not be carried out in Japan. The Government of Japan will also continue to take all possible measures to ensure safety.

(2) Realignment, etc. of USFJ Facilities and Areas

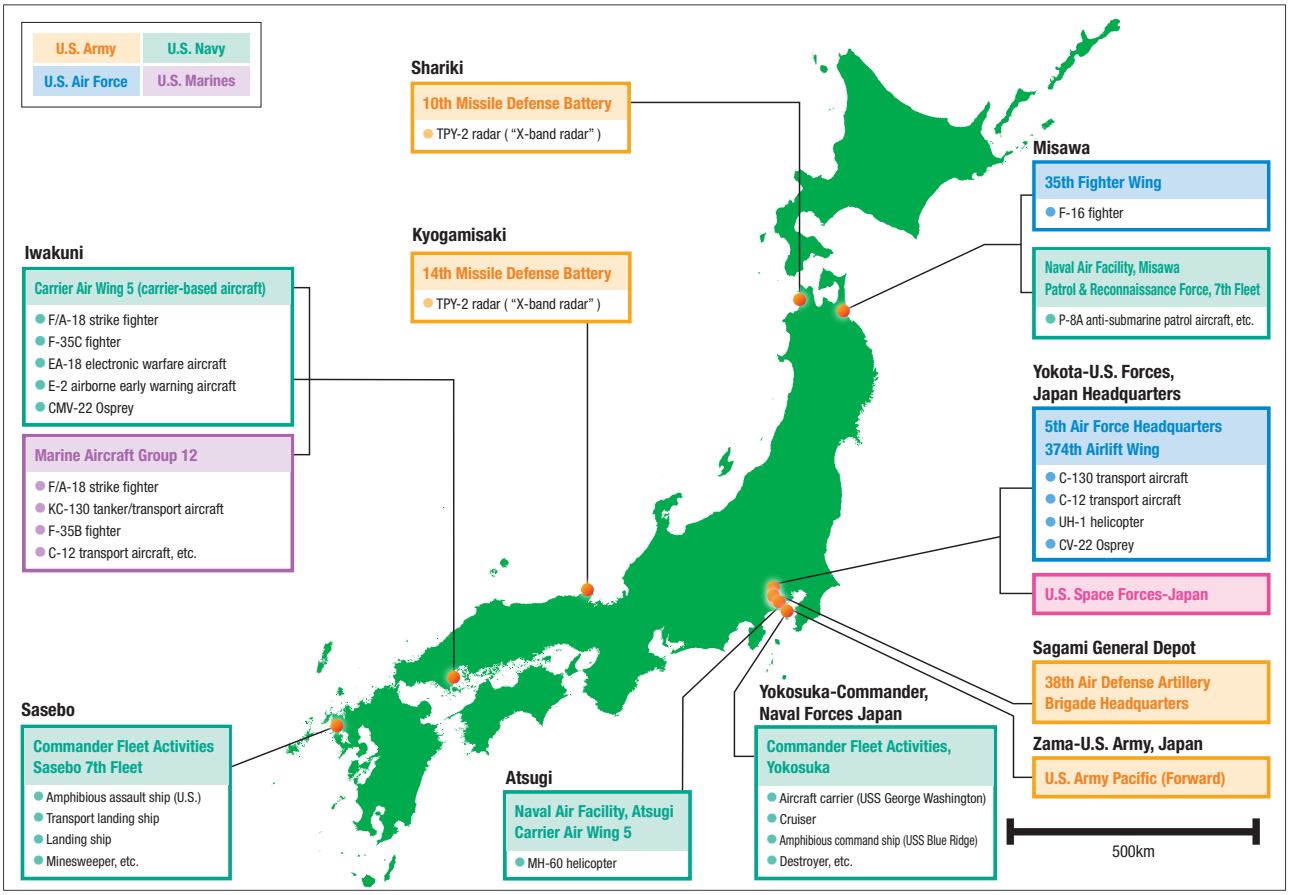
With regard to the realignment of facilities and areas of the USFJ in Kanagawa Prefecture, the release of facilities and areas including Kamiseya Communication Station and Fukaya Communication Site has already been realized based on the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee agreement of October 2004.

Meanwhile, more than 10 years have passed since the initial agreement, and security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe. Therefore, there have been changes in the U.S. Navy's posture and capabilities, as represented by the increased operations of the U.S. vessels at Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka. In light of such circumstances, the following were agreed at the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee in 2018: (1) development of facilities for satisfying the U.S. Navy's facility requirements; (2) start of negotiations on joint use of Negishi Dependent Housing Area to conduct site restoration works; and (3) cancellation of the construction of family housing units in the Yokohama portion of Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex. Subsequently, joint use of Negishi Dependent Housing Area was agreed upon at the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee in 2019.

See Fig. III-2-5-16 (Locations of Major U.S. Forces Stationing in Japan (Excluding Okinawa Prefecture) (As of March 31, 2024)), Fig. III-2-5-17 (Realignment of USFJ Facilities and Areas in Kanagawa Prefecture (image))

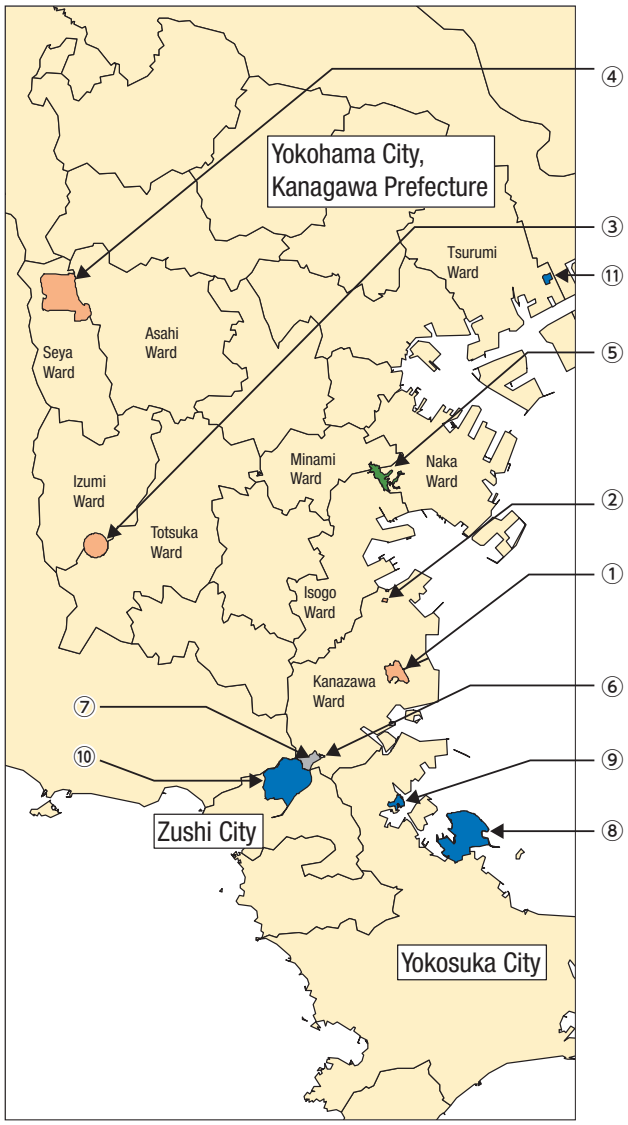
28 Nuclear-powered aircraft carriers do not need refueling and they are able to maintain high speeds necessary for the operations of aircraft, giving them excellent combat and operational capabilities.

Fig. III-2-5-16 Locations of Major U.S. Forces Stationing in Japan (Excluding Okinawa Prefecture) (As of March 31, 2024)



(Note) Based on information on the U.S. Forces Japan website and other sources.

Fig. III-2-5-17 Realignment of USFJ Facilities and Areas in Kanagawa Prefecture (image)



Japan-U.S. Joint Committee agreement of October 2004

Location	Name	Location	Area (ha)	Plan for land return, etc.
①	Koshiba POL Depot	Kanazawa Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 53 ha	Returned in December, 2005
②	Tomioka Storage Area	Kanazawa Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 3 ha	Returned in May, 2009
③	Fukaya Communication Site	Izumi Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 77 ha	Returned in June, 2014
④	Kamiseya Communication Station	Seya Ward and Asahi Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 242 ha	Returned in June, 2015
⑤	Negishi Dependent Housing Area	Naka Ward, Minami Ward and Isogo Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 43 ha	To be returned when the construction of family housing etc. is completed at Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex
⑥	Detached part of Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex	Kanazawa Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 1 ha	Return procedures to begin upon completion of the current use
⑦	Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex	Yokohama City Area	—	Construction of family housing, etc.

: Returned

Japan-U.S. Joint Committee agreement of November 2018

[Development of facilities]

Location	Name	Location	Details
⑧	U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka	Yokosuka City	Bachelor enlisted quarters
⑨	Urago Storage Area	Yokosuka City	A wharf
⑩	Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex	Zushi City Area	Living support facilities, fitness center, maintenance shop and fire station
⑪	Tsurumi POL Depot	Tsurumi Ward, Yokohama City	A fire station

[Joint use and return]

Location	Name	Location	Area	Details
⑤	Negishi Dependent Housing Area	Naka Ward, Minami Ward and Isogo Ward, Yokohama City	Approx. 43 ha	A Japan-U.S. consultation concerning joint use of the Negishi Dependent Housing Area will commence with the aim of promptly carrying out site restoration work. Consultation on the specific return date will be held between the two governments depending on the progress of the site restoration work.

[Cancellation of construction]

Location	Name	Location	Details
⑦	Ikego Housing Area and Navy Annex	Yokohama City Area	Cancellation of construction of family housing, etc.

Section 6 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises

The Japan-U.S. Alliance is essential to Japan's national security, and Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises play a significant role in enhancing Japan's deterrence and response capabilities. The JSDF has consistently conducted joint training involving different JSDF services as well as Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercises (field training exercises and command post exercises) to improve the JSDF's tactical skills and strengthen collaboration with the U.S. Forces, demonstrating Japan and the United States' unified commitment to and capacity for achieving peace and stability in the region.

1 Training that Contributes to Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance

1 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercises

Since 1986, the JSDF has been conducting the Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercises "Keen Sword" (field training exercise) and "Keen Edge" (command post exercise) to rehearse JSDF operational procedures and the Japan-U.S. Joint Response Plan for armed attack situations, etc., as well as to improve the readiness of the JSDF and the interoperability of Japan and the United States.

In FY 2024, the Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercise for FY 2024 "Keen Sword 25" was conducted. This exercise was intended to rehearse and verify the Japan-U.S. joint response capabilities and the JSDF's joint operations system for the defense of Japan, thereby maintaining and improving the joint operations capabilities. The Australian Armed Force and the Canadian Armed Forces participated in this exercise to enhance cooperation with like-minded countries.

2 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Exercises of Each JSDF Service

(1) Ground Self Defense Force

In recent years, the GSDF has strengthened its operational and strategic coordination with the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps including headquarters, and USAPAC and MARFORJ. Bilateral exercises, in conjunction with high-level exchanges, have continued to evolve and develop as part of ongoing efforts to fundamentally strengthen the Japan-U.S. joint response posture.

In FY 2024, Japan and the U.S. worked together to materialize the coordination procedures and improve interoperability through bilateral exercises, including "Orient Shield 24" with the U.S. Army and "Resolute Dragon 24" with the U.S. Marine Corps. In addition, Japan and the U.S. conducted "North Wind 25," a bilateral exercise with the U.S. Army in snowy and cold regions, to share know-how on tactical operations in snowy regions and improve the ability to cope with all kinds of situations.

a. Field training exercise with the U.S. Army "Orient Shield 2024"

In July 2024, the GSDF conducted a training aimed at reinforcing Japan-U.S. coordination capabilities in light of its cross-domain operations and the U.S. Army's multi-domain operations (MDO). This training involved a Japan-U.S. training exercise, based on cooperation between various fields, that combined electronic warfare and heliborne activities. It also included live-fire exercises using GSDF FH-70 howitzers and the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) from the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps, as well as an exchange of experts on cyberattack response.

b. Field Training exercise with the U.S. Marine Corps in Japan "Resolute Dragon 24"

From July to August 2024, the GSDF rehearsed a series

FY 2024 Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercise "Keen Sword 25" (FTX) (October 2024)

Japan-U.S. bilateral heliborne combat (July 2024)

of operations for island defense, with a focus on cross-domain operations and coordination based on the U.S. Marine Corps' Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO)[1]. This exercise, conducted under direction of Western Army Headquarters and III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters, is one of the largest training exercises in Japan involving the U.S. Marine Corps. GSDF surface-to-ship guided missiles (SSM), GSDF V-22s, AH anti-tank helicopters, the U.S. Marine Corps' High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), and MV-22s were deployed in the maneuver areas to carry out mobilization training necessary for the defense of remote islands, such as anti-ship combat and anti-landing combat. Additionally, GSDF CH-47 transport helicopters conducted patient-evacuation drills, while ASDF C-130 transport aircraft carried out aerial-delivery exercises, enhancing mission sustainability on remote islands.

(2) Maritime Self Defense Force

The MSDF has traditionally conducted bilateral exercises with the U.S. Navy proactively, and is working to enhance the effectiveness of Japan-U.S. joint response as well as cross-domain operation capabilities through Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises with naval vessels and aircraft, special anti-submarine exercises, special mine warfare training, medical special training, and Japan-U.S. medical joint training.

For example, the MSDF has consistently conducted bilateral exercises with U.S. navy carrier strike groups and conducted a wide range of Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises in the waters surrounding Japan, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea, thereby ceaselessly strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. In FY 2024, the MSDF conducted its first special mine warfare training in Guam while actively conducting Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises involving other services, including bilateral exercises with the GSDF and the U.S. Marine Corps, as well as "Rescue Flag Iwakuni" and "Rescue Flag Okinawa" which were search and rescue exercises with the ASDF and the U.S. Air Force, to strengthen comprehensive deterrence and response capabilities.

(3) Air Self Defense Force

The ASDF is working to reinforce the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance through "Red Flag-Alaska," the U.S. Air Force exercise that the ASDF has been participating in since 1996, and the bilateral exercise with the U.S. Air Force "Cope North," which has been conducted since 1999 and has been a trilateral exercise with Australia since 2011. In addition, the ASDF is working to enhance the effectiveness of Japan-U.S. joint response as well as cross-domain operation capabilities through air combat training, intercept training, defensive counter air training, and search and rescue training with the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, as well as other Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises.

In 2024, the exercises—continuing those of the previous year and including the F-35A/B fighter jets and B-1 and B-52 bombers of the U.S. Air Force—affirmed the readiness

USNS Washington Chambers and JS Kaga undergoing replenishment at sea (November 2024)

Bilateral exercise with the U.S. Air Force (Rescue Flag Okinawa) (January 2025)

REFERENCE: The evolution of Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/about/japan-us/index.html

MOVIE: 2024 "Resolute Dragon" live-fire training with U.S. Marine Corps in Japan
URL: https://youtube.com/watch?v=rwaVCfzRqsc

1 Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. An operational concept in which frontline operations are executed by rapidly dispersing and deploying within the enemy's firepower zone and establishing temporary bases.

of the JSDF and the U.S. Forces under the robust Japan-U.S. Alliance, and demonstrated both domestically and internationally the strong will and close cooperation between Japan and the United States when responding to various contingencies.

The JSDF and the U.S. Forces will continue to cooperate closely in peacetime to safeguard the defense of Japan and the peace and stability of the region while maintaining the necessary posture to swiftly respond to various contingencies.

See Reference 29 (Record of Main Japan-U.S. Bilateral Exercises in FY2024)

2 Multilateral Exercises Involving Japan, the United States, and Third-Party Countries

Each JSDF service is actively engaged in high-level multilateral training exercises with the participation of not only the United States but also third-party countries. By conducting training with Australian and European forces, the JSDF has been working to enhance its tactical skills and strengthen its coordination and interoperability with the armed forces of other countries to reinforce Japan's deterrence and response capabilities.

1 Joint Multilateral Exercises Involving Japan, the United States, and Third-Party Countries

(1) Japan-U.S.-ROK Multi-Domain Trilateral Exercise "Freedom Edge"

In June and November 2024, the Self-Defense Forces conducted the Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral exercise "Freedom Edge" covering multiple domains with U.S. Forces and ROK Forces. The implementation of this exercise was announced at the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting in 2023 and the Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting held during the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024. In this exercise, ballistic missile defense exercise, defensive counter air training, anti-submarine warfare training, and cyber attack countermeasure training were conducted in partial coordination, strengthening the Japan-U.S.-ROK joint response capabilities covering multiple domains.

(2) U.S.-hosted Multilateral Joint Exercise "Valiant Shield 24"

In June 2024, the Self-Defense Forces and its like-minded forces participated in the U.S.-hosted multilateral joint exercise "Valiant Shield 24." This exercise was a biennial U.S.-only joint field training exercise held since 2006. In 2024, for the first time, the Self-Defense Forces and several partners were invited to participate in a part of the exercise, transforming it into a multilateral joint exercise. Participating in this exercise allowed the Self-Defense Forces to strengthen interoperability and partnerships with allies and like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

2 Multilateral Exercises of Each JSDF Service Involving Japan, the United States, and Third-Party Countries

(1) Ground Self Defense Force

a. FY 2024 Field Training Exercise with U.S. and Australian Forces "Southern Jackaroo 24"

From May to June 2024, the GSDF participated in a field training exercise with the U.S. and Australian forces in Australia, which included exercises for protection of critical facilities, search and destruction training in urban areas, and forest and complicated area training, to improve the operation execution capabilities of GSDF units and strengthen cooperation with the U.S. and Australian forces.

Search and destruction training in forest and complicated area with the Australian Army (June 2024)

b. Japan-U.S.-Australia Multilateral Command Post Exercise "YS-87"

YS-87, conducted in Japan in December 2024, is one of

MOVIE: Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises "Rescue Flag Okinawa"
URL: https://youtu.be/2wjXvLuzOwg?si=XFaa8P4RQaUVycJT

MOVIE: 2024 "Southern Jackaroo 24" live-fire training with the U.S. and Australian forces in Australia
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lyxLFONntk

the largest command post exercises by each service of the Japan, the U.S., and Australia armies.

In anticipation of various situations including the defense of remote islands, this exercise—which included participation by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Australian Army—saw Japan, the U.S., and Australia jointly rehearsing remote island defense operations based on the GSDF's cross-domain operations, the U.S. Army's MDO, and the U.S. Marine Corps' EABO.

In addition, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Canada, Singapore, France, and India participated in the exercise as observers, strengthening mutual cooperation.

Japan-U.S.-Australia trilateral exercise "Cope North 25" (February 2025)

(2) Maritime Self Defense Force

a. Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Cyber Exercise "Blue Spectrum 24"

In May and September 2024, the MSDF conducted a trilateral cyber-response exercise with the U.S. Navy and the Royal Australian Navy. This exercise improved the MSDF's cybersecurity skills and enhanced interoperability with the cyber response units of the U.S. Navy and Royal Australian Navy, thereby strengthening deterrence and response capabilities among Japanese, U.S., and Australian cyber units.

b. Japan-Australia-India-U.S. multilateral exercise "Malabar 24"

In October 2024, the MSDF conducted a multilateral exercise involving the U.S. Navy, the Indian Navy, the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Australian Air Force in Visakhapatnam (India) and its surrounding sea and airspace. The destroyer "Ariake" and the special boarding unit of the MSDF participated in the exercise, which included anti-submarine warfare, anti-air warfare, and anti-surface warfare, aimed at improving interoperability with the participating countries. Malabar has major significance as it continues to be conducted under the framework of the four countries at the heart of the vision of Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), and efforts will be made to continue strengthening the relationships between the participating countries.

(3) Air Self Defense Force

In February 2025, the ASDF participated in the Japan-U.S.-Australia trilateral exercise "Cope North 25" based in Guam. This exercise marked the first time that ASDF's F-35A fighter jets, E-2D airborne early warning aircraft, and KC-46A aerial refueling/transport aircraft participated in training conducted outside of Japan. F-35A fighter jets from Japan, the U.S., and Australia conducted a trilateral exercise for the first time, enhancing Japan-U.S. joint response capabilities and interoperability among Japan, the U.S., and Australia.

Commentary

FY2024 Japan-U.S. Bilateral/Joint Exercise (Field Training Exercise) KS25

In order to maintain and enhance the joint operations of the Self-Defense Forces and Japan-U.S. joint response capabilities for the defense of Japan, the FY2024 Japan-U.S. Bilateral/Joint exercise KS25, the largest Japan-U.S. joint training, was implemented in October 2024.

This exercise further deepened the variety of training related to Japan's defense that had been accumulated in previous exercises and, as one example, in order to reinforce medical functions, Japanese and U.S. aircraft were used to implement patient transfer training to practice a series of arrangements for medical care and transfer from the islands to major Self-Defense Forces hospitals on Honshu. The medical functions are necessary and essential for the achievement of missions, and so KS25 has become more practical by giving training in the fundamentals.

Moreover, when implementing KS25, with the deep understanding of all of the residents and the cooperation of the relevant local governments and other organizations, the training was implemented using Japan and U.S. aircraft, ships, and other equipment in civilian airports and ports. Furthermore, the Australian military and the Canadian military participated in a part of this exercise, and as a result it was possible to reinforce collaboration with like-minded countries.

With the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, the MOD/JSDF is enhancing the deterrence and response capabilities through these exercises to swiftly respond to various contingencies, and is working to safeguard the defense of Japan and the peace and stability of the region by demonstrating the strong will and capability of Japan and the U.S.

U.S. military personnel giving first aid training to Ground Self-Defense Force personnel on board an aircraft

A scene showing a patient on a stretcher being carried onto an aircraft for transfer

Chapter 3 Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries and Others

In situations where the need for international cooperation in the security and defense fields is increasing in an unprecedented manner, the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) is required to actively contribute to ensuring the security of Japan, the peace and stability of the region and the peace, stability and prosperity of the entire international community.

The first defense objective of the National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) is to shape a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force, in cooperation with Japan's ally, like-minded countries and others. Therefore, the NDS calls for Japan to promote efforts that contribute to realizing the vision of Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) from the perspective that it is extremely important to reinforce collaboration with not only its ally but also as many countries as possible.

In addition, it is essential to deepen cooperation and coordination with its ally and like-minded countries to counter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts and to safeguard the security environment of Japan.

Furthermore, Japan will also more actively advance its efforts to solve global security issues and others, including securing the freedom and safety of maritime navigation and overflight, coordination and cooperation with relevant countries in relation to the use of the space and cyber domains, international peace cooperation activities, cooperation on climate change and maritime security, arms control and disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

For the implementation of these efforts, Japan will, while placing the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the key pillar of its security policy, proactively promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges, taking into account characteristics of the region as well as situation of each country. In doing so, Japan will further promote the establishment of institutional frameworks such as **Reciprocal Access Agreements (RAA), Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSA) and Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology** from the perspective of effectively promoting the strengthening of collaboration with like-minded countries and others.

See Fig. III-3-1 (MOD's Approach Under the Vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) (image))

KEY WORD **Reciprocal Access Agreements (RAA)**

Its purpose is to facilitate the implementation of cooperative activities between the forces of the two countries, such as joint training and disaster relief, establishing procedures for the cooperative activities conducted by defense force of one country while visiting the other country, and to define the status of the visiting force. As of April 2025, it has been concluded with Australia and the United Kingdom and signed with the Philippines.

KEY WORD **Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSA)**

It establishes the basic terms and conditions for the mutual provision of goods and services necessary for joint training, UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), humanitarian international relief operations, operations to deal with major disasters, and others.
As of April 2025, it has been concluded with the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, India and Germany and signed with Italy.

KEY WORD **Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology**

An international agreement that establishes a general legal framework for the transfer of defense equipment and technology between signatory countries. Specifically, it establishes procedures for deciding and confirming individual transfers and obligates them to properly use and manage transferred defense equipment and technology.
As of April 2025, Japan has concluded the agreement with the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, India, the Philippines, France, Germany, Malaysia, Italy, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Thailand, Sweden, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Mongolia. (*Arrangement on Transfer of Arms and Military Technologies to the United States, and Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning the Transfer of Arms and Military Technologies)

REFERENCE: Multilateral and multilayered security cooperation
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/exchange/index.html

MOVIE: The MOD's Efforts under the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific"
URL: https://youtu.be/q__RHctUc0I

REFERENCE: The official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: A new plan for Free and Open Indo-Pacific [Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]
URL: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/fp/pp/page3_003666.html

Fig. III-3-1 MOD's Approach Under the Vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) (image)

MOD's Approach under the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

Background

○ In August 2016, then Prime Minister Abe unveiled the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" concept in his keynote speech in the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) held in Kenya.
○ Japan's fundamental aim is to foster regional stability and prosperity by improving connectivity between Asia and Africa through a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
○ Then Prime Minister Kishida announced Japan's new plan for a FOIP in his policy speech at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) held in India in March 2023.

Basic concepts of "Free and Open Indo-Pacific"

○ The Indo-Pacific region is the center of the world vitality and home to more than half the world population; realizing the stable and autonomous development in this region is crucial for the stability and prosperity of the world.
○ The goal of "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" Vision is to facilitate free and robust economic activity throughout the Indo-Pacific, and to realize the prosperity in the entire region.

New Pillars of Cooperation for FOIP

(1) Principles for peace and rules for prosperity
(2) Addressing challenges in an Indo-Pacific way
(3) Multilayered connectivity
(4) Extending efforts for security and safe use of the "sea" to the "air"

✓ **Japan is pursuing the "Free and Open Indo Pacific (FOIP)" Vision through a coordinated whole-of-government approach.**

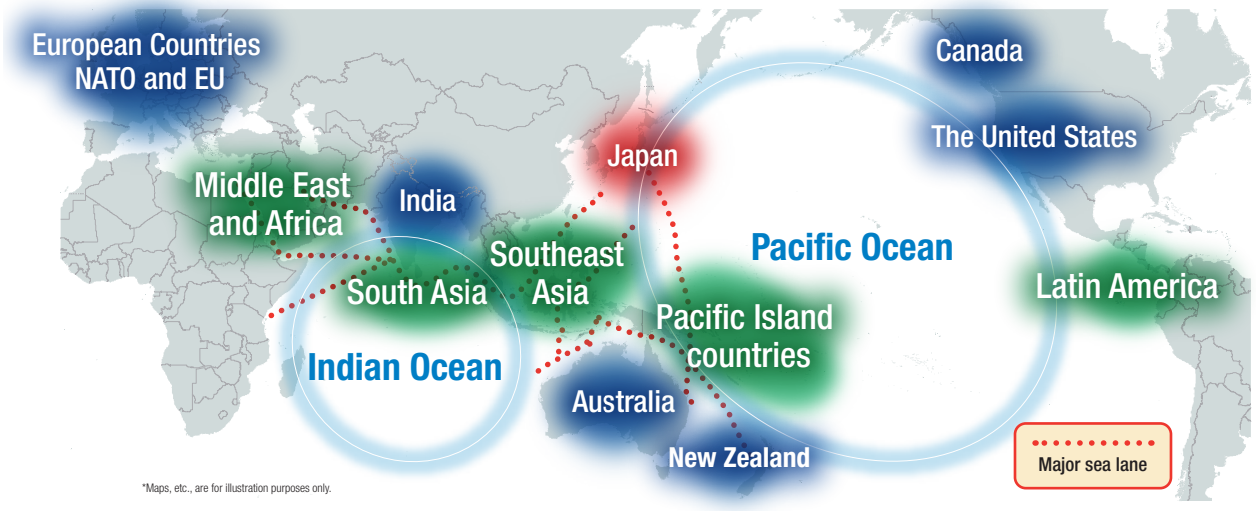
Characteristics of the Indo-Pacific Region

○ The Indo-Pacific region is at the center of global economic dynamism and home to the largest share of the world's population. Key sea lanes are located in the Indo-Pacific area; as a result, regional stability is essential to Japan's security and prosperity.
○ Meanwhile, there are various challenges within the region, including rapid military modernization and intensified military activities.
○ All countries in the region are taking measures to respond to these rapid changes in the environment.

Aspects of MOD's Approach

○ Securing the stable use of major sea lanes by defense cooperation and exchange activities
○ Preventing contingencies through confidence-building and mutual understanding
○ Contributing to peace and stability through active engagement in the region, in cooperation with partner countries

✓ **There are many security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region**
✓ **Creating a favorable security environment for Japan by leveraging defense cooperation and exchange activities**



○ The MOD/JSDF is enhancing defense cooperation and exchanges with countries in the Indo-Pacific region. This enhanced engagement encompasses Southeast Asia, South Asia and Pacific Islands, in which several key sea lanes are located; Middle East, a key region in terms of energy security; and Africa and Latin America.
○ The MOD/JSDF is collaborating positively with Indo-Pacific countries such as the United States, Australia, India, Canada, New Zealand, and also countries in Europe including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy, all of which share values inherent to the FOIP Vision and have ties to the region.

✓ **As "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" is an inclusive vision, Japan welcomes cooperation with all countries that share its values.**

Section 1 Strategic Promotion of Multilateral and Multilayered Defense Cooperation

1 Significance, etc. of Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others

1 Significance and Changes of Cooperation with Like-Minded Countries, Etc.

The peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region is closely related to Japan's security. In addition, with increasingly changeable and complicated global power dynamics and escalation of interstate competition encompassing political, economic, military and other aspects, they are also becoming a more important issue for the international community.

Thus, taking into account the international situation, regional characteristics and situations and security issues that other nations face, the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/the Self Defense Forces (JSDF) intends to strategically promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges, so that each country can build mutual trust and work together to solve regional security issues.

It is also necessary to further coordinate with each other even in peacetime to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts and to be able to receive support from the ally, like-minded countries, etc. in various contingencies.

Defense cooperation and exchanges have been delivered in the forms of high-level meetings; "Cooperation and exchanges among people" introducing working-level talks, bilateral/multilateral training and exercises; "cooperation and exchanges among troops" such as calling at ports and airports by the JSDF; "capacity building" in which human resource development and technical support are provided to other countries in security and defense fields; "defense equipment and technology cooperation" which is conducted to secure homeland security and promote contribution to peace/international cooperation, etc.; and others.

The MOD/JSDF has long strived to alleviate any sense of caution and to foster a collaborative and cooperative atmosphere by building face-to-face relationships through human cooperation and exchanges including bilateral dialogues. In addition, the MOD/JSDF has recently enhanced bilateral defense relationships from traditional exchanges to deeper cooperation in a phased manner by appropriately combining various means, including bilateral/multilateral training and exercises, capacity building, defense equipment and technology cooperation and the development of institutional frameworks such as RAA and ACSA.

In addition, multilateral security cooperation and dialogue are in the process of evolving from those that focus on dialogue to those that focus on cooperation that seeks to maintain and strengthen international order. It is important to promote bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges in a multifaceted and multilayered manner to create an ideal security environment.

See Fig. III-3-1-1 (Defense Cooperation and Exchanges), Fig. III-3-1-2 (Number of High-level Bilateral Dialogues and Consultations (April 2024-March 2025)), Fig. III-3-1-3 (Visit to Ports and Airports by JSDF (April 2024-March 2025)), Reference 40 (Situations Concerning the Conclusion of Agreements), Reference 41 (International Student Acceptance Record (Number of Newly Accepted Students in FY2024))

Fig. III-3-1-1 Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Defense cooperation and exchanges

"Defense cooperation and exchanges" refers to efforts to strengthen bilateral and multilateral defense relations by using various tools, which are significant initiatives for securing the peace and stability of Japan and the international community.

Purpose of defense cooperation and exchanges

- ○ To create a security environment desirable for Japan
- ○ To deter threats from reaching Japan by making opponents realize that doing harm to Japan would be difficult and consequential
- ○ To prevent contingencies through promoting confidence-building and mutual understanding

Tools for defense cooperation and exchanges

Tool ① Cooperation and exchanges among people

… On such occasions as "2+2" Meetings, defense ministerial meetings, chief of staff-level meetings or other high-level meetings, working-level consultations among defense authorities, and multilateral international conferences, participants frankly exchange views on defense policies, regional affairs, defense cooperation and exchanges, etc., thereby developing mutual understanding and confidence-building among them and further promoting defense cooperation and exchanges thereafter. Exchanges of students and interchange in education and research aim to facilitate understanding of defense policies and statuses of military units of other countries and promote relations of trust through network building.

Japan-Australia "2+2" Meeting

Land Forces Summit

First Sea Lord's Sea Power Conference

Air Force Forum in Japan (AFFJ)

Tool ② Cooperation and exchanges among assets

… Through goodwill exercise, mutual visits of naval ships and aircraft (calling at ports and airports), exchange events among units, and other measures, mutual trust with partner countries is developed and cooperative relationships are promoted. In joint training and exercises, the JSDF will enhance the skills of each unit and strengthen nation-to-nation defense relationships through by increasing collaborative capacity with foreign military assets.

Japan-U.S.-ROK Joint Exercise "Freedom Edge"

Field training exercise with U.S.-Philippines Marines "Kamandag 24"

Japan-France Bilateral Exercise "Oguri-Verny"

Japan-Germany Bilateral Exercises "Nippon Skies 24"

Tool ③ Capacity building

… Capacity building aims to improve the capabilities of partner countries in a concrete and steady manner over a certain period of time, and help their military forces play roles in contributing to international peace and regional stability. It is conducted through activities such as seminars and practical training in various fields, the provision of technical guidance, opinion exchanges, and the observation of education and training programs, etc.

Medical care area (Mongolia)

Military band training (Papua New Guinea)

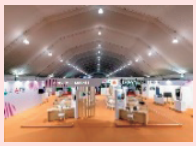
HA/DR (Malaysia)

Cybersecurity (ASEAN)

Tool ④ Defense equipment and technology cooperation

… Through overseas transfers of equipment, joint research and development, participation in international exhibitions, and holding of the Defence Industry Forum, Japan seeks to maintain and strengthen its industrial base, enhance capacity of both the JSDF and military forces of partner countries, and strengthen and maintain defense cooperation with those partner countries.

Donation of material transport vehicles to Viet Nam


International Exhibition (ADAS2024)

International Exhibition (IODS2024)

International Exhibition (Eurosatory)

(Reference) Conclusion of agreements regarding defense cooperation

… Through concluding such agreements as Reciprocal Access Agreements, Agreements concerning Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements, General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), the framework of cooperation has been materialized and institutionalized with the aim of promoting defense cooperation and exchanges more smoothly and consistently.

Signing of Japan-Philippines Reciprocal Access Agreement

Signing of the Agreement between Japan and Mongolia concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

Establishment of a joint organization to develop next-generation fighter jet by Japan, UK and Italy

Signing of Japan-Italy ACSA

Fig. III-3-1-2 Number of High-level Bilateral Dialogues and Consultations (April 2024-March 2025)

"High-level bilateral dialogues and consultations" refers to bilateral meetings of the Defense Minister, State Defense Minister, Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister, Administrative Vice-Defense Minister, Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs, and Chiefs of Staff with their respective counterparts.
High-level bilateral dialogues and consultations were conducted with the following countries between April 2023 and March 2024, but had also been conducted with other countries prior to that period together with other types of defense cooperation and exchanges. It is clear from this figure that Japan has conducted high-level dialogues and consultations with various countries across the globe.

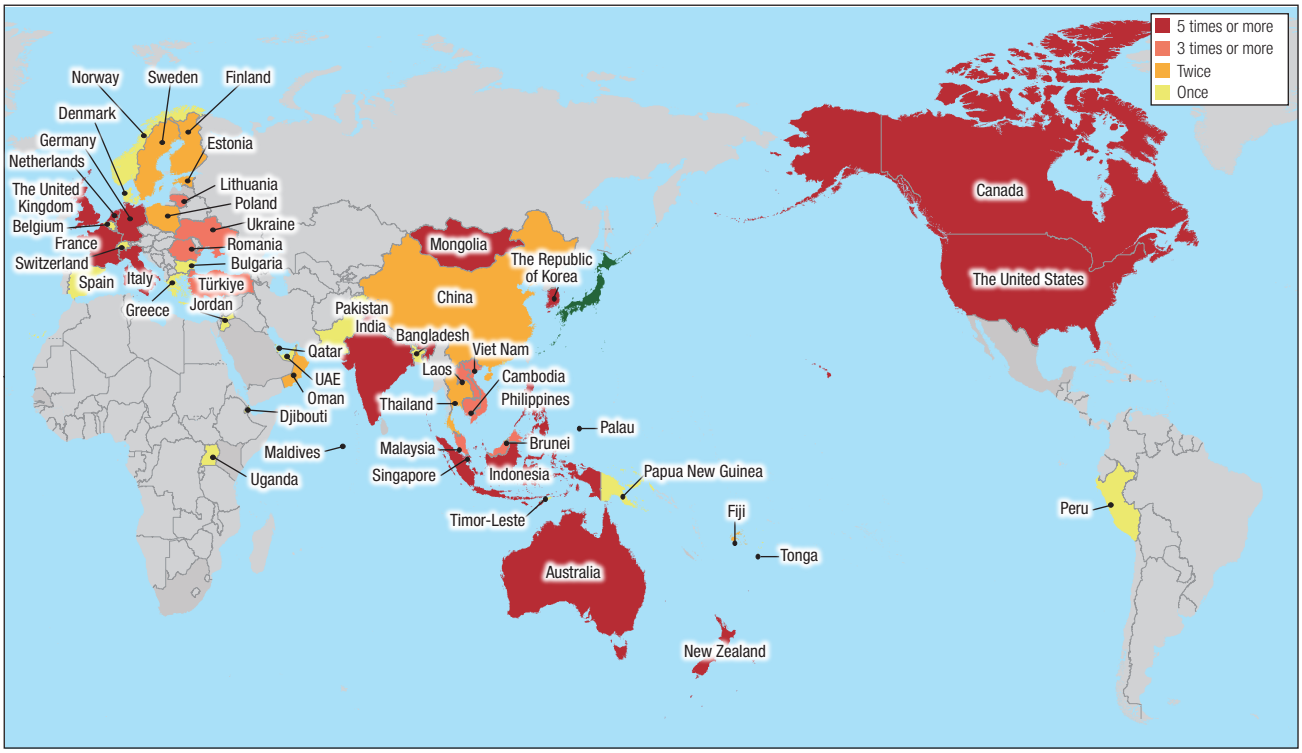
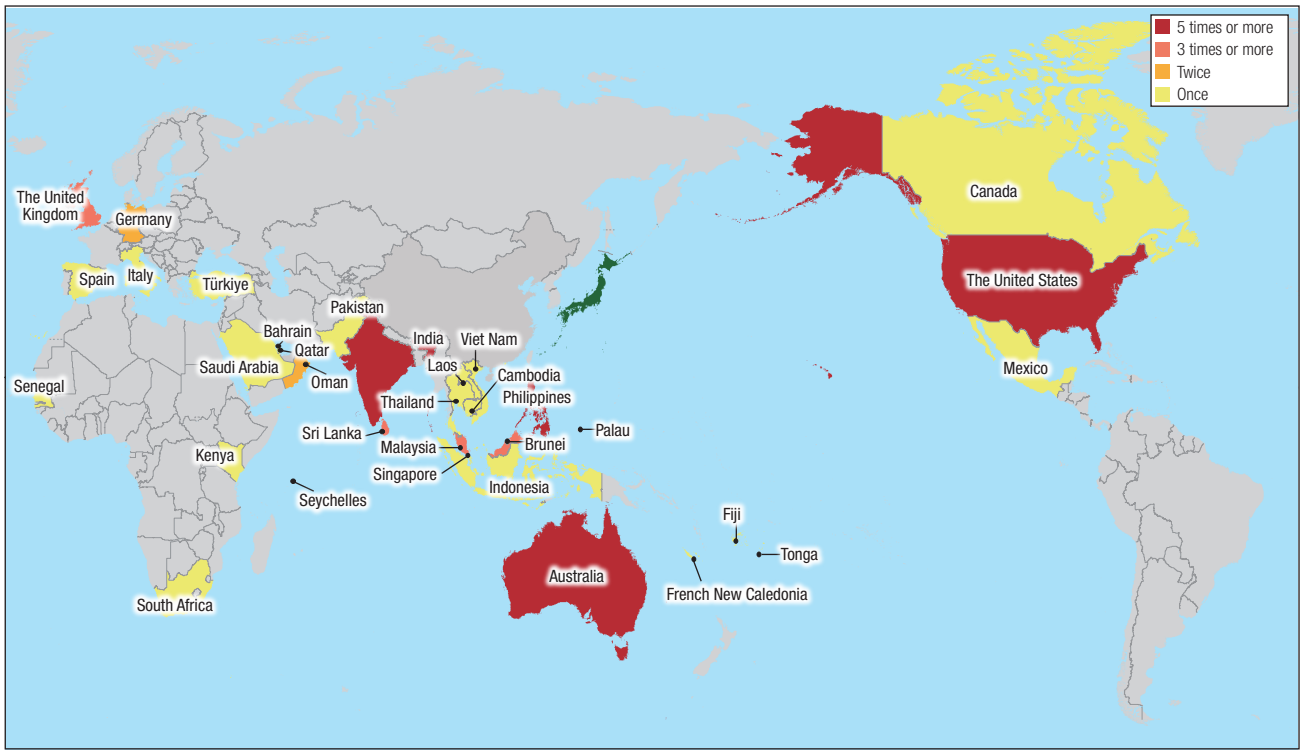


Fig. III-3-1-3 Visit to Ports and Airports by JSDF (April 2024-March 2025)



2 Efforts under the Vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP)

(1) Characteristics of the Indo-Pacific Region

A free and open maritime order, which relies on the rule of law, is the foundation for the stability and prosperity of the international community. The Indo-Pacific region is at the core of the world's vitality, and home to half the world's population. It is important to establish this region as a free and open global commons to ensure the peace and prosperity of the entire region.

On the other hand, a range of challenges exist for realizing FOIP in the region, including in Japan's vicinity, such as a rapid modernization of military forces and intensified military activities.

(2) Direction of the MOD's Initiatives

Given this situation, the MOD/JSDF is, for example, promoting defense cooperation and exchanges to ensure that Japan can continue stable use of major sea lanes. In addition, the MOD/JSDF is promoting mutual understanding and confidence building with countries that modernize their military forces and intensify their military activities to prevent contingencies and ensure Japan's security. Furthermore, for countries in the region that are taking steps to respond to changes in the environment, the MOD/JSDF is trying to contribute to regional peace and stability by supporting their efforts through defense cooperation and exchanges.

(3) Expansion of FOIP

With the Japan-U.S. Alliance as its cornerstone, Japan's policy is to further deepen cooperation with like-minded countries and further promote efforts toward realizing FOIP through frameworks, including Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) partnership. With respect to Southeast Asia, South Asia, Pacific Island countries, the Middle East, Africa and Latin American countries, cooperation will be strengthened to realize FOIP while utilizing wide-ranging means.

The MOD/JSDF is also promoting defense cooperation and exchanges to realize FOIP and is working to maintain the stable use of sea lanes by establishing good relations with coastal countries in the aforementioned regions and ensuring that the JSDF has stable access to their ports and airports. The MOD/JSDF is also promoting initiatives, such as joint training and capacity building, to enable these countries to play a more effective role for the stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

Furthermore, the United States, which is the ally of Japan, Australia, India, European countries such as the United Kingdom, France and Germany, Canada and New Zealand are countries that not only share fundamental values with Japan but also have geographic and historical ties to the Indo-Pacific region. The MOD/JSDF has been encouraging these countries to engage more in the Indo-Pacific region and promoting defense cooperation and exchanges so as to become more effective than through unilateral efforts by Japan.

(4) Promotion of Mutual Understanding and Trust Building

With regard to China, the MOD/JSDF will, through defense exchange opportunities, continue to encourage to comply with international norms of conduct and assume a responsible and constructive role for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. In doing so, by frankly conveying its concerns about the increased military activities and military expansions around it, Japan will promote mutual understanding and confidence-building and avoid unforeseen circumstances, thereby ensuring its security.

As for Russia, while condemning its aggression against Ukraine to the maximum extent possible, based on the belief that unilateral changes to the status quo by force are unacceptable, Japan has been keeping in touch with Russia as necessary to avoid unforeseen circumstances and unnecessary friction alongside it.

2 Promotion of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Various Countries

In promoting security cooperation and exchanges, it is important to enhance bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges using optimal combinations of various cooperative means, while taking matters such as regional affairs, the situations of partner countries and their relationships with Japan into account.

1 Australia

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Australia

For Japan, Australia is a special strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region as both Japan and Australia are allied with the United States and share not only fundamental values but also security strategic stakes and interests.

Previously, the foundations for cooperation have been formed, including the Japan-Australia Acquisition and Cross-

servicing Agreement (ACSA), the Japan-Australia General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Australia concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology and the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA). In addition, based on the new Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (JDSC)[1] signed in October 2022, the National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) states that the two countries will further deepen their defense cooperation and build a closer relationship second only to the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation.

Based on the new JDSC as well, the two countries have been consulting about effective collaboration between the JSDF and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in all situations from peacetime to contingencies and promoting cooperation in Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), asset protection for the ADF, and bilateral and multilateral training to improve interoperability. They also promote support for capacity building in third countries, cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR), defense equipment and technology cooperation and others.

See Part II, Chapter 5, 3-8 (Asset Protection for the U.S. Forces and other Forces), Reference 23 (Track Record of Asset Protection for the U.S Forces and Other Forces (JSDF Law Article 95-2))

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In May 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Marles in Hawaii and welcomed the National Defence Strategy (NDS)[2] released by Australia in April of the same year, and stated that Japan and Australia share perceptions of security environment and strategic direction. The two ministers also confirmed the importance of enhancing capabilities by advancing substantial cooperation based on both countries' strategies. Ministers also confirmed that they would consider the direction of substantial cooperation between Japan's counter strike capabilities that leverage its stand-off defense capability and Australia's long-range strike capabilities. Furthermore, they concurred to continue reinforcing cooperation in the Pacific Island countries region.

Japan-Australia "2+2" (September 2024)

In August 2024, Administrative Vice-Defense Minister Masuda and Secretary of the Australian Department of Defence Moriarty held a Japan-Australia Defense Vice-Ministerial-level Dialogue in Sydney, during which they exchanged views on regional affairs. They also discussed various fields including strategic cooperation, operational cooperation and joint training, defense equipment and technology cooperation following previous meetings such as the Japan-Australia Defense Ministerial Meeting held in May 2024, and confirmed their commitment to further strengthen and expand defense cooperation.

In September 2024, in Melbourne, then Defense Minister Kihara and then Foreign Minister Kamikawa, together with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Marles and Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Wong held the Eleventh Japan-Australia "2+2" Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations. Both countries concurred on working unwaveringly to play a leading role in realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific and to working unwaveringly to deepen Australia-Japan strategic and security cooperation in line with the JDSC issued in 2022.

In that same month of September 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with Australian Prime Minister Albanese where they exchanged views on maintaining and strengthening the "Special Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Australia. They also had a candid exchange of views on bilateral cooperation including security cooperation, as well as on regional and international affairs, and reaffirmed the broadly aligned strategic recognition between Australia and Japan.

In October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had a teleconference with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Marles during which they confirmed that defense cooperation between Japan and Australia had expanded in every area, and shared their views on continuing to promote each initiative such as enhancing the interoperability between the JSDF and the ADF. In November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani and Australian Deputy Prime

1 This Agreement reaffirms the special strategic partnership between Japan and Australia and states that cooperation between Japan and Australia, as well as between Japan, the United States, and Australia, will be consolidated across the board to maintain rule-based order and peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, specifying the strengthening of defense cooperation in fields such as enhanced interoperability between the JSDF and the Australian Armed Forces, cooperation in ISR, HA/DR, capacity building of regional partner countries, advanced defense science and technology, and cyber/space. It also states that response measures will be mutually considered in the event of an emergency situation that may affect the security interests of both Japan and Australia or the surrounding region.

2 Announced in April 2024 in light of the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. It stipulates the capabilities required by the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) in the future. (See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 6-1 (Australia))

Minister and Minister for Defence Marles held a meeting in Darwin, during which they confirmed that Japan and Australia are an indispensable partnership and that they continue to work together to elevate the relationship to a higher level.

(3) Initiatives of Each Service

Since April 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan has held six meetings with General Campbell, then Chief of the Defence Force of Australia and Admiral Johnston, Chief of the Defence Force of Australia. During the meetings, the two sides agreed to further improve the effectiveness of defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries based on aligned strategies of each country and to strive to make this the core of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Since April 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) has met three times with Lieutenant General Stuart, Chief of the Australian Army. In September 2024, he attended the Chief of Army Symposium (CAS) hosted by the Australian Army and exchanged views with the Chief of the Australian Army as well as chiefs of army from other participating countries.

Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), officially invited Vice Admiral Hammond, Chief of the Royal Australian Navy, in July 2024 to discuss further improvements in interoperability between Japan and Australia and to share the need to further evolve the close relationship between the two countries in the future.

Since July 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, Japan Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) has had three meetings with Air Marshal Chappell, Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). He also visited RAAF Base Darwin on the occasion of the Exercise PITCH BLACK 2024 hosted by RAAF, and had a meeting on the enhancement of cooperation between ASDF and RAAF.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (1) (Australia), Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 42 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Australia (FY2021 and Beyond))

(4) Cooperative Relationship, etc., among Japan, Australia, and the United States

To ensure greater effectiveness of cooperation between Japan and Australia and to contribute to the peace and stability of the region, it is important for both countries and their common ally, the United States, to proactively promote the trilateral cooperation.

In May 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a Japan-U.S.-Australia Defense Ministerial Meeting in Hawaii. At the meeting, the ministers underscored the deep strategic alignment and shared values of the three countries and reiterated their strong opposition to any attempts by China to unilaterally change the status quo by force or coercion in the South and East China Seas. They also affirmed the important role that the trilateral partnership contributes to realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific and committed to expanding defense cooperation, including conducting trilateral F-35 Joint Strike Fighter trainings in all three countries, an inaugural joint and combined live fire air and missile defense exercise, and increasing Japan's participation in Australia-U.S. force posture activities. Furthermore, they signed the trilateral Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation Projects (RDT&E) Arrangement, agreeing to continue discussion to explore opportunities for science and technology cooperation.

On the same month of May 2024, the second Japan-Australia-Philippines-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting was held and the four ministers emphasized the importance of collaboration to promote their shared vision of a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

In November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani visited Darwin in Australia to hold a Japan-U.S.-Australia Defense Ministerial Meeting with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Marles, and then U.S. Secretary of Defense Austin. The three countries issued a joint statement which announced the establishment of the Trilateral Defense Consultations (TDC)[3] and the commitment to promoting defense cooperation with three pillars of expanding trilateral operational cooperation that includes cooperative training and exercises, building advanced capabilities together, planning together regarding the three countries' command centers, and demonstrating three countries' presence in the region.

Japan, the United States and Australia have continued to engage in cooperation among each force, including the Japan-U.S.-Australia trilateral exercises as well as multilateral exercises involving other countries.

In September 2024, on the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan held a Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Senior Level Meeting with Admiral Paparo, Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and Admiral Johnston, Chief of the Defence Force of Australia. During the meeting, while reaffirming the agreements reached during Japan-U.S. "2+2" and Japan-Australia "2+2" meetings, the three parties discussed specific directions for the realization of Japan-U.S.-Australia cooperation and also agreed to work closely together at the military level.

In May 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF participated in the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) held in Hawaii and held a panel discussion with General Flynn, then Commanding General of the U.S. Army Pacific, General Park An-su, then Chief of Staff, ROK Army, and Lieutenant General Stuart, Chief of the Australian Army. In December 2024, he also invited

3 The purpose of this mechanism is to enable the JSDF, the U.S. Armed Forces and the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) to collaborate effectively in all situations and at all levels, from peacetime to emergency situations, through measures such as providing direction with regular ministerial consultations, following-up with working-level talks between the policy and operational sides, and conducting tabletop exercises for regional emergency situations.

Lieutenant General Stuart, Chief of the Australian Army and his counterparts from the U.S., the Philippines, and India to host the Land Forces Summit (LFS) and confirmed the importance of multilateral cooperation with allies and like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

On the occasion of the Indian Ocean Defence and Security 2024 (IODS 24) held in Perth in June 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF held a panel discussion with Admiral Franchetti, then Chief of Naval Operations of the U.S. Navy, Admiral Sir Key, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff of the United Kingdom and Vice Admiral Hammond, Chief of the Royal Australian Navy during which they stressed the need to further deepen multilateral cooperation in logistics to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force, and confirmed that they would promote the realization of FOIP through trainings and people-to-people exchanges.

As just described, Japan has been continuing its efforts to improve interoperability while coordinating views on the situation and policy direction through various opportunities with the United States and Australia.

See Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 53 (Recent multilateral high-level exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

VOICE

Voice of the First Liaison Officer to Australia's Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC)

MORI Keigo, (then) Liaison Officer, Australia's Headquarters Joint Operations Command

I am serving as the first Liaison Officer to the HQJOC from November last year. After taking up my post, the Chief of Joint Operations introduced me to several hundred personnel, and stated that I am the first Liaison Officer to be accepted from a country other than the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and New Zealand, with which Australia has historically had deep ties. As a "representative of the Joint Staff (JS)," I am supporting the development of Japan-Australia defense cooperation from Australia by carrying out information gathering, communication and coordination, in particular regarding operational aspects. Meanwhile, for my colleagues in the Australian Defence Forces (ADF), I am the "representative of Japan." I receive consultations and questions on all manner of things, not just Japan-Australia defense cooperation. Although I am confused by the differences in culture and organization sometimes, I feel honored by the fact that people rely on me as the "representative of Japan." Defense cooperation cannot be established without a relationship of trust between the two countries. Feeling firsthand the deepening cooperation between the Self-Defense Forces and the ADF, I will strive to play my part in deepening it further.

A scene showing action officers from Japan, the U.S., and Australia holding a discussion (this author is on the right)

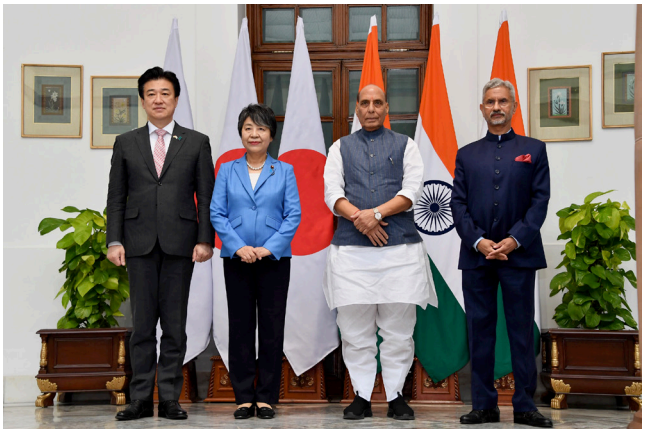
2 India

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with India

India is increasing its influence with its population (the world's largest), its high economic growth and its latent economic power. Located in the center of sea lanes that connect Japan with the Middle East and Africa, India is an extremely important country for Japan. Furthermore, Japan and India share fundamental values as well as common interests in the peace, stability and prosperity of the Indo-pacific region and the world and have established the "Special Strategic and Global Partnership." In this context, Japan and India have promoted cooperation in maritime security and various other areas, while utilizing some frameworks including the "2+2" meeting.

Moreover, Japan and India signed the "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India" and concluded the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence

REFERENCE: Japan-U.S.-Australia Defense Ministerial Meeting November 2024 Joint Statement
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/anpo/2024/1117b_usa_aus-j.html



Japan-India "2+2" (August 2024)

General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan exchanging gifts with General Chauhan, Chief of Indian Defence Staff (October 2024)

Equipment and Technology, the Japan-India General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and the Japan-India ACSA. These agreements have strengthened the relationship between the two partners, which are capable of dealing with regional and global issues, as well as the foundation of this partnership.

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In August 2024, in New Delhi, then Defense Minister Kihara and then Foreign Minister Kamikawa, together with Indian Minister of Defence Singh and Indian Minister of External Affairs Dr Jaishankar held the third Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting. As two democratic countries that sharing common values, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining and strengthening the rule-based international order founded on the principles of the UN Charter, respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and peacefully settlement of disputes without resorting to the threat or use of force and emphasized the need for all countries to refrain from any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo. They also expressed their commitment to continuing bilateral and multilateral exercises and welcomed the participation of the ASDF in the multilateral exercise "Tarang Shakti" hosted by the Indian Air Force. In addition, they appreciated the progress made for the transfer of Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN)[4] and related technologies and early signing of related arrangements, and concurred on accelerating future cooperation in defense equipment and technology. They also welcomed the MSDF and Indian Naval Force exploring future cooperation in the area of ship maintenance in India. In May 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani met with Defense Minister Singh in New Delhi. Considering the situation that the growing importance and necessity of enhancing cooperation and collaboration in defense between of Japan and India, which share the ideal of realizing peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific based on rule of law, under the recent regional and international situation surrounding both countries is becoming more complex and uncertain rapidly, the ministers concurred the importance to create a large synergy in the Indo-Pacific region by enhancing the collaboration among initiatives led by each country from the defense side. Minister Nakatani suggested to proceed the collaboration as "Japan India (India Japan) Defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region (JIDIP/ IJDIP)" between the both defense authorities from now on, and materialize the specific cooperation and collaboration with under it. As response, Minister Singh welcomed the suggestion, and stated to discuss specifically about the content from now on.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (2) (India)

(3) Initiatives of Each Service

In October 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan made an official visit to India where he had a meeting with General Chauhan, Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces and observed the Japan-U.S.-India-Australia multilateral exercise "Malabar 2024." During the meeting, they exchanged views on their perceptions of the strategic environment of both countries and agreed to further strengthen multi-faceted and multi-layered joint efforts towards Japan-India defense cooperation and exchanges. They also agreed to further develop the relationship between Japan and India and explore multilateral defense cooperation with their relationship at its core.

In July 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a video conference with General Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army and officially invited him to a meeting held in October of the same year. They discussed their countries' shared fundamental values and their mutual recognition that it is essential to strengthen the relationship between Japan and India, which are geopolitically located in the East and West of the Indo-Pacific. They also agreed

4 Multiple antennas are consolidated into a single antenna, improving the stealth integration of vessels. The MSDF is using a UNICORN for the Mogami-class destroyer (FFM).

to further strengthen cooperation between the two armies through the Japan-India bilateral exercise "Dharma Guardian 24," based on the outcomes of the Japan-India 2+2 meeting and Japan-India Defense Ministerial Meeting held in August 2024. In December 2024, General Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff of the India Armed Forces also participated in the Land Forces Summit (LFS) hosted by General Morishita the Chief of Staff, GSDF through a video conference.

On the occasion of the Indian multilateral exercise "Tarang Shakti 24" taking place in India in September 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF also had a meeting with Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari, then Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force.

See Chapter 2, Section 6 (Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises), Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 43 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with India (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 53 (Recent multilateral high-level exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

3 European Countries

European countries share fundamental values with Japan and play a central role in initiatives to address common challenges to global security, with a primary focus on non-traditional security areas, such as counter-terrorism and response to illicit ship-to-ship transfers, as well as international peace cooperation activities. As such, recognizing the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security, the development of defense cooperation and exchanges with these countries is important for both Japan and the European countries as it provides a basis for Japan to be actively involved in these challenges.

See Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 44 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with European Countries (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

(1) The United Kingdom

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, being a major power that has influence not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world, has historically maintained close relations with Japan. On the security front, Japan shares the same strategic interests as the United Kingdom, as both countries are important allies of the United States. Given this relationship, it is extremely important for Japan to promote cooperation with the United Kingdom by working together on global issues, such as international peace cooperation activities, counterterrorism, counter-piracy operations and cybersecurity as well as by exchanging information on regional situations. Additionally, in recent years, the United Kingdom has made important contributions to ensuring a rule-based maritime order by dispatching a Carrier Strike Group to the Indo-Pacific region and permanently deploying two patrol vessels to the region to conduct monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including "ship-to-ship transfers" with North Korean-flagged vessels. Accordingly, it is important for Japan to deepen cooperation between Japan and the United Kingdom to realize FOIP.

The strategic partnership with the United Kingdom has been further facilitated and strengthened through the holding of Japan-U.K. "2+2" meetings, as well as the conclusion of the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, the Japan-U.K. General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), the Japan-U.K. ACSA, and the Japan-U.K. RAA.

Furthermore, the Global Combat Air Programme[5] (GCAP) launched with a joint statement by the leaders of Japan, Italy, and the United Kingdom in December 2022, is a project that could also serve as a cornerstone of stability and prosperity for the international community bridging between the Indo-Pacific region and Europe. In this way, Japan and the United Kingdom are strengthening their ties as each other's closest security partner in Asia and Europe.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (3) (United Kingdom)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Healey in London. Based on the joint statement entitled "Japan-U.K. Hiroshima Accord"[6] issued at the Japan-U.K. Leader's Working Dinner between then Prime Minister Kishida and then U.K. Prime Minister Sunak during the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, the two countries confirmed the progress of cooperation between Japan and the United Kingdom in the security area, including the agreement between the defense authorities to apply JSDF's asset protection measures to the United Kingdom. Then Defense Minister Kihara also welcomed the further strengthening of the involvement of the United Kingdom in the Indo-Pacific region, including its deployment of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group to the Indo-Pacific region planned in 2025, and they agreed to work closely together to further deepen Japan-U.K. defense cooperation and exchanges.

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara met with U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Healey and Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto also in London, where they agreed to

5 A project to jointly develop next-generation fighter aircraft surpassing so-called fifth-generation fighter aircraft by 2035 by Japan, the United Kingdom and Italy.
6 Based on the recognition of the inseparability of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security and prosperity, plans are being envisaged to strengthen common security capabilities, cooperate in the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft, and expand joint training by utilizing the Japan-U.K. RAA.

continue preparations for the establishment of the GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO) for an efficient intergovernmental collaboration on the GCAP and to remain strongly committed to achieving the schedule for its first aircraft deployment in 2035.

In October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani met with U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Healey and Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto in Naples, Italy, where they reported that a path had been paved for the establishment of a joint venture to work together with the GIGO, which manages the GCAP. They also agreed to work toward the conclusion of a first joint agreement between GIGO and the Joint Venture in 2025. Defense Minister Nakatani also explained that preparations were underway for the first Chief Executive from Japan to be dispatched. The three countries agreed to keep working closely together to accelerate the program, which plays a central role in Japan-U.K.-Italy defense cooperation.

In January 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Healey in London and expressed that he welcomed the continued commitment by the United Kingdom to the Indo-Pacific region, including its deployment of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group to the Indo-Pacific region, which includes Japan, planned in 2025. He also welcomed the entry into force of the convention for the establishment of the GIGO in December 2024. They also exchanged views on the progress of Japan-U.K. defense equipment and technology cooperation, including the GCAP, and agreed to further deepen cooperation in the future. Furthermore, both ministers agreed on the importance of technical cooperation on AUKUS Pillar 2 advanced capabilities, as it supports cooperation among allies and like-minded countries in the area of advanced technology, and agreed to continue discussing specific cooperation.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, on the occasion of his participation in the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with Admiral Radakin, U.K. Chief of the Defence Staff. Both countries shared their understanding of the security environment and agreed to continue working towards a closer and stronger Japan-U.K. defense cooperation, including through interoperability improvement using the GCAP and Japan-U.K. RAA and the visit of the Carrier Strike Group to Japan planned in 2025.

On the occasion of the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) in May 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with General Sir Walker, then U.K. Deputy Chief of Defence Staff and the incoming Chief of the General Staff of the British Army. They agreed to continue strengthening their mutual confidence and promoting collaboration between their army forces. He also made an official visit to the United Kingdom in February 2025 to meet again with General Sir Walker, newly appointed as the U.K. Chief of the General Staff, to agree on the promotion of their defense cooperation and exchanges.

In October 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF received a courtesy call from Rear Admiral Pedre, Commander Strike Force of the U.K. Royal Navy to exchange views on the deployment planning of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group planned in 2025, and seek to reinforce cooperation between their naval forces for the realization of FOIP.

On the occasion of the Global Air and Space Chief's Conference (GASCC) hosted by the U.K. Royal Air Force in July 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF met with Air Chief Marshal Sir Knighton, U.K. Chief of the Air Staff to exchange views on matters such as international affairs and security environment, and they agreed to strengthen collaboration between their air forces.

(2) France

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with France

France is a major power that has influence not only in Europe and Africa, but also around the world. It is the only EU member state that maintains a constant military presence in the Indo-Pacific region, with territories across the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. It also historically has had a close relationship with Japan and is positioned as Japan's special partner. In addition, cooperation with France, which has influence in the African region, is essential for the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas in the region.

Japan and France have continued high-level exchanges such as the Japan-France "2+2" meeting and have concluded the Japan-France General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), the Japan-France Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Japan-France ACSA. In addition, the two countries agreed to further accelerate the discussion on measures to improve each other's administrative, policy and legal procedures for joint operations and exercises between the units of both countries on a permanent basis.

Japan-UK-Italy Defense Ministerial Meeting (October 2024)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level held in May 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida had a Japan-France Summit Working Lunch with French President Macron, where they agreed to start negotiations for the Japan-France RAA and make steady progress in the negotiations.

At the 21st IISS Asia Security Summit[7] (Shangri-La Dialogue) hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with French Minister for Armed Forces Lecornu to welcoming the announcement of the start of the negotiations for the Japan-France RAA, and they agreed to make progress in specific cooperation in areas such as cyber and space, and joint training.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with General Schill, Chief of Staff of the French Army during the Chief of Army Symposium (CAS) hosted by the Australian Army in Melbourne in September 2024, where they agreed on continuing to further strengthen their countries' relationship through multi-layered exchanges such as with the Japan-France bilateral exercise "Brunet-Takamori" in order to maintain an international order based on the rule of law without allowing attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force. They also had a meeting in March 2025 after General Schill was officially invited to share their understanding of the strategic environment. Additionally, they observed together Japan-U.S. bilateral exercise "Iron Fist 2025" undertaken with the U.S. III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), and hence shared both countries' recognition to cooperate in the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

(3) Germany

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Germany

Germany is a partner with which Japan shares fundamental values and cooperates in addressing issues in the international community as a member of the G7 and other organizations. Germany is increasing its involvement in the Indo-Pacific region based on the Indo-Pacific Guidelines formulated in 2020 and, since the German naval frigate called on Japan in 2021 to conduct joint training and other activities, Germany has regularly dispatched its ground, maritime and air forces to the region. Japan and Germany have concluded the Japan-Germany Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Japan-Germany General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), and the Japan-Germany ACSA entered into force in July 2024. In addition, high-level and other exchanges between the two countries are progressing, such as the Japan-Germany "2+2."

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense held in Naples in October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with German Defense Minister Pistorius to express that he welcomed the deployment of the German naval vessels in the Indo-Pacific region in August earlier in the same year. They also agreed to strengthen their defense cooperation by also collaborating on the promotion of their cooperation in the space and cyber domains and in the fields of defense equipment and technology cooperation.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a video conference with Lieutenant General Mais, Chief of the German Army during which they shared their recognition of the inseparability of the Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic security and shared views on matters such as the development and future direction of defense cooperation and exchanges between their army forces. He also had a meeting with Lieutenant General Mais again on an official visit to Germany in November 2024 to agree on and sign a roadmap focusing on medium-term Japan-Germany defense cooperation and exchanges. Additionally, Lieutenant General Mais visited Japan in March 2025 to observe together Japan-U.S. bilateral exercise "Iron Fist 2025" undertaken with the U.S. III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), and hence shared both countries' recognition to cooperate in the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

In August 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF officially invited Vice Admiral Kaack, Chief of the German Navy to share views on the direction of defense cooperation and exchanges orientated at strengthening Japan-Germany collaboration, and shared their recognition for the further deepening of the close relationship between the two countries in the future.

General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF and Lieutenant General Gerhartz, Inspector of the German Air Force observed Japan-Germany bilateral training "Nippon Skies" in July 2024, where a joint observation flight was conducted by both F-15 fighter and EF2000 Eurofighter. In doing so, the two countries fostered mutual confidence between their air forces and further deepened their defense cooperation for the realization of FOIP.

7 This is a multilateral conference sponsored by IISS, a private U.K. think tank, in which defense ministers from various countries participate with the objective of discussing defense-related issues and regional defense cooperation. It has been held in Singapore every year since 2002 and is known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, named after the hotel where it takes place.

General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF welcoming Lieutenant General Gerhartz, Inspector of the German Air Force (July 2024)

(4) Italy

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Italy

Italy and Japan are G7 member countries and Italy is a strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan. The two countries have been promoting institutional development for facilitating defense cooperation, including concluding the Japan-Italy General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA) and the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, as well as signing the Japan-Italy Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges and Japan-Italy ACSA.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the G7 Summit held in Apulia in June 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida met with Italian Prime Minister Meloni. The two leaders welcomed the announcement of an action plan with guidelines for future Japan-Italy cooperation and agreed to steadily implement the action plan to continue strengthening their bilateral relationship. They also agreed to start negotiations for the Japan-Italy ACSA and welcomed the significant progress being made in terms of cooperation between the two countries in the defense field, including the GCAP, and agreed to further reinforce it.

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara met with Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto in London. The two ministers welcomed the announcement of a Japan-Italy Action Plan and their agreement to start negotiations for the Japan-Italy ACSA. Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto also provided explanations about port calls of Italian military vessels and Italian aircraft visits to Japan, and they agreed to collaborate even more closely for deepened defense cooperation and exchanges in the future.

On the occasion of the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense held in Naples in October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto and welcomed the deepening of defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries, including through port and airport visits by naval vessels and aircraft, steady implementation of joint training, and Italy's first warning and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers.

In November 2024, Foreign Minister Iwaya and Italian Minister of Defence Crosetto signed the Japan-Italy ACSA before discussing the cooperation of both countries in the area of security.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In April 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a video conference with Lieutenant General Masiello, Chief of the Italian Army General Staff during which they exchanged views on the security environment surrounding both their countries and agreed on the importance of strengthening the relationship of their army forces for a peaceful and stable international society. They also met in January 2025 as General Masiello visited Japan and agreed to promote exchanges primarily in the airborne field.

(5) Netherlands

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Netherlands

The Netherlands has a historical relationship with Japan that is over 400 years old and is a strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan. Based on the Japan-Netherlands Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges signed in 2016, the two countries have agreed to further strengthen relations between defense authorities.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with then Dutch Minister of Defence Ollongren on the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue. During the meeting, they welcomed growing Dutch interest in the Indo-Pacific as represented by the deployment of its frigates in 2021, and agreed to collaborate more closely moving forward, including in the areas of multilateral defense cooperation framework and cybersecurity. In the same month, the Netherlands conducted its first monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers.

On the occasion of the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting in October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Dutch Minister of Defence Brekelmans where he welcomed the increasing involvement of the Netherlands in the Indo-Pacific region, and they agreed to further strengthen cooperation against attempts to unilaterally change the status quo through force or coercion, and to further enhance defense cooperation and exchanges in the future.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

During his first official visit to the Netherlands as Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan in January 2025, General Yoshida held a meeting with General Eichelsheim, Netherlands Chief of Defence during which they shared their recognition of the

inseparability of the Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic security and shared views on the future direction of their countries' bilateral cooperation.

In August 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a video conference with Lieutenant General Swillens, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army during which they discussed their countries' future defense cooperation and agreed to strengthen the relationship of their army forces. General Morishita also made an official visit to the Netherlands in November 2024 where he had another meeting with Lieutenant General Swillens during which they agreed to deepen Japan-Netherlands defense cooperation and exchanges.

(6) Spain

Spain is a strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan. The two countries have agreed to further enhance the relationship between their defense authorities based on the Japan-Spain Memorandum for defense cooperation and exchanges signed between Japan and Spain in 2014.

During the 5th Japan-Spain Military to Military Dialogue held in Madrid in October 2024, they exchanged views on the regional affairs and defense policies of both countries.

(7) NATO

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a partner that shares fundamental values and responsibility for global security challenges with Japan.

The "NATO Strategic Concept" adopted in June 2022 stated that the Indo-Pacific region was an important region for NATO which could have a direct impact on the security of the Euro-Atlantic region and that dialogue and cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners such as Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the ROK should be strengthened.

Following the twice revision of the "Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP)" between Japan and NATO[8] formulated in 2014, in light of the current international security environment and with a view to further promoting practical cooperation between Japan and NATO in a wide range of areas, such as information warfare including cyber, disinformation countermeasures and maritime security, in July 2023, the two sides agreed on the new cooperation document, the "Japan-NATO Individually Tailored Partnership Programme[9] (ITPP)." Japan and NATO share the recognition on the need to further deepen cooperation based on ITPP in future.

The MOD/JSDF dispatches a female JSDF personnel to NATO Headquarters as part of the cooperation in the field of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), and MOD personnel participates in the annual meeting of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) every year based on the ITPP.

Currently, an uniformed JSDF personnel is dispatched to the NATO Headquarters International Military Staff, Cooperative Security Division (NHQIMSCS) as a staff members for cooperation with international organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), where she has been involved in coordinating cooperation projects between NATO and the United Nations, African Union (AU), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), NGOs and others.

Furthermore, the MOD sends liaison officers to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)

Commentary

About the First Participation of Japan in the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense and the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting

In October 2024, Minister Gen Nakatani attended the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense and the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting.

In the first G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense, through five sessions on (i) Middle East, (ii) Africa, (iii) Indo-Pacific, (iv) Ukraine, and (v) defense readiness, meaningful discussions were held about the important issues surrounding each region and the national defense authorities. Through the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Defense, the G7 was able to transmit to the international community the message that it would make every effort to secure the peace, stability, and prosperity of the entire international community, including the Indo-Pacific region.

Furthermore, at the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting, to which the four IP4 countries (Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea) were invited for the first time as partner countries in the Indo-Pacific region, discussions were held on the situation surrounding the defense and security of the region, including the situation in the Indo-Pacific region, and cooperation between NATO and the IP4 going forward, among other issues. Through the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting, we were able to share the perception that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable and to confirm the importance of NATO and the IP4 reinforcing their collaboration going forward.

8 The IPCP stipulates the promotion of cooperation, such as enhancing high-level dialogue and promoting defense cooperation and exchanges, with the aim of further developing cooperation between Japan and NATO and specifies priority areas for working level cooperation. The IPCP was revised in June 2020, adding "human security" as a priority area for working level cooperation.

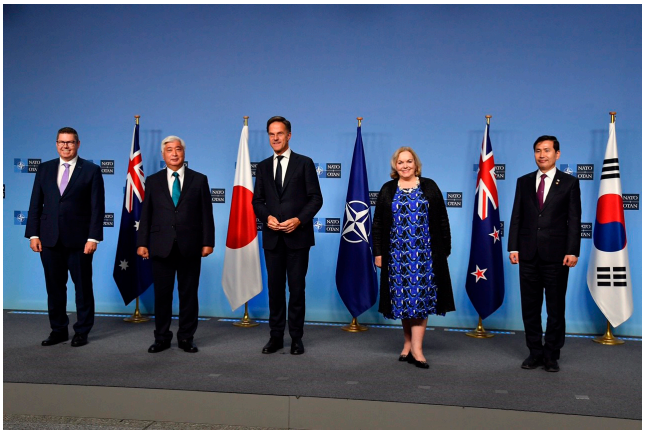
9 A new framework cooperation document between Japan and NATO designed to take NATO-Japan cooperation to new heights to respond to the challenges of a new era, covering the four-year period from 2023 to 2026.

and a liaison officer to the NATO Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM).[10]

See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 9-2-1 (NATO)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani was invited for the first time as a part of the 4 countries in the Indo-Pacific region (IP4: Japan-Australia-New Zealand-ROK) to the NATO Defense Ministerial Meeting where he participated in the session on the Indo-Pacific region. Defense Minister Nakatani mentioned that the security of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is separable and also shared about the regional situation surrounding Japan. He also expressed Japan's willingness to strengthen cooperation between Japan, the IP4, and NATO to the international community, and to work together to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law. He also had a meeting with NATO Secretary General Rutte and they agreed to further promote practical defense cooperation with an intention to improve in areas of cyber, space, and strategic communication and to improve interoperability, based on ITPP.



Defence Ministers from IP4 Countries/NATO Secretary General Rutte (October 2024)

In April 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with Secretary General Rutte during his visit to Japan and conveyed an intention that the MOD will coordinate to participate in the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU), which was welcomed by Secretary General Rutte, confirming the continuation of their cooperation including support for Ukraine.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with then NATO Military Commander Chair Bauer in both the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference held in Hawaii in September 2024 and in the NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session held at NATO Headquarters in Belgium in January 2025, and emphasized Japan's willingness to make the significantly progressing Japan-NATO defense cooperation and exchanges even more effective. They also both agreed to promote Japan-NATO defense cooperation and exchanges based on ITPP, with the understanding that the security of Europe and of the Indo-Pacific region is inseparable.

(8) EU

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with the EU

Japan shares fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law with the European Union (EU). Since the provisional application of the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement began in 2019, Japan and the EU have been steadily expanding cooperation in the fields of security and defense. The EU has been strengthening its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, such as with the announcement of the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in 2021, as well as the Strategic Compass in March 2022 that includes a policy of increasing the frequency of naval exercises and port calls and patrols with partner countries. Amidst this, the MOD/JSDF is positively and proactively advancing cooperation to ensure that the EU's commitment to the region is irreversible.

See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 9-2-2 (EU)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In May 2024, then Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs Serizawa attended the Schuman Security and Defence Forum held by the EU in Brussels and paid a courtesy call on the Secretary General of the European External Action Service Sannino.

In November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Mr. Borrell, then High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission, where they shared views on Japan-EU defense cooperation and exchanges and concurred to work more closely together towards further deepening defense cooperation and exchanges between Japan and the EU.

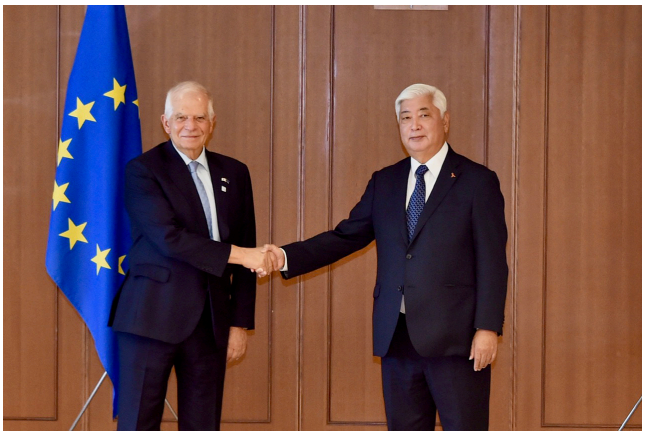
In the same month, on the occasion of the Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, the "Japan-EU Security and Defence Partnership" was announced. This partnership is aimed at further strengthening cooperation between Japan

10 JSDF personnel have been dispatched to the NATO Headquarters International Military Staff, Cooperative Security Division (NHQIMSCS) since 2021 within the IPCP framework. To the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), the Defense Attaché at the Embassy in Belgium (Mission of Japan to NATO from January 2025) has been dispatched since 2017 to hold a concurrent post, as part of Japan-NATO defense cooperation. To the NATO Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), the Defense Attaché at the Embassy in the United Kingdom has been dispatched since 2019 to hold a concurrent post, within the revised IPCP framework.

and the EU in a wide range of fields including maritime security, space, cyber and hybrid threats.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

The Deployment Surface Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement (DSPE) is strengthening its cooperation with EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) based on the "Administrative Arrangement between EU Naval Force Atalanta and Japan's Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden for Communication and Coordination on Joint Counter-Piracy Exercises" signed in 2023. In April 2024, joint counter-piracy exercises were conducted with EUNAVFOR (Italian Navy) and in September and December with EUNAVFOR (Spanish Navy).



Meeting between Defense Minister Nakatani and then High Representative of the EU Borrell (November 2024)

4 Republic of Korea (ROK)

(1) Significance of Japan-ROK Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

The ROK is an important neighboring country that Japan should cooperate with as a partner in addressing various issues in the international community. In the fields of security and defense, the cooperation between Japan and the ROK is increasingly important as the security environment surrounding the two countries is becoming severe and complex, including the nuclear and missile issues of North Korea, response to large-scale natural disasters, counterterrorism, counter-piracy and maritime security.

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a Japan-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting with then ROK Defense Minister Shin Won-sik on the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue held in Singapore, during which they shared the recognition that a security cooperation relationship between Japan and the ROK is beneficial for both countries, which share fundamental values and strategic interests, also serves as a foundation for robust Japan-U.S.-ROK security cooperation, and is essential not only for deterring North Korean threats but also for realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific. They also concurred to resume high-level exchanges between the JSDF and the ROK Armed Forces in order to activate the dialogue between defense authorities, and concurred on discussing details of future Japan-ROK security cooperation. They also discussed pending issues between Japan-ROK defense authorities as a result of working-level discussions that included naval services of both sides, and based on the fact that the Chief of Staff, MSDF, and the Chief of Naval Operations of the ROK Navy formulated a document of which the content includes adhering to the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), improving communication at the unit level such as communication procedures, and strengthening communication at the headquarters level. During this discussion, the two ministers agreed to implement the items that were confirmed at the working level and to ensure safety in the event of encounters between the MSDF and the ROK Navy at sea in peacetime. Through this meeting, the MOD/JSDF has concluded that measures were taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident of a ROK naval destroyer directing its fire-control radar at an JSDF aircraft,[11] which was a long-standing issue, and to ensure the safety of the unit. Accordingly, in order to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific, the MOD/JSDF will continue to enhance Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK security cooperation, while promoting cooperation and exchanges in various fields.

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with then ROK Defense Minister Shin while he was visiting Japan as the first Defense Minister of the ROK to visit Japan in 15 years. During their meeting, in order to revitalize Japan-ROK defense cooperation and exchanges, they agreed to coordinate on (1) the activation of mutual visits between defense ministers, (2) the resumption of mutual visits between chiefs of staff, (3) the resumption of Staff Talk between each service, and (4) the activation of unit-to-unit exchanges including the resumption of Japan-ROK joint search and rescue (SAREX), as well as to jointly prepare an annual exchange plan.

On the occasion of the Seoul Defense Dialogue held in Seoul in September 2024, then State Defense Minister Oniki paid a courtesy call on then Minister of National Defense of the ROK Kim Yong-hyun and confirmed the importance of the promotion of Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK defense cooperation and agreed to strengthen it.

Following on a teleconference in October 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had another meeting with then Minister of National Defense of the ROK Kim during the 11th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) held in Laos in November during which they expressed serious concerns

11 In December 2018, a destroyer of the ROK Navy directed a fire control radar at a MSDF patrol aircraft conducting warning and surveillance activities off the coast of the Noto Peninsula (within Japan's exclusive economic zone). For details, see the MOD website (https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/radar/index.html).

about North Korea's launching ballistic missiles and the growing military cooperation between Russia and North Korea. They also confirmed that Japan and the ROK will continue to cooperate closely. In the same month, the ROK Navy Joint Training Task Group made a port call to Japan for the first time in about six years. In addition to participating in the welcome ceremony for their arrival, Defense Minister Nakatani went on board the landing ship Marado and discussed with ROK Navy personnel. In the same month, then Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs Nakajima visited the ROK and held a Japan-ROK Defense Vice-Ministerial Meeting with then Vice Minister of National Defense of the ROK Kim Seon-ho, where they agreed to continue to strengthen Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK defense cooperation.

See Reference 45 (Recent Japan-ROK Defense Cooperation and Exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond))

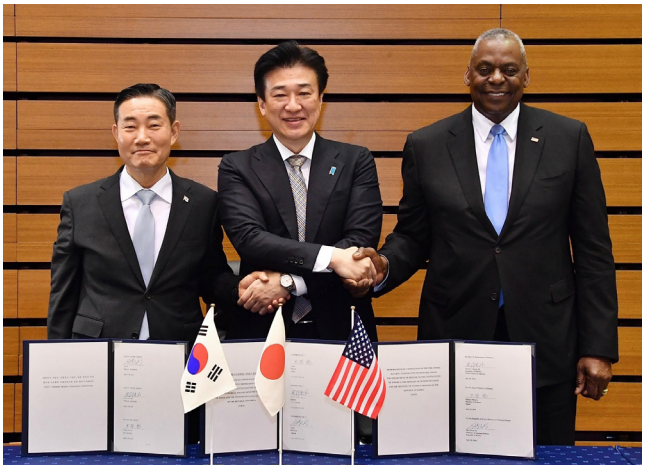
(3) Japan-U.S.-ROK Cooperative Relationship

Japan, the United States and ROK, have common interests in peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and it is important for the three countries to work closely together at every opportunity to address various security challenges, including response to North Korea.

In April 2024, the 14th Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT) were held through a video conference. During the talks, the three countries confirmed that they have remarkably strengthened security cooperation over the past year through real-time sharing mechanism of North Korea missile warning data, and cooperating on training plans that extend over multiple years between the three countries. They also agreed to institutionalize security cooperation policy consultations between the three countries, such as the Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting, Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT) and Trilateral Chiefs of Defense Meeting. The three defense officials welcomed progress on the implementation of designated multi-domain trilateral exercises.

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held the first Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting to be held in Japan with then U.S. Secretary of Defense Austin and then ROK Defense Minister Shin. During the meeting, they discussed their shared regional security challenges and confirmed having successfully completed the first Japan-U.S.-ROK multi-domain joint exercise "Freedom Edge." They also signed the Japan-U.S.-ROK Memorandum of Cooperation on the Trilateral Security Cooperation Framework,[12] confirming that the three countries intend to continue to implement trilateral security cooperation, including through high-level policy consultations, real-time sharing of North Korea missile warning data and trilateral exercises. Accordingly, this confirmed that the three countries have nominally and literally reached a new stage of trilateral cooperation.

In August 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida, together with then U.S. President Biden and then ROK President Yoon issued a Japan-U.S.-ROK Joint Leaders' Statement to commemorate the progress of their trilateral cooperation to date. The statement confirmed their trilateral cooperation outcomes such as the reinforcement of security cooperation supported by a strong Japan-U.S. Alliance and U.S.-ROK Alliance, the first implementation of the Japan-U.S.-ROK multi-domain joint exercise "Freedom Edge" and the signature of their new Cooperation on the Trilateral Security Cooperation Framework. During the 15th Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT) held in Seoul in September 2024, the three countries shared their views that the Japan-U.S.-ROK Memorandum of Cooperation on the Trilateral Security Cooperation Framework, which was signed by ministers of the three countries in July, institutionalizes the progress made in their relationship to date and serves as a basis for pursuing security cooperation among the three countries in a systematic and stable manner. In November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba also released the Japan-U.S.-ROK Joint Leaders' Statement together with then U.S. President Biden



Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting (July 2024)

Japan-U.S.-ROK Joint Exercise "Freedom Edge" (June 2024)

12 The framework institutionalizes trilateral security cooperation among defense authorities, including high-level policy consultations, information sharing, trilateral training and defense exchange cooperation, in order to contribute to peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

and then ROK President Yoon. The statement confirmed the continuing maintenance of their trilateral collaboration and the success of the second Japan-U.S.-ROK multi-domain exercise "Freedom Edge" conducted in the same month.

(4) Initiatives of Each Service

In July 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan held a Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Chiefs of Defense Meeting in Japan with General Brown, then U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Admiral Kim Myung-soo, ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff. During the meeting, they shared their concerns over provocations by North Korea and over the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. They also shared the outcomes of their new Japan-U.S.-ROK multi-domain exercise "Freedom Edge" conducted in June 2024 and agreed to keep strengthening their trilateral cooperation for the preservation of peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Additionally, at the Japan-ROK Chiefs of Staff meeting, Japan and the ROK shared their understanding of the strategic environment and defense policies following the Japan-ROK Leaders' Meeting in May and the Japan-ROK Defense Ministerial Meeting in June. They also agreed on the direction of future Japan-ROK defense cooperation, and agreed to continue Japan-ROK as well as Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral cooperation for regional peace and stability and the realization of FOIP.

On the occasion of the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) held in Hawaii in May 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a panel discussion with General Flynn, then Commanding General of the U.S. Army Pacific, Lieutenant General Stuart, Chief of the Australian Army and General Park An-su, then Chief of Staff, ROK Army, during which they discussed the challenging security environment and the importance of multilateral collaboration, especially between Japan, the U.S., Australia and the ROK.

In November 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF received a courtesy call from the Commander of the "ROK Navy Joint Training Task Group," which made a port call to Japan for the first time in about six years, and welcomed the Group's visit to Japan. They also confirmed the importance of Japan-ROK cooperation and agreed to strengthen collaboration of Japan-ROK maritime forces for the peace and stability of the region.

During the same month, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF held a video conference with General Allvin, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force and General Lee Young-su, Chief of Staff of the ROK Air Force during which they confirmed to cooperate in various areas in addition to conducting Japan-U.S.-ROK air forces trilateral training. They agreed to further strengthen cooperation among the three countries' air forces in the future and to work toward the realization of FOIP.

These Japan-U.S.-ROK exercises are a way to promote trilateral cooperation to address security challenges in the region. They also demonstrate the commitment of Japan, the United States and ROK to protect their common security and prosperity and to strengthen the rules-based international order.

See Chapter 2, Section 6 (Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises), Reference 53 (Recent multilateral high-level exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

(5) Japan-ROK GSOMIA

In light of the increasingly serious situation surrounding North Korea, in November 2016, the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was concluded between Japan and the ROK to further promote bilateral cooperation to exchange and share classified information regarding North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles. This agreement serves as a framework to appropriately protect classified military information shared between the Japanese and ROK governments. In August 2019, the Government of the ROK notified the Government of Japan of its intention to terminate the GSOMIA in writing. However, in November 2019, the ROK Government notified Japan that it would suspend the effect of its notice. In March 2023, the Government of the ROK withdrew its notice of termination and officially notified Japan of confirmation that the agreement remained in force.

5 Canada and New Zealand

Canada and New Zealand share fundamental values with Japan and play a central role in initiatives to address common challenges to global security, with a primary focus on non-traditional security areas, such as counter-terrorism and response to illicit ship-to-ship transfers, as well as international peace cooperation activities. Promoting defense cooperation and exchanges with these countries provides the foundations for Japan to become actively involved in these challenges and this is important for all of Japan, Canada and New Zealand.

See Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 46 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Canada and New Zealand (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

(1) Canada

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Canada

Japan and Canada are G7 members, fellow Pacific nations, and strategic partners that share fundamental values. The relationship between Japan-Canada defense authorities has been significantly deepening over the past few years, including through the Joint Statement on defense cooperation in 2019 and the entry into force of the Japan-Canada ACSA.

Canada has been increasing its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region in recent years, including releasing its Indo-Pacific Strategy in November 2022 and increasing the

number of navy vessels that it dispatches to the Indo-Pacific region to support FOIP.

See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 9-3-4 (Canada)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Then Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Canada Summit Meeting with then Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau on the occasion of the G7 Summit held in Apulia in June 2024 and on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly held in September 2024. In addition, Prime Minister Ishiba held a Japan-Canada Summit Meeting on the occasion of the G20 Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in November 2024. During these meetings, the two leaders exchanged their views on the situation in the Indo-Pacific, including China, and concurred that they would continue close coordination between Japan and Canada in responding to North Korea, including its nuclear and missile activities and the abductions issue. They also welcomed the steady progress of the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific region" (announced in 2022). During a Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers Meeting held in March 2025, both countries welcomed the agreement in principle of the Japan-Canada General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA).

Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF exchanging gifts with the Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy (November 2024)

In June and September 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with then Canadian Minister of National Defence Blair. During the meeting, the ministers welcomed the steady deepening of their defense cooperation through activities such as Japan-Canada joint training and cooperation on monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korea. Both countries also shared views on defense cooperation and exchanges, including future joint training and collaboration through NATO, and agreed to work on even closer and deeper collaboration.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, on the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with General Carignan, Chief of the Defence Staff of Canada, and agreed to further strengthen defense cooperation and exchanges toward the realization of FOIP, as cooperation with the Canadian Armed Forces would greatly contribute to peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

During his visit to Canada in June 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with Lieutenant General Paul, then Commander of the Canadian Army, and held unit visits. During their meeting, they agreed to continue strengthening the relationship of both countries' army forces to maintain a free and open international order based on the rule of law. Since 2023, the relationship between the GSDF and the Canadian Army has been strengthened in recent years and is being promoted through multi-layered exchanges, through events such as the participation as observers of the Canadian army to the Japan-U.S. bilateral command post exercise "Yamasakura" and exchanges between airborne units.

In November 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF met with Vice-Admiral Topshee, Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy during his visit to Japan and together they agreed on the importance of further strengthening their countries' close relationship in light of the contribution to the realization of FOIP through Canadian navy vessels' operations in the vicinity of Japan.

(2) New Zealand

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with New Zealand

New Zealand shares fundamental values with Japan and is an important strategic cooperative partner in the Indo-Pacific region, where the strategic environment is becoming increasingly severe. The defense authorities of Japan and New Zealand actively conduct high-level exchanges, joint training and unit-to-unit exchanges.

During a Japan-New Zealand Summit Meeting in June 2024, the two countries welcomed the agreement in principle in the negotiations of the Japan-New Zealand General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA), and concurred to cooperate on further bilateral and plurilateral activities and exercises, including in the area of maritime security, and to accelerate discussions on ACSA.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with New Zealand Minister of Defence Collins during the Shangri-La Dialogue. During their meeting, the two ministers concurred on further advancing Japan-New Zealand defense cooperation and exchanges in the Pacific Islands Region under the "Statement of Intent between the Minister of Defence of New Zealand and the Defense Minister of Japan on Defence Cooperation in Defense Minister, Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief and Climate Change in the Pacific Islands Region" signed in June 2023. On the occasion of the ADMM-Plus in November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani held a

meeting with New Zealand Minister of Defence Collins, and he welcomed New Zealand's first deployment of its vessels to conduct monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korea vessels. He also welcomed the first conduct of bilateral training between Japan and New Zealand seizing this opportunity. Two ministers concurred on developing defense cooperation and exchanges to progress the security of Indo-Pacific region to realize FOIP.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference held in Hawaii in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with Air Marshal Davies, New Zealand Chief of Defence Force, which led to the holding of Joint Staff Talks. They also reaffirmed the progress of defense cooperation between the two countries at the working level and agreed to promote defense cooperation, including solving the various issues faced in the Southwest Pacific region.

In September 2024, at the Army Staff Symposium (CAS) hosted by the Australian Army, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met Major General King, Chief of Army of New Zealand to discuss future defense cooperation. Both countries have been strengthening the relationship of their army forces, including through the GSDF's participation as observers to the Tropic Twilight exercise conducted by the New Zealand Army.

In a video conference held in November 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF met with Rear Admiral Golding, Chief of Navy of New Zealand, and agreed to further strengthen their relationship of security and defense cooperation, including through mutual visits of both countries' naval ships and unit-to-unit/people-to-people exchanges.

6 Northern Europe and the Baltic States

(1) Sweden

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Sweden

December 2022 marked the conclusion of the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, the first of such agreement with a Nordic country, promoting the defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries. In addition, as the relationships between NATO and our country have strengthened in recent years, progress in defense cooperation and exchanges with Sweden, which has become a new member of NATO in 2024, is expected.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In July 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with Sweden Minister for Defence Jonson in Stockholm and expressed his support for Sweden officially becoming a member state of NATO. The two ministers also agreed to promote further defense cooperation and exchanges, including high-level exchanges, defense equipment and technology cooperation, assistance to Ukraine and cooperation through NATO, and confirmed that they will continue to work closely together to deepen Japan-Sweden relations.

In December 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba held a meeting with Sweden Prime Minister Kristersson while he was on a visit to Japan and they issued a joint statement regarding the strategic partnership between Japan and Sweden. As for their cooperation in the security field, both countries confirmed that they will give a concrete form to their countries' defense equipment and technology cooperation based on the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology.

In the same month, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Sweden Minister for Defence Jonson while he was on a visit to Japan during which both ministers agreed to further promote their defense cooperation and exchanges, including through high-level and working-level exchanges, defense equipment and technology cooperation, and cooperation through NATO.

(2) Denmark

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Denmark

Denmark is a strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan and the two countries have accumulated a series of defense exchanges, including high-level talks and research exchanges.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In 2023, then Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Danish Prime Minister Frederiksen visiting Japan. At the meeting, recognizing the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security, they agreed to work to consolidate bilateral and multilateral security cooperation. They also agreed to hold discussions between defense authorities and maintain and develop cooperation in the field of maritime security.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan held a meeting with General Hyldgaard, Denmark Chief of Defence, for the first time in Copenhagen. During the meeting, they confirmed their recognition of the inseparability of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security and the need for mutual involvement in issues of both regions, and agreed to further reinforce their collaboration, including through high-level and unit-to-unit exchanges in both countries.

(3) Norway

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Norway

Norway is a strategic partner that shares values and principles

as well as a long history of friendship with Japan and, in 2023, Japan and Norway announced a strategic partnership. Japan acquires the Joint Strike Missile (JSM), a stand-off missile to be mounted on F-35A fighter jets, from Norway.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In September 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with Norway Minister of Defence Gram during his visit to Tokyo and welcomed Norwegian frigate's deployment to the Indo-Pacific region for the first time as a member of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group. Both countries also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation and agreed to collaborate more closely towards deepening further defense cooperation and exchanges.

(4) Finland

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Finland

Finland is a strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan and in 2019, Japan signed the Japan-Finland Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges. In addition, as the relationships between NATO and Japan have been strengthened in recent years, defense cooperation and exchanges with Finland, which became a new member of NATO in 2023, is expected to progress.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In September 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with Finland Minister of Defence Häkkänen while he was visiting Japan and welcomed the development of their defense cooperation and exchanges in various fields based on the Japan-Finland Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges. They also confirmed to cooperate on promoting considerations for the establishment of a framework on defense equipment transfer and information security. Furthermore, Finland Minister of Defence Häkkänen visited the Destroyer JS Izumo anchored in Yokosuka together with then State Defense Minister Oniki and they shared their recognition of the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security.

In December 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba held a meeting with Finland Prime Minister Orpo while he was visiting Japan during which they agreed to accelerate cooperation in the security field and welcomed the start of negotiations on the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology.

Finland Minister of Defence Häkkänen and then State Defense Minister Oniki visiting the Destroyer JS Izumo (September 2024)

(5) Estonia

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Estonia

Estonia is a partner that shares fundamental values with Japan. Estonia is implementing advanced initiatives as one of the world's leading IT countries, and cooperation with the MOD/JSDF is progressing in the field of cyber defense. In addition, Estonia takes an important role in the view of Japan-NATO cooperation, including being the location of the NATO Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE).

Previously, the defense attaché in Finland was concurrently serving in Estonia but a new Defense Attaché has been dispatched since March 2025.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In April 2024, then Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Miyake visited the Estonian Ministry of Defence and paid a courtesy call on Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia Pevkur and discussed the promotion of defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries, including coordination through the IT Coalition[13] to support Ukraine, and about the regional situation. He also held a meeting with General Herem, Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces and shared views about the regional situation, including the situation in Ukraine.

In January 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia Pevkur while he was visiting Japan and the two Ministers shared the view to further promote their defense cooperation and exchanges, including through high-level and working-level exchanges, cyber cooperation, defense equipment and technology cooperation, and cooperation through NATO.

13 A multilateral framework for IT support announced for launch in June 2023 and led by the Republic of Estonia, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Ukraine.

(6) Latvia

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Latvia

Latvia is a partner that shares values and principles with Japan. With growing recognition among like-minded countries that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable, collaboration toward the realization of FOIP and cooperation through the EU, NATO and others are becoming increasingly important.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In April 2024, then Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Miyake visited the Latvian Ministry of Defence and paid a courtesy call on Latvia Minister for Defence Sprūds and shared views on regional affairs and bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges and concurred to continue working closely together.

(7) Lithuania

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Lithuania

Lithuania is a strategic partner of Japan and the two countries are deepening their cooperation to uphold and reinforce the free and open international order based on the rule of law. Additionally, in October 2023, the two countries signed the Japan-Lithuania Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In April 2024, then Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Miyake held a meeting with then Vice Minister of National Defence of Lithuania Tomkus and they agreed to continue promoting defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries, including collaboration through the Demining Coalition[14] to support Ukraine and cooperation in the field of cybers domain. He also held a meeting with then Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania Meilūnas and both of them shared views on the regional situation and on bilateral cooperation and exchanges.

On the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with then Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania Kasčiūnas. Based on the Japan-Lithuania Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchange signed in 2023, both Ministers worked strengthen birateral defense cooperation and exchanges, exchanged their views on cyber defense cooperation and exchanges cooperation and collaboration through support for Ukraine, and concurred to work closely together to further deepen the relationship between Japan and Lithuania.

In January 2025, on the occasion of the NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session, General Yoshida, Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met for the first time with General Vaikšnoras, Chief of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania. Both parties shared views on the development and deepening of the bilateral defense cooperation, including training and exercises as well as cooperation in the cyber domain. On the occasion of the Munich Security Conference in February 2025, Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Kobayashi made a courtesy call to Lithuanian Minister of National Defence Šakalienė and shared views on Japan-Lithuania defense cooperation and exchanges, including collaboration through the Demining Coalition supporting for Ukraine.

See Reference 44 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with European Countries (FY2021 and Beyond))

Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Kobayashi making a courtesy call to Lithuanian Minister of National Defence Šakalienė (February 2025)

7 Central and Eastern European Countries

(1) Ukraine

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Ukraine

Ukraine is a partner that shares fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law with Japan. With Ukraine, in 2018, Japan signed the Japan-Ukraine Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges and held the Japan-Ukraine Security Meeting.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which began in February 2022, violates Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, is a serious violation of international law, including the UN Charter prohibiting the use of force, shakes the very foundations of the international order and is absolutely unacceptable. Based on this position, Japan has been taking decisive measures by uniting with the international community.

In June 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida attended a summit meeting in Italy with Ukraine President Zelenskyy during which

14 A multilateral framework for demining support announced for launch in June 2023 and led by the Republic of Lithuania and Iceland.

they signed the Accord on Support for Ukraine and Cooperation between the Government of Japan and Ukraine. Additionally, in November 2024, the Japan-Ukraine General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA) was signed between the Ambassador of Japan to Ukraine and the First Deputy Head of the Security Service of Ukraine in order to expand and promote information sharing with Ukraine, which has unique experience and knowledge in the security and defense fields.

Japan-Ukraine Defense Ministerial Meeting (October 2024)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Japan has been providing non-lethal equipment and goods, such as bulletproof vests, chemical protective masks, chemical protective suits, vehicles, small drones and emergency rations, sequentially after March 2022, responding to the request of the Government of Ukraine for the provision of equipment, etc. after Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In May 2023, based on a Japan-Ukraine Summit Meeting held on the occasion of the G7 Hiroshima Summit during the same month, Japan accepted two injured Ukrainian soldiers with lower leg amputations (in which the leg was amputated from the knee down) at the JSDF Central Hospital, with the Japanese side bearing the costs in principle, and Japan has since then accepted a total of eight injured soldiers as of March 2025. In addition, since June 2023, approximately 30,000 emergency rations and a total of 101 JSDF vehicles (1/2t trucks, high mobility vehicles and material handling vehicles) have been provided, and in March 2024, the planned shipment of JSDF vehicles out of the country was completed. Six additional JSDF vehicles were also shipped in February 2025, and the shipment was completed in April of the same year.

Then Defense Minister Kihara held a video conference with Ukraine Defense Minister Umerov in April 2024 and had a meeting on the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024. During the meetings, they firmly criticized Russia's aggression against Ukraine and stated that they would respond with firm resolve in solidarity with the international community as such unilateral changes to the status quo by force are absolutely unacceptable.

On the occasion of the NATO Defense Ministers' Meeting in October 2024 Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with Ukraine Defense Minister Umerov where he conveyed the MOD/JSDF's decision to provide additional JSDF vehicles to Ukraine. Defense Minister Umerov reiterated his deep appreciation for the continued provision of equipment and acceptance of wounded soldiers by the MOD/JSDF.

The MOD regularly participates in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group organized by the U.S. Department of Defense

Commentary

Track Record of Support for Ukraine by the Ministry of Defense (MOD)

Since 2022, based on the perception that "Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow," the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) has provided a variety of support in solidarity with the international community to strongly protect peace and order.

We promptly provided non-lethal equipment such as bulletproof vests, chemical protective masks, chemical protective suits, vehicles, small drones, emergency rations, and so on immediately after the start of the aggression. As of April 2025, we have provided a total of 107 JSDF vehicles and approximately 190,000 emergency rations, and currently we are providing additional Self-Defense Forces vehicles.

Furthermore, from early May to the end of June 2022, in response to a request from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), we used Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) C-2 transport aircraft and other equipment to carry out support for the air transport of humanitarian relief supplies from Dubai where the UNHCR warehouse is located to countries neighboring Ukraine (Poland and Romania).

Since June 2023, JSDF Central Hospital has been providing prosthetic limbs and rehabilitation to injured Ukrainian soldiers who lost their legs in Russian attacks. To date it has helped eight injured soldiers and six of those have already been discharged from the hospital and returned to Ukraine.

Moreover, support in collaboration with other countries is also being provided. Since 2022, we have been attending the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, a multilateral conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Defense, to enhance collaboration with the other countries by sharing information concerning support for Ukraine, among other measures. Furthermore, we are also participating in the Demining Coalition and IT Coalition multilateral support frameworks, and going forward we plan to provide educational support with the objective of enhancing the capabilities of the Ukrainian military, among other measures.

and works with participating countries to share information on assistance to Ukraine.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (8) (Ukraine)

(2) Czech Republic

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is a strategic partner that shares values and principles with Japan. In 2017, the Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges was sined between Japan and Czech, becoming the first such Memorandum signed between Central and Eastern European countries with Japan. The NDS also specifies that Japan will strengthen cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries, including the Czech Republic.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In November 2024, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency (ATLA) Commissioner Ishikawa attended the 1st Prague Defence Summit[15] hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and noted the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security and the importance of collaboration with allies and like-minded countries to enhance defense production and technology bases.

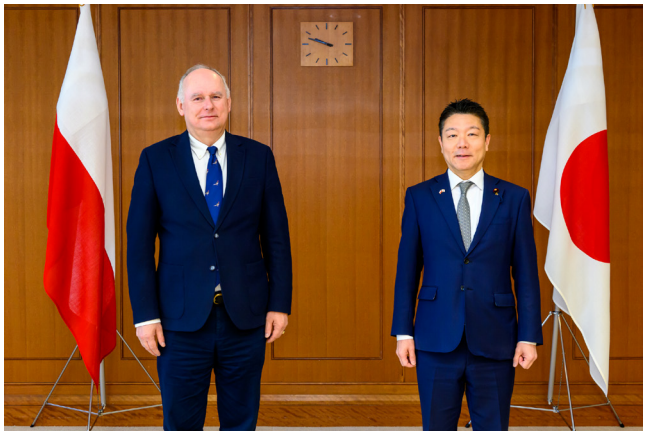
(3) Poland

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Poland

Poland is a strategic partner that shares values and principles with Japan. Cooperation with Poland is advancing based on the "Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership," including in the areas of politics and security. In 2022, the Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges was sined between Japan and Poland. The NDS also specifies that Japan will strengthen cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries, including Poland.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara received a courtesy call from General Kukuła, Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, and expressed to Poland that has played an important role as a hub of support for Ukraine, and stated that he will further strengthen the cooperation with Poland, including the development of high-level exchanges. Furthermore, in February 2025, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Poland Mr. Sikorski and Secretary of State of Ministry of National Defence Mr. Zalewski made a courtesy call to Defense Minister Nakatani, and Secretary of State Zalewski and State Defense Minister Honda held a meeting. During the meetings, they concurred to continue to work closely together towards further deepening Japan-Poland cooperation.



State Defense Minister Honda meeting with Poland's Secretary of State, Ministry of National Defence Zalewski (February 2025)

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In June 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan officially invited General Kukuła, Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces to hold a meeting. During the meeting, the two sides agreed to promote mutual understanding through shared recognition of the strategic environment and defense policies, as well as to strengthen bilateral cooperation based on the recognition that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable and on the intention not to tolerate any unilateral changes to the status quo by force.

(4) Romania

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Romania

Romania is a strategic partner of Japan and in response to the increasingly severe security environment, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the two countries are going to consolidate dialogue in the security field.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In June 2024, then Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Miyake received a courtesy call from a delegation of the Romania-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League and both countries shared views on regional affairs and bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges and concurred to continue working closely together.

During the 3rd Japan-Romania Military to Military Dialogue held in Bucharest in October 2024, they exchanged views on the regional situation and defense policies of both countries.

In February 2025, State Defense Minister Honda received

15 This international conference was held for the first time in Prague (Czech Republic) in 2024 to discuss the improvement of defense capabilities in the Euro-Atlantic region from the perspectives of technological innovation and procurement. Participants include defense and security authorities and business executives mainly from the Euro-Atlantic region.

a courtesy call from Romanian State Secretary for Strategic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tinca and they shared views on their bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges and cooperation through NATO.

See Reference 44 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with European Countries (FY2021 and Beyond))

8 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with ASEAN Member States

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries have high potential as the world's "open growth center" with continuous high economic growth, etc. In addition, they are situated in strategically important areas that occupy key points on Japan's sea lanes and they play an important role in ensuring peace and prosperity for both Japan and whole of the region.

Given such importance of ASEAN countries, there is great significance in the MOD/JSDF strengthening defense cooperation and exchanges with each ASEAN country while supporting efforts to reinforce ASEAN centrality, unity and resilience as the foundation for regional cooperation from the view of realizing FOIP. This will also lead to the creation of a desirable security environment for Japan.

Based on this principle, Japan is facilitating confidence building and mutual understanding through high-level and working-level exchanges as well as promoting capacity building, bilateral/multilateral training and defense equipment and technology cooperation with ASEAN countries. In addition to bilateral cooperation, Japan also conducts cooperation within multilateral frameworks such as the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The "Vientiane Vision," which Japan announced in 2016 was the first guideline for Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation, which presented an overall picture of the priority area of the future direction of ASEAN-wide defense cooperation in a transparent manner. At the 5th ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting held in 2019, then Defense Minister Kono announced the "Vientiane Vision 2.0" and the ASEAN ministers welcomed it.

At the 8th ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting held in Indonesia in November 2023, then Defense Minister Kihara affirmed that the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), adopted by ASEAN shares fundamental principles with FOIP such as openness, transparency and a rules-based framework. He also presented the Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE) to promote the Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation to a new level.

The MOD will continue to actively promote such bilateral and multilateral cooperation going forward.

See 3 (Promotion of Multilateral Security Cooperation), 4 (Proactive and Strategic Initiatives for Capacity Building), Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 47 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with ASEAN Member States (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 53 (Recent multilateral high-level exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 57 (Vientiane Vision 2.0), Reference 58 (Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

(2) Indonesia

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchange with Indonesia

Indonesia is a major regional power that exercises leadership in ASEAN and is a comprehensive and strategic partner that shares fundamental values with Japan in principle. Indonesia is located in the Strait of Malacca and other key areas of maritime transportation and since the Japan-Indonesia Summit in 2015 when the two countries agreed to strengthen the Strategic Partnership underpinned by sea and democracy, they have been actively engaging in defense cooperation and exchanges at various levels and fields, such as holding a Japan-Indonesia "2+2" Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting.

In addition to signing the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology in 2021, Japan and Indonesia agreed in the "2+2" meeting of 2021 to improve their capacity in maritime surveillance and maritime law enforcement, enhance maritime cooperation, including the provision of fishery surveillance vessels, and strengthen cooperation in the region around the Sulu and Celebes Seas.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In April 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with then Indonesian Defense Minister Prabowo while he was visiting Japan during which they discussed their bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges, including training/exercises and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, and concurred to further enhance defense cooperation and exchanges.

In the same month, to enhance the Japanese language education course at the Defense Language Education and Training Center of the Indonesian Ministry of Defence, the MOD dispatched instructors to provide guidance on Japanese language education over 11 months and conduct training in Japanese language education and teaching methods. In July 2024, the Center's faculty members were invited as part of a capacity building program.

On the occasion of the APEC Summit Meeting in November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba met with Indonesian President Prabowo and stated that he attaches great importance on

cooperation with Indonesia towards the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law, and he would like to make concrete progress, including the transfer of defense equipment.

In January 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Indonesian Minister of Defence Sjafrie in which they concurred to establish a defense consultation on both countries' maritime security, including defense equipment and technology cooperation.

In the same month, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Indonesia and had a meeting with Indonesian President Prabowo, where they concurred to hold a "2+2" Meeting within the year and welcomed the launch of defense working-level consultations and the signing of the exchange of notes regarding the provision of high-speed patrol boats under the Official Security Assistance (OSA) programme. They also affirmed the importance of forming people-to-people networks through the acceptance of Indonesian students at National Defense Academy of Japan and the exchange program of field officers.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF observed the multilateral field training "Super Garuda Shield" including the U.S. and Indonesia and met with General Maruli, Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Army and they agreed to further strengthen the relationship between their army forces.

In November 2024, the GSDF invited Indonesian military personnel, as part of a capacity building program in HA/DR, to the "Michinoku Alert 2024" exercise, an army field training exercise for disaster response, to deepen their understanding of collaboration between the JSDF and local governments.

In December 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF had a meeting with Air Chief Marshal Tony, Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Air Force while he was on a visit to Japan, during which they shared views on matters such as defense cooperation and exchanges between Japanese and Indonesian air forces.

(3) Cambodia

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Cambodia

In 1992, Cambodia became the first country to which Japan sent an JSDF unit for UN PKO (Peacekeeping Operations). As indicated by Japan's capacity building for Cambodia since 2013 and other programs, defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries have made steady progress.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In August 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held a meeting with General Tea Seiha, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, during which they welcomed the upgrade of their countries' relationship to a "comprehensive strategic partnership" and presented their expectation towards further strengthening of Japan-Cambodia cooperative relationship, including in the security field. In April 2025, MSDF vessels became the first foreign naval vessels to call at the upgraded Ream Port in Cambodia.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with General Mao Sophan, Commander of the Royal Cambodian Army, both during an official invitation in July 2024 and during the Indo-Pacific Army Management Seminar (IPAMS) held in Fiji in August 2024. They shared their understanding of the strategic environment and exchanged views on future cooperation between their army forces.

The GSDF conducted a capacity building program for the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces on PKO (civil engineering) from December 2024 to February 2025.

(4) Singapore

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Singapore

Singapore was the first Southeast Asian country to sign a memorandum on defense exchanges with Japan in 2009 (revised in 2022). Since then, based on this memorandum, various cooperative relationships have been progressing steadily, including the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology that took effect in 2023.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with Singapore Defence Minister Ng during which they discussed bilateral defense cooperation between Japan and Singapore in addition to the strengthening of defense cooperation between Japan and ASEAN as Singapore will be taking over the role of country coordinator for Japan from the summer of 2024 until 2027. They also concurred in further strengthening defense cooperation and exchanges between both countries.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with Vice Admiral Beng, Chief of Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces and agreed to continue deepening their "cooperation centered on the digital field," which was agreed on at the 9th JPN-SGP Joint Staff Talks in February 2024.

In October 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with Major-General Neo, then Chief of Singapore Army who was officially invited, and they communicated their understanding of the strategic environment and shared views on the future cooperation between their army forces.

(5) Thailand

With Thailand, Japan has longstanding defense cooperation and exchanges based on the traditionally good relationship

between the two countries, including the dispatch of Defense Attachés and consultations between their defense authorities from early years. At the National Defense Academy, a Thai student became the first foreign student to be accepted in 1958. Since then, Thailand has sent the largest cumulative number of students to the academy.

With the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology entering into force in May 2022, in November of 2022, Japan and Thailand upgraded their relationship to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" accelerating talks on deepening security cooperation between the two countries.

b. Initiatives of Each Service

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with General Thitichai, Chief of Joint Staff of the Royal Thai Armed Forces. Both of them mentioned the multilateral exercise "Cobra Gold 24" conducted between February and March 2024 and the Destroyer JS Murasame's port call and goodwill exercise in Thailand conducted in April, and agreed to further strengthen collaboration between their countries.

In May 2024, on the occasion of the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) held in Hawaii, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with General Charoenchai, then Chief of the Royal Thai Army and they agreed to continue strengthening the relationship between their army forces.

(6) The Philippines

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with the Philippines

The Philippines faces important sea lanes for Japan, such as the South China Sea and the Luzon Strait and cooperation with the Philippines and strengthening of its coastal surveillance and maritime domain awareness (MDA) capabilities are important to ensure the security of these sea lanes. In addition to high-level exchanges with the Philippines, also a U.S. ally, there are frequent mutual visits by naval vessels, working-level exchanges including Military-Military Consultation and service-to-service exchanges.

Since the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology entered into force in 2016, progress has been made in defense equipment and technology cooperation such as grant of decommissioned equipment and the transfer of air surveillance radar systems, as well as cooperation based on OSA.[16]

In 2022, the two countries held their first "2+2" meeting, where they agreed to start considering a framework to facilitate reciprocal visits and reciprocal provision of supplies and services in the field of logistical support. Also, in February 2023, the "Terms of Reference (TOR) between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines concerning the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Activities of the Japan Self-Defense Forces in the Republic of the Philippines"[17] was signed. Following the decision in November 2023 to begin negotiations on RAA, it was signed in July 2024, deepening security cooperation between the two countries steadily.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Japan-Philippines "2+2" (July 2024)

In April 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida attended a Japan-U.S.-Philippines Summit Meeting in the United States. The leaders of the three countries agreed to continue strengthening security and defense cooperation through Military to Military (MM) Dialogues and trilateral exercises.

In July 2024, in Manila, then Defense Minister Kihara and then Foreign Minister Kamikawa, together with Secretary of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines Teodoro and Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines Manalo held the Second Japan-Philippines "2+2" Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue. Both countries expressed strong opposition to any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force or coercion regarding the situation in the East China Sea and South China Sea. In particular, they shared serious concerns over recent dangerous activities at the Second Thomas Shoal and other activities which increase tensions in the region, and concurred to continue to exchange views on the latest developments surrounding North Korea, as well as to seek compliance with international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. They also exchanged views on the latest situations relating

16 A new framework for grant assistance established in 2023 in which military forces and others are beneficiaries, for the purpose of strengthening security cooperation with Japan, creating a favorable security environment for Japan and helping maintain and strengthen international peace and security by consolidating the security capabilities and deterrence of the countries of the region by providing equipment and materials, infrastructure development and other activities

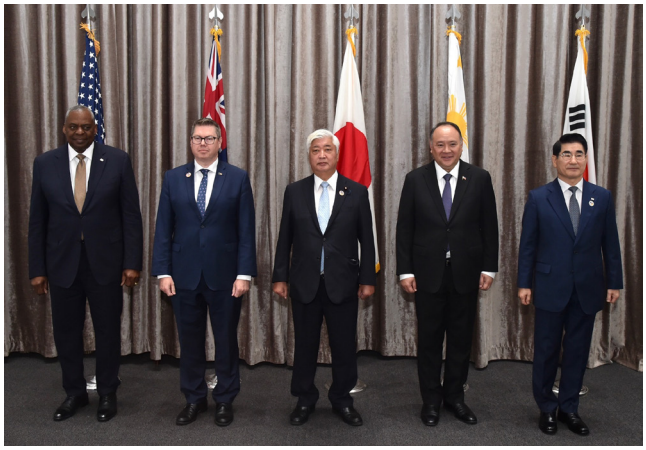
17 It simplifies the procedures for the JSDF to visit the Philippines for activities related to HA/DR.

to North Korea and concurred to continue to work closely in dealing with it. In addition, they confirmed exchanges and cooperation between the two countries' forces based on the Japan-Philippines RAA signed on this occasion as a new foundation. They also confirmed the continuation and strengthening of cooperation in capacity building, including defense equipment and technology cooperation and OSA, as well as the continuation and strengthening of cooperation in the areas of economic security, cybersecurity, maritime affairs, and contribution to the Mindanao Peace Process from the perspective of WPS. They also confirmed the establishment of multilayered cooperation with allies and like-minded countries, including Japan-U.S.-Philippines and Japan-Australia-Philippines-U.S. cooperation.

On the occasion of the ADMM-Plus in November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Defense Secretary Teodoro. The Japan-Australia-Philippines-ROK-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting was also held for the first time, during which the five countries reaffirmed their shared commitment to advance the vision for a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific where international law and sovereignty are respected. After April 2024, Japan, the U.S., Australia, and the Philippines conducted joint training as a **maritime cooperative activity** in the South China Sea to strengthen the effectiveness and interoperability of their defense cooperation, while New Zealand also joined the activity in September of the same year. Japan will maintain close cooperation with the ally and like-minded countries and others and continue such initiatives.

Furthermore, in December 2024, an exchange of notes regarding the provision of equipment related to transferred air surveillance radar systems and coastal radar systems was signed as part of the OSA project which is at its second consecutive year since FY2023. In February 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani visited the Philippines and met with Defense Secretary Teodoro. They concurred to intensify joint training and unit-to-unit cooperation. They also confirmed to establish a new high-level framework for strategic operational cooperation. Additionally, they decided to initiate discussions on to discuss broader and long-term cooperation on defense equipment and technology as well as to send public and private sector mission to the Philippines. In April 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited the Philippines and met with Philippine President Marcos. They agreed to commence negotiations for the conclusion of the ACSA. The two leaders also confirmed the importance of early conclusion of an Agreement on the Security of Information, and agreed to facilitate discussions among two governments.

See Part V, Chapter 1, Section 3-4-1 (9) (Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Countries)



Japan-Australia-Philippines-ROK-U.S. Ministerial Meeting (November 2024)

c. Initiatives of Each Service

In June 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan held a video conference with General Brawner, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in response to the incident between the China Coast Guard and the Philippine military that occurred in the same month, and reiterated his support for the Philippines' position opposing coercive behaviors in the South China Sea. They agreed to promote cooperation and to also collaborate with the allies and like-minded countries, including the U.S. and Australia, to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law. On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference in September 2024, they held a Japan-U.S.-Australia-Philippines meeting also attended by Admiral Paparo, U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander and Admiral Johnston, Chief of the Defence Force of Australia. During the meeting, the four parties shared their understanding of the strategic environment surrounding the Indo-Pacific region and, while reaffirming that the four countries' cooperation has been steadily deepening at their fourth Japan-U.S.-Australia-Philippines meeting in 2024, they agreed to strengthen collaboration among Japan-U.S.-Australia-Philippines through various opportunities following the Maritime Cooperative Activity which has been conducted continuously. General Yoshida also held a video conference with General Brawner, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in both December 2024 and February 2025 to share their understanding of the issues concerning the South China Sea.

On an official visit to the Philippines in September 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with Lieutenant General Galido, Commanding General of the Philippine Army and Major General Rojas, then Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps and agreed to plan the further

KEY WORD

Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA)

An initiative to strengthen regional and international cooperation for realizing FOIP by collaboration of allies and like-minded countries that support freedom of navigation and freedom of overflight and respect rights under the Law of the Sea.
With the United States, Australia and the Philippines among others, Japan Self-Defense Forces has so far conducted joint trainings in South China Sea.

strengthening of the relationship between their army forces in response to the Japan-Philippines "2+2" Meeting held in July 2024. During the Land Forces Summit (LFS) held in December 2024, he also invited Lieutenant General Galido and Major General Rojas and they confirmed the importance of multilateral collaboration between the ally and like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

In September 2024, as part of a capacity building program in the field of HA/DR, the GSDF shared its knowledge on how to respond to earthquakes with the Philippine Army and provided the Army with technical guidance and advice on how to use lifesaving equipment.

In November 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF held a video conference with Vice Admiral Ezpeleta, Flag Officer in Command of the Philippine Navy during which they agreed to develop an even stronger relationship for the realization of FOIP, as Japan and the Philippines are important partners that build strong ties. He also made an official visit to the Philippines in March 2025 during which they signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) for strengthening the strategic partnership between the MSDF and the Philippine Navy.

In March 2025, the MSDF shared knowledge in vessel engine maintenance to the Philippine Navy as part of a capacity building program on vessel maintenance.

On an official visit to the Philippines in November 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF held a meeting with Lieutenant General Parreño, then Commanding General of the Philippine Air Force and shared views on their understanding of the current situation and on defense cooperation and exchanges between their air forces. In January 2025, he held a video conference with Lieutenant General Cordura, newly appointed Commanding General of the Philippine Air Force, during which they shared their recognition of the cooperation regarding the air surveillance radar systems transferred from Japan to the Philippines and of the strengthening of their collaboration including joint training.

As part of a capacity building program on aviation medicine, from September to October 2024, the ASDF provided training, exchanged views and shared their knowledge with the Philippine Air Force on aeromedical evacuation units and training on aerospace physiology.

(7) Brunei

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Brunei

With Brunei, Japan signed a memorandum of defense cooperation and exchanges in 2023, agreeing to further strengthen relationships between the defense authorities of the two countries through various exchanges, including high-level exchanges, port calls (navigation) of naval vessels, etc., joint training programs and others.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the ADMM-Plus in November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani held a meeting with Brunei Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Defence II Pehin Halbi and welcomed the fact that 2024 marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Brunei diplomatic relations, as well as the implementation of defense cooperation and exchanges based on the signed Memorandum of Cooperation on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges, including JSDF vessels and aircraft port calls as well as goodwill training. The two countries agreed to continue to strengthen multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges, including within the framework of the ADMM-Plus, in addition to bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges.

(8) Viet Nam

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Viet Nam

Viet Nam is a coastal country facing the South China Sea. Japan and Viet Nam have developed cooperation and exchanges between their defense authorities. The 2021 Defense Ministerial Meeting was an opportunity to promote high-level exchanges and others under "Japan-Viet Nam Defense Cooperation at the New Level" to contribute more actively not only to Japan-Viet Nam bilateral relations but also the peace and stability of the region as well as the international community. In November 2023, the two countries decided to develop their relationship into a comprehensive strategic partnership for peace and prosperity in Asia and the world and in the security field, they agreed on the importance of steadily advancing procedures for transfer of defense equipment, discussing OSA and others, further expanding defense cooperation and exchanges.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In August 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara visited Viet Nam and held a meeting with General Giang, Minister of National Defence of Viet Nam. Based on the upgrade of their countries' bilateral relationship to a "comprehensive strategic partnership," both countries stated their expectation to develop their defense cooperation and exchanges in a wide range of areas in the future, including high-level exchanges, defense equipment and technology cooperation, capacity building and educational exchanges. They also welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Implementation (MOI) and Letter of Arrangement (LOA) concerning the transfer of decommissioned material handling vehicles from Japan to Viet Nam as the first case of defense equipment transfer based on the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, and agreed to continue strengthening bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges. In December 2024, they realized a transfer of decommissioned material handling vehicles. In April 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Viet Nam and met with Prime Minister Pham. In the meeting, they welcomed progress in cooperation between the two countries,

and agreed to establish a Foreign and Defense Vice-Ministerial Level Meeting (Vice-Ministerial Meeting "2+2") to enhance strategic communication between Japan and Viet Nam.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

From September to October 2024, the GSDF invited military personnel from the People's Army of Viet Nam to Japan to provide training on the operation and maintenance of decommissioned material handling vehicles for transfer.

In May 2024, the MSDF conducted a capacity building program on underwater unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance for the Viet Nam People's Navy.

In November 2024, the ASDF invited the Viet Nam Air Defense-Air Force to Japan and conducted a capacity building program in the field of air rescue.

The Viet Nam Air Defense-Air Force on air rescue training (November 2024)

(9) Malaysia

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Malaysia

Malaysia is located at an important place for maritime transportation facing the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea. In 2018, Japan signed the Japan-Malaysia Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges and concluded the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with Malaysia. In December 2023, the two countries decided to upgrade their relationship to a comprehensive and strategic partnership to further promote security cooperation between them.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba held a summit meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar on the occasion of the APEC Summit Meeting. During the meeting, they welcomed the expansion of both countries' security field and agreed to strengthen their countries' cooperation even more.

In January 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Malaysia on his first bilateral visit and had a meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar during which they welcomed the holding of foreign affairs and defense strategic dialogue and the start of navy-to-navy joint training and agreed to further promote such cooperation in the future. Prime Minister Ishiba also mentioned the steady progress of OSA which involves the provision of warning and surveillance equipment such as rescue vessels, to which Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar expressed his appreciation.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference held in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with General Rahman, Chief of Defence Force of the Malaysian Army. They shared their understanding of the strategic environment and agreed to further strengthen collaboration between the Malaysian Army and the JSDF.

During the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) held in May 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with General Muhammad, Chief of Malaysian Army and they agreed to strengthen their relationship, including through exchanges in HA/DR, and to continue developing their countries' relations.

In November 2024, the GSDF invited Malaysian Army personnel, as part of a capacity building program in HA/DR, to the "Michinoku Alert 2024" exercise, an army field training exercise for disaster response, to deepen their understanding of collaboration between the JSDF and local governments.

(10) Myanmar

In response to the coup d'état by Myanmar's armed forces that occurred in 2021, in the same year, Japan issued a statement jointly with the chiefs of staffs of 12 countries, including the United States, condemned the use of military force by the national armed forces and related security agencies against the civilian population and calling for the national armed forces to stop the violence.

(11) Laos

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Laos

In 2019, Japan signed the Japan-Laos Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges and the two countries intend to promote defense cooperation and exchanges in wide-ranging fields, including HA/DR.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

On the occasion of the ADMM-Plus held in Laos in November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with General Chansamone, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Laos during which they shared views on bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges including high-level exchanges and capacity building and agreed to continue strengthening their countries' defense cooperation and exchanges.

9 Mongolia

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Mongolia

Relations with Mongolia were elevated to a special strategic partnership for peace and prosperity in 2022 and progress is being made in wide-ranging fields of defense cooperation and exchanges.

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Then State Defense Minister Oniki visited Mongolia in May 2024 and had a meeting with Mongolia Vice Minister of National Defence Bayarmagnai during which they agreed to further promote Japan-Mongolia defense cooperation and exchanges based on the new "Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges between Japan and Mongolia" which had been signed and revised by Japanese and Mongolian Defense Ministers in February 2024.

On the occasion of his visit to New York to attend the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida had a meeting with President of Mongolia Khürelsükh during which they reaffirmed the increasing importance of the principle of maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law as put forth in their joint statement of 2022. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida stated that he would like to continue to steadily promote concrete cooperation based on the direction of the "Japan-Mongolia Action Plan (2022–2031)."[18] The two leaders welcomed that the in-principle agreement was reached in the negotiations of the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and agreed to aim for its early signing. The agreement was signed in December 2024 and entered into force in January 2025.

(3) Initiatives of Each Service

During an official visit to Mongolia in August 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan had a meeting with Major General Ganbyamba, Chief of the General Staff of the Mongolian Armed Forces and observed the multilateral exercise "Khaan Quest 24." During the meeting, they shared their understanding of the strategic environment and defense policies of both countries, promoted mutual understanding and shared their view of the direction of future Japan-Mongolia defense cooperation.

In May 2024, as part of a capacity building program in the field of civil engineering, the GSDF provided advice and educational guidance to the Mongolian Army Engineering unit on road construction needed for PKO dispatch. In the same month, as part of a capacity building program in the field of HA/DR, the GSDF provided advice and guidance to the Central Military Hospital of the Mongolian Armed Forces in the Mass Casualty Response Exercise (MCRE) in cooperation with related organizations including the National Emergency Management Agency. In July 2024, they invited personnel of the Central Military Hospital of the Mongolian Armed Forces and shared their expertise through MCRE training organized by the JSDF Central Hospital.

In May and September of the same year, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF held a teleconference with then Commander Ganbat, Air Force Command, Mongolian Armed Forces and with Commander Munkh-Ireedui, Air Force Commander, Mongolian Armed Forces in March 2025, during which they shared their understanding of the future direction for both countries by sharing views on joint training and capacity building.

In December 2024, the ASDF invited the Mongolian Air Force to Japan and conducted a capacity building program on air traffic control.

10 Other Asian Countries

In January 2025 as part of a capacity building program on medical care, the GSDF gave lectures and hands-on training to the Kazakh Ground Forces on damage control surgery to improve lifesaving rates at the JSDF Central Hospital.

See Reference 48 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Asian Countries (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond)

11 Pacific Island Countries

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Pacific Island Countries

Pacific island countries share with Japan, a maritime nation, the recognition of the importance of a free, open and sustainable maritime order based on the rule of law and are important countries that have deep historical relationships with Japan. It is also located at a strategic point where the sea lane connecting Japan and Australia and the sea lane from the Indian Ocean through the South China Sea to the Pacific Ocean intersect.

Japan holds Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) with the Pacific Island countries on a regular basis.

The MOD has been promoting defense cooperation and exchanges among defense authorities, including hosting the Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (JPIDD) in March 2024 for the second time since 2021 and presenting the "Concept of Cooperation for Integrated Security Initiatives in the Pacific Islands Region." The NDS calls for Japan, as an

18 This plan is for Japan and Mongolia, which share universal values, to strengthen relations and cooperation with a focus on "people" in all areas, as well as to address global challenges and contribute to the world under the "Joint Statement on the Establishment of a Special Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity between Japan and Mongolia" announced in November 2022.

important partner, to work with allies, like-minded countries and others to cooperate in capacity building and other cooperation, including with organizations other than military forces such as coast guards.

(2) Initiatives of Each Service

The MOD conducted a capacity building program for the Tongan Maritime Force in April 2024 and January-February 2025 for the maintenance of outboard motors. In June 2024, a Ship Rider Cooperation Program on maritime security was held on board the Destroyer JS Izumo for naval officers and other personnel from each country. The program included seminars on international maritime law, observation of various training exercises, and presentations on maritime security by participants from each country in order to promote mutual understanding.

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with Major General Kalouniwai, Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces and they reaffirmed the further deepening of Japan-Fiji defense exchanges through the port call of the frigate JS Noshiro to Suva that year, and exchanged views on issues such as climate change and maritime security as well as WPS initiatives and educational exchanges. He also participated as an observer in the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM) held in conjunction with the CHOD Conference and exchanged views on a wide range of security issues in the region, such as maritime security and climate change impacts.

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS) in August 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF met with Brigadier General Covunisaqa, Commander Land Forces of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces and they agreed to continue cooperation in the medical care field and to reinforce collaboration between their army forces using a multilateral framework. He also met with Lieutenant Colonel Tupou, Component Commander Land Forces of His Majesty's Armed Forces Tonga and they agreed to promote exchanges in fields such as HA/DR.

In August and from September to November 2024, the GSDF conducted a capacity building program for the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) Military Band on the training of military bands by respectively dispatching and inviting units. In November 2024, as part of a capacity building program in the field of HA/DR, the GSDF also conducted practical training on the structural functions of engineering equipment for the PNGDF Engineer Battalion. In addition, in February 2025, the GSDF conducted a capacity building program on the field of medical care training for the Republic of Fiji Military Forces and, in the same month, as part of a capacity building program in the field of unexploded ordnance (UXO) disposal, taught the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) about shell recovery and disposal as well as safety.

In June 2024 while on a visit to Papua New Guinea (PNG) General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF made a courtesy call to Rear Admiral Polewara, Commander of PNG Defence Force and shared views on the security environment surrounding Japan and the Pacific Island countries. He also visited Palau similarly and made a courtesy call to President of Palau Whipps, reaffirming that they will continue to cooperate in various fields in the future, including ASDF aircraft calls and HA/DR.

See 3 (Promotion of Multilateral Security Cooperation), 4 (Proactive and Strategic Initiatives for Capacity Building), 6 (Ensuring Maritime Security), Section 4 (Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries), Reference 49 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Pacific Island Countries (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

12 Indian Ocean Coastal Countries and Middle Eastern Countries

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Indian Ocean Coastal Countries and Middle Eastern Countries

Since peace and stability in Indian Ocean coastal countries and the Middle East are extremely important for the peace and prosperity of the international community, including Japan, from the perspective of stable use of sea lanes as well as energy and economy, the MOD/JSDF has been promoting high-level exchanges and unit-to-unit exchanges to build and strengthen cooperative relations with countries in these regions.

See Reference 50 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Middle Eastern Countries (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

(2) Sri Lanka

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is an important country located at a key point on the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean. In recent years, Japan has strengthened bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges with Sri Lanka.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In May 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani visited Sri Lanka, where he paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Amarasuriya and met with the Deputy Minister of Defence, Major General Aruna Jayasekara. During the courtesy call on the Prime Minister, they agreed that both countries would cooperate more closely as comprehensive partners and strengthen defense cooperation and coordination. In the meeting with the Deputy Defence Minister, they confirmed to deepen cooperation and coordination between their respective land, maritime, and air services to promote the defense

cooperation between the two countries, as well as to commence new multilayered personnel exchanges, such as exchanges of personnel who will lead the future of national defense.

c. Initiatives of Each Service

The DSPE unit called at Colombo in June and November 2024 and conducted goodwill exercises and exchange events with the Sri Lanka Navy.

In February 2025, the ASDF conducted a capacity building program in the field of air rescue for the Sri Lanka Air Force.

(3) Pakistan

Located at the junction of South Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia, Pakistan is an important state for stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and it faces an important sea lane for Japan. Pakistan is a pro-Japanese country that has traditionally had a friendly relationship with Japan. Building on this relationship, the two countries have promoted defense cooperation and exchanges.

(4) Bangladesh

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Bangladesh

Located at the junction of South Asia and Southeast Asia, Bangladesh is an important state for stability in the Indo-Pacific region and it faces an important sea lane for Japan. In 2023, the two countries decided to further strengthen security cooperation by upgrading their relationship to a strategic partnership and signed a memorandum on defense cooperation and exchanges to begin negotiations on the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, etc. to further consolidate security cooperation.

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In 2023, then Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with Sheikh Hasina, then Prime Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. During the meeting, the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the realization of FOIP and agreed to continue to promote mutual visits by naval vessels and aircraft, exchanges between units and goodwill exercises. They also welcomed OSA-based cooperation as well as the start of negotiations of the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and agreed to strengthen dialogue among defense authorities. Furthermore, in November of 2023, the exchange of notes on OSA was signed.

(5) Maldives

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Maldives

The Maldives is an important country for the stability of the Indo-Pacific region, as it is located at a strategic point in the Indian Ocean and faces an important sea lane for Japan, etc. For more than 20 years, the Maldives has served as a transit point for JSDF forces participating in UN PKO and cargo transport for counter-piracy deployment forces, and has also been an important refueling point for the deployment and return of DSPE and DAPE. Japan and the Maldives intend to promote exchanges among defense authorities in the field of maritime security and other areas.

b. Initiatives of Each Service

On the occasion of the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference held in September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with Major General Hilmy, Chief of Defense Force of the Maldives National Defense Force and, on behalf of the JSDF, he expressed gratitude for the acceptance of naval vessels and aircraft to the Maldives (Male) and enormous support by Maldives National Defense Force during counter-piracy operations.

(6) United Arab Emirates (UAE)

Japan and the UAE signed a memorandum of understanding on defense exchanges in 2018. Since then, the two countries have continued to deepen bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges, through high-level exchanges by defense ministers and chiefs of staff, periodical holding of military-to-military dialogues and air-to-air cooperation.

In January 2024, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, Japan's first such agreement with a country of the Middle Eastern region, entered into force.

(7) Israel

Japan and Israel signed the revised Japan-Israel Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges during the Japan-Israel Defense Ministerial Meeting held in 2022, confirming to continue strengthening defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries including defense equipment and technology cooperation and service-to-service cooperation.

(8) Iran

Through opportunities for high-level exchanges among defense ministers and other officials, Japan explained to Iran about the extension of information-gathering activities by JSDF to ensure the safety of Japanese-related vessels in the Middle East region and the two sides agreed to continue communication between the defense authorities.

(9) Egypt

Japan has confirmed the importance of promoting bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges in fields including PKO with Egypt through high-level exchanges, including the visit to Egypt by the State Defense Minister and others.

(10) Oman

Japan and Oman signed a memorandum on defense exchanges in 2019. In addition to high-level exchanges,

Japan and Oman have been continuing navy-to-navy cooperation, including MSDF ships' port calls and training.

In February 2025, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF met with Rear Admiral Al-Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman while he was on a visit to Japan and the two countries confirmed that they will work together on peace and stable use of maritime transportation routes including through counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

(11) Qatar

Japan and Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding on defense exchanges in 2015. In 2023, the relationship between the two countries was elevated to a "strategic partnership" and cooperation in the security field, including consultations between defense authorities, was set to be further deepened.

On the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs Attiyah during which they agreed to further strengthen defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries through closer communication between defense authorities in the future.

In November 2024, the DSPE made a port call in Doha and conducted goodwill training with the Qatari Emiri Navy.

(12) Saudi Arabia

Japan signed a memorandum of understanding on defense exchanges with Saudi Arabia in 2016. In addition to holding a defense ministerial telephone meeting even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, both countries have continued to deepen defense cooperation and exchanges, such as through the visit to Japan of His Royal Highness Prince Khalid, Defense Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2023 for a Defense Ministerial Meeting.

(13) Türkiye

In 2012, Japan and Türkiye signed a Statement of Intent to promote defense cooperation and exchanges.

In November 2024, General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF held a video conference with General Bayraktaroğlu, Commander of the Turkish Land Forces during which they agreed to develop cooperation between their army forces to strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries, which are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Türkiye diplomatic relations. They also met during an official visit of General Morishita to Türkiye in January 2025 and shared views on both countries' understanding of their strategic environment.

General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF attending a guard of Honor ceremony by the Turkish Land Forces (January 2025)

(14) Bahrain

Japan had signed a memorandum of understanding on defense exchanges with Bahrain in 2012 and the two countries had conducted high-level exchanges and other activities. In 2023, the memorandum was revised to further promote defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries.

The DSPE made a port call at Mina Salman in July 2024 and conducted goodwill exercises with the Royal Bahrain Naval Force.

(15) Jordan

Japan signed a memorandum of understanding on defense exchanges with Jordan in 2016 and the two countries continue to hold Politico-Military (PM) dialogues.

In November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani received a courtesy call from Major General Al-Hnaity, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during his visit to Japan, and all the while noting that this is a commemorative year marking the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Jordan diplomatic relations, he expressed his appreciation for the support from Jordan during the JSDF's transportation of Japanese nationals overseas in the Middle East. They agreed to further promote defense cooperation and exchanges between the two countries, which are strategic partners.

In the same month, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan had a meeting with Major General Al-Hnaity during an official visit to Japan, and the two attended the 2024 JSDF Marching Festival, which featured a guest appearance by the Jordanian Armed Forces Band. During their meeting, General Yoshida expressed gratitude for the great support Japan received from Jordan, including accepting the establishment of a JSDF base at the Marka International Airport for the mission of transporting Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic in October 2024.

The Jordanian Armed Forces Band participating in the 2024 JSDF Marching Festival (November 2024)

13 African Countries

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with African Countries

African countries are becoming increasingly important and influential in the international community.

While multilateral frameworks such as the African Union (AU) are making positive efforts toward regional peace and stability, challenges such as serious inequality and poverty and political instability remain. Moreover, in recent years, the influences of complex crises consisting of the pandemic and Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and those of climate change (natural disasters, food crises, etc.) continue. In the face of these global challenges, cooperation with African countries is becoming increasingly important to maintain a free and open international order.

The MOD/JSDF is conducting activities to contribute to peace and stability in Africa, by such means as international peace cooperation activities in the African region and counter-piracy activities off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden based on the JSDF facility in Djibouti, and sending JSDF personnel as instructors to PKO training centers in Africa to support African countries' self-help efforts in peacekeeping operations.

See Chapter 1, Section 1-2-7 (1) (Counter-Piracy Operations), Section 2-2 (Initiatives to Support UN PKO and other activities), Reference 51 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Other Countries (FY2021 and Beyond))

(2) Djibouti

a. Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Djibouti

Djibouti is important as it is the only country where the JSDF has an overseas facility that is used for counter piracy activities. The facility has been used to transport supplies to the unit dispatched to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) as well as to conduct trainings as part of Japan's capacity building programs for Djibouti.

Additionally, the JSDF facility in Djibouti was used as a standby location for transportation of Japanese nationals and others in the Republic of Sudan in April 2023 and Israel in October of the same year.

The National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS) and other documents state that Japan will, while obtaining the understanding of the government of Djibouti, utilize this operation facility on a long-term and stable basis to strengthen operational bases in African countries, etc., including the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas. In December of 2023, Japan concluded an exchange of notes with the government of Djibouti on the mutatis mutandis application of the Japan-Djibouti Status of Forces agreement[19] in order to secure the status of the JSDF in Djibouti responsible for rescuing and transporting Japanese nationals and others overseas as well as for improving readiness for such operations.

Capacity building program for the Djibouti Armed Forces (November 2024)

b. Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In May 2024, then Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister Matsumoto visited Djibouti and attended the Commemorative Events for the 13th Anniversary of the JSDF Installation in Djibouti. He also made a courtesy call to Djibouti Defense Minister Burhan and confirmed that the JSDF and Djibouti Armed Forces will collaborate and promote further cooperation.

From October to December 2024, the GSDF provided the Djibouti Armed Forces with education on civil engineering and other activities as part of a capacity building program for Djibouti.

In December 2024, an exchange of notes regarding the

19 An exchange of notes securing the status of personnel operating in Djibouti for counter-piracy operations, which was concluded with the Djibouti government in 2009

provision of coastal observation radars and other equipment to the Djibouti Navy based on OSA was signed.

(3) Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Other African Countries

In February 2024, Japan and Kenya signed a Statement of Intent on defense cooperation and exchanges.

In November 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan met with General Kainerugaba, Chief of Defence Forces of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) during his visit to Japan, forming the first of such meeting between Japan and an African Country. Both welcomed the continued cooperation in engineering and medical fields provided to the UPDF through the United Nations Triangular Partnership Programme (UNTPP) and the UN PKO Rapid Deployment Support Project.

14 Latin American Countries

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Latin American Countries

Many Latin American countries border the Pacific Ocean and share fundamental values with Japan and the MOD/JSDF is promoting defense cooperation and exchanges with such countries including through unit-to-unit exchanges and the dispatch of uniformed JSDF personnel as instructors.

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

In 2020, Japan and Brazil signed a memorandum on defense cooperation and exchanges. During an official visit to Brazil in May 2024, then Prime Minister Kishida had a meeting with Brazil President Lula and encouraged the promotion of defense cooperation and exchanges including unit-to-unit exchanges. In March 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba had a meeting with President Lula while he was visiting Japan during which they decided to establish the Japan-Brazil Foreign Affairs and Defense Dialogue, a dialogue mechanism on foreign policy and defense exchanges between different foreign affairs and defense authorities, as well as to promote defense personnel exchanges and unit-to-unit exchanges.

With Peru, the MSDF conducted landing exercises and other activities with the Peruvian Navy in July 2024 as part of RIMPAC 2024. On the occasion of the APEC Summit Meeting in November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba also visited Peru and held a Summit Meeting with President of the Republic of Peru Boluarte. They agreed to promote bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges based on the Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges between Japan and Peru which was signed ahead of the meeting.

In October 2024, the MSDF Training Squadron called at Puerto Vallarta and conducted various exchanges with Mexico, including sports exchanges with Mexican naval officers and training on naval vessels.

See Reference 51 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Other Countries (FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

15 China

(1) Significance of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with China

Japan will comprehensively promote a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests" and build a constructive and stable relationship with China through communication at various levels, in which Japan asserts its position and calls for responsible actions while continuing dialogue, including on issues of concern and cooperation on matters of common interests.

The MOD/JSDF will continue to encourage China to play a responsible and constructive role for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, comply with international codes of conduct and improve transparency regarding its strengthening of military capabilities buildup and its defense policies, while also conveying the concerns Japan has in a candid manner. Japan will also make use of the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the Defense Authorities of Japan-China, including the hotline, to avoid unexpected contingencies between the two countries.

(2) Recent Major Achievements in Defense Cooperation and Exchanges

Japan and China have resumed face-to-face dialogue and exchange between the defense authorities of the two countries, including a Japan-China Security Dialogue held in Tokyo in February 2023 for the first time in about four years.

On the occasion of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara had a meeting with Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun during which he stated that precisely because of the numerous security concerns between Japan and China, it was important to have candid discussions between the defense authorities of the two countries and Defense Minister Dong expressed the same view.

Regarding the regional situation, then Defense Minister Kihara conveyed once again his serious concerns about the situation in the East China Sea, including the Senkaku Islands, and the increased military activities by China in Japan's surrounding waters and airspace, including China's collaboration with Russia. Then Defense Minister Kihara also reiterated his serious concerns about the situation in the South China Sea and emphasized the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. He also strongly condemned the repeated launch of ballistic and other missiles by North Korea and expressed concern over the destabilization of the region.

Subsequently, the two ministers reaffirmed that the Hotline between Japanese and Chinese Defense Authorities would operate appropriately and reliably and agreed to continue to promote dialogue and exchange going forward.

In November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba held a summit meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the occasion of the APEC Summit Meeting. The two leaders affirmed that Japan and China would continue to share a broad direction of comprehensively promoting a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests" and building "constructive and stable Japan-China relations." Subsequently, Prime Minister Ishiba expressed Japan's serious concerns about the situation in the East China Sea, including the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and the intensification of Chinese military activities, and called on the Chinese side to address them. He also stated that Japan is closely monitoring relevant developments, including military activities, and stressed that peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait are extremely important for the international community, including Japan.

On the occasion of the ADMM-Plus in November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani had a meeting with Chinese Defense Minister Dong, and while describing the broad direction of Japan-China relations as was reaffirmed at the Japan-China Summit Meeting, he conveyed Japan's serious concern about the increasing military activities of China in various forms, and pointed out that it is extremely important for Japanese and Chinese defense authorities to hold candid discussions and communicate with each other.

Regarding the regional situation, Defense Minister Nakatani once again lodged severe protests from Japan against the Chinese military aircraft's intrusion of Japanese territorial airspace in August 2024, and, based on the explanation from China regarding the incident, strongly urged the prevention of recurrence so that such an incident would never happen again. He also strongly condemned the repeated launch of ballistic missiles by North Korea and expressed concern over the progress of Russia-North Korea military cooperation.

Subsequently, the two ministers reaffirmed that the Hotline between Japanese and Chinese Defense Authorities would operate appropriately and reliably and agreed on the importance of dialogue and exchanges among their defense authorities, including the resumption of unit-to-unit exchanges which have not taken place since 2019.

(3) Initiatives of Each Service

In 2023, the Japan-China Field Officer Exchange Program implemented by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation resumed face-to-face exchanges for the first time in four years after its discontinuance due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2024, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s field officer-level delegation visited Japan to make a courtesy call to then Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs Serizawa and visit JSDF facilities. Moreover, while visiting China from November to December 2024, the JSDF field officer-level delegation visited the PLA Academy of Military Sciences to exchange views on Japan-China relations as well as issues in the security field between the two countries and visited Chinese military facilities, etc.

In January 2025, based on the outcome of the aforementioned Japan-China Defense Ministerial Meeting, the MOD accepted the visit of the PLA Eastern Theater Command delegation to Japan as the first resumption of unit-to-unit exchanges in about five years. During their visit, the Japanese side reiterated its serious concerns over China's increased military activities in Japan's surrounding waters and airspace, and both sides confirmed the importance of holding candid discussions, including at the unit level, regarding their various concerns.

(4) Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the Defense Authorities of Japan and China

Utilization of the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism began in June 2018. The "Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the Defense Authorities of Japan and China" has been developed (1) to promote mutual understanding and confidence between Japan and China and to enhance bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges; (2) to avoid unexpected collisions; and (3) to prevent unforeseen circumstances in the sea and air from developing into military clashes or political or diplomatic issues. The mechanism's main components include (1) annual and expert meetings between the two countries' defense authorities; (2) a hotline between Japanese and Chinese defense authorities; and (3) on scene communication measures between vessels and aircraft of the JSDF and the People's Liberation Army.

See Chapter 1, Section 1-2-2 (3) (Violations of Japanese Territorial Airspace by Chinese and Russian Aircraft), Reference 52 (Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with China (FY2021 and Beyond))

16 Russia

Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began in February 2022 clearly undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, is a serious violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations which forbids the use of force and is an absolutely unacceptable act. Such unilateral changes to the status quo by force shake the foundations of the international order and under this position, the Government of Japan condemns Russia to the utmost degree.

The Government of Japan handles the relationship with Russia appropriately while emphasizing the solidarity of the G7 and taking the Ukrainian situation into account. At the same time, it is also necessary to maintain the minimum essential contacts with Russia, as it is one of Japan's neighbors, in order to avoid unforeseen circumstances or unnecessary conflicts.

3 Promotion of Multilateral Security Cooperation

1 Multilateral Security Framework and Dialogue Initiatives

Multilateral framework initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region, especially the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the ASEAN Regional Forum[20] (ARF), have made steady progress and served as an important foundation for dialogue and cooperation and exchanges on the security of the Indo-Pacific region. Japan places importance on such multilateral frameworks and is contributing to the strengthening of cooperation and mutual confidence with countries in the region.

See Reference 54 (Record of Major Multilateral Security Dialogues (Indo-Pacific Region, FY2021 and Beyond)), Reference 55 (Multilateral Security Dialogues Organized by the Ministry of Defense), Reference 56 (Other Multilateral Security Dialogues)

(1) Security Dialogue in the ASEAN Region

a. Initiatives under the ADMM-Plus

ASEAN holds the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), a ministerial level meeting among defense authorities in the ASEAN region and the ADMM-Plus, which includes eight other countries outside of ASEAN, including Japan[21] (so-called "Plus Countries").

The ADMM-Plus is an invaluable framework that brings together defense ministers from all ASEAN member states and Plus Countries to discuss security issues and defense cooperation and exchanges in the region and the international community. The MOD/JSDF has been actively participating in this framework.

In November 2024, Defense Minister Nakatani attended the 11th ADMM-Plus held in Laos. During the meeting, he strongly condemned unilateral attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force or coercion in the East and South China Sea, North Korea's ballistic missile launches and Russia's aggression against Ukraine. He also pointed to the cooperation for peaceful resolution of Myanmar's situation and the emergence of non-traditional international security issues such as cyberattacks, disinformation and the risks of climate change to security. He also stressed the importance of the principles and framework of ASEAN and emphasized that Japan will support the various initiatives of the ADMM-Plus and that specific initiatives are progressing under the Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE) presented by Japan in 2023. He then announced that Indonesia and Japan would co-host the Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference to implement the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)" from a defense perspective in December 2024 to enhance connectivity across regions including between ASEAN, Japan and the Pacific Island countries to effectively address common issues. During the meeting, the ADMM-Plus adopted the Joint Statement on Resilience to Climate-related and other Natural Disasters, including through Best Practices Exchange and Capacity-Building.

Under the ministerial level ADMM-Plus, there are (1) the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM)-Plus, (2) the ADSOM-Plus Working Group (ADSOM-Plus WG), and (3) the Experts' Working Groups (EWGs).[22] Japan is co-chairing the EWG on Maritime Security with the Philippines in the fifth cycle (2024 to 2027).

See Fig. III-3-1-4 (Organizational Chart and Overview of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus))

b. The ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI)

The ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI) is a permanent hotline to facilitate communication between the defense ministers of ASEAN countries, including during emergencies. Use of the hotline has been extended to Plus Countries as well.

In 2023, Japan became the first among the Plus Countries to operationalize the ADI. Because the ADI is useful for building confidence and managing crises in the region, the MOD/JSDF intends to utilize the ADI to promote closer communication with ASEAN and contribute more actively to peace and stability in the region with all parties.

c. ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

Regarding the ARF, in which mainly diplomatic authorities are engaged, active efforts[23] have been made in recent years

20 A forum aimed at improving the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region through dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues, which has been held since 1994. The ARF currently comprises 25 countries, one area and one organization (EU) as members and holds various inter-governmental meetings that are attended by both foreign affairs and defense officials to exchange opinions on the regional affairs and the security area. The 25 countries and one area are comprised of the 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam m and Cambodia (since 1995); and Myanmar (since 1996)) as well as Japan, Australia, Canada, China and India (since 1996); New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the ROK, Russia, the United States. and Mongolia (since 1998); North Korea (since 2000); Pakistan (since 2004); Timor-Leste (since 2005); Bangladesh (since 2006); and Sri Lanka (since 2007).

21 The ADMM-Plus was founded in October 2010. Other than Japan, Australia, China, India, New Zealand, the ROK, Russia, and the United States participate in the Meeting as Dialogue Partners.

22 Japan served the co-chair of the EWG on Military Medicine in the first cycle (2011 to 2013), co-chair of the EWG on HA/DR in the second cycle (2014 to 2016), actively participated in each EWG in the third cycle (2017 to 2019) and served the co-chair of the EWG on PKO with Viet Nam in the fourth cycle (2021 to 2024). Japan is co-chairing the EWG on Maritime Security with the Philippines in the fifth cycle (2024 to 2027).

23 In addition to the Ministers' meeting at the foreign minister level, the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISM) are held each year, as well as meetings of the Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBM/PD) and the ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC). Moreover, since the Ministers' meeting in 2002, the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogues (DOD) has been held ahead of the main meeting.

Fig. III-3-1-4 Organizational Chart and Overview of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)

ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)

The ASEAN-hosted official meeting of the defense ministers in the Indo-Pacific region that includes countries outside the ASEAN region

* Participating countries: **10 ASEAN member states + 8 countries (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, Russia, and the U.S.)**
Timor-Leste was granted in-principle approval for ASEAN membership in 2022 and has been participating as an observer in the ADMM-Plus since November 2023.

The Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) established under the framework of the ADMM-Plus take practical actions, such as joint exercises, to address security issues in the Indo-Pacific region, which is a unique feature of the ADMM-Plus.

ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)
...Defense Minister-level meeting; Held every year

The 11th ADMM-Plus (November 2024)

ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM-Plus)
...Vice-Minister or Director-General-level meeting; Held every year

Experts' Working Groups (EWGs)
were established under
the ADSOM-Plus
and the ADSOM-Plus WG.

ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Plus Working Group (ADSOM-Plus WG)
...Director-level meeting; Held every year

Experts' Working Groups (EWGs)

EWGs are established in seven fields. Each EWG is co-chaired by one of the 10 ASEAN member states and one of the 8 Plus Countries for a term of three years.

* Seven fields: **(i) counter-terrorism, (ii) HA/DR, (iii) maritime security, (iv) military medicine, (v) PKO, (vi) humanitarian mine action, and (vii) cybersecurity**

EWGs respectively take practical actions such as sharing information, holding workshops and seminars, conducting joint exercise, and submitting recommendations and reports concerning respective areas. Since 2023, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom, which are not members of the ADMM-Plus, have been permitted to participate in certain activities of the Expert Working Groups (EWGs) as observer countries.
Japan, together with the Philippines, is serving as co-chair of the 5th Cycle of the Maritime Security Expert Working Group for the 2024–2027 term.

for specific initiatives in non-traditional security areas such as disaster relief, maritime security, and peacekeeping and peace building. The MOD/JSDF has been making active contributions to this forum.

d. Multilateral Security Dialogues Hosted by the MOD/JSDF.

(a) ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting

The MOD/JSDF has been attending the ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting since 2014 to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations with ASEAN countries.

In 2023, then Defense Minister Kihara participated in the 8th ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting in an online

format (then State Defense Minister Miyazawa participated on-site). During the Meeting, he affirmed that AOIP and FOIP share essential principles such as openness, transparency, and a rules-based framework, and presented the Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE).

(b) Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Meetings

Since 2009, the MOD has hosted the Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Forum to strengthen bilateral and multilateral ties by establishing personal connections on a Vice-Ministerial level between ASEAN countries and Japan. During the 14th meeting[24] held in Fukuoka in February 2025, the Vice Minister-level defense authorities of each country revisited specific defense cooperation achievements undertaken under "JASMINE" and held candid discussions toward implementing new initiatives in the future.

(c) Guidelines for Japan-ASEAN Security Cooperation

(1) Vientiane Vision 2.0

During the ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting in 2016, Japan presented the "Vientiane Vision," the guideline for Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation, and in 2019, Japan updated and presented "Vientiane Vision 2.0."

The "Vientiane Vision 2.0" presents an overall picture of the priority areas of the future direction of ASEAN-wide defense cooperation in a transparent manner. It retains the basic framework of the initial Vision, including its objectives, direction and means of cooperation but introduces three new principles for ASEAN-Japan defense cooperation: (i) heart-to-heart cooperation, (ii) tailored and lasting cooperation and (iii) equal and open cooperation. It also introduces contribution to ASEAN's centrality, unity and resiliency as well as the perspective of pursuing synergies between AOIP and FOIP, as new pillars.

(2) JASMINE

In 2023, at the 8th ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting, then Defense Minister Kihara newly presented the "JASMINE" to promote Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation to a new level.

Taking the current security environment into account and in line with the spirit of the "Vientiane Vision 2.0," JASMINE proposed specific defense cooperation that Japan would like to pursue together with ASEAN to realize the shared vision of the future for the Indo-Pacific region.[25] Its four pillars are: (1) Japan-ASEAN to carry out efforts to create a security environment that does not allow any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, (2) to continue and expand the Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation, (3) to pursue further friendship and opportunities between Japan and ASEAN defense officials and (4) to support defense cooperation between ASEAN, Japan, and the Pacific Island countries.

The specific initiatives proposed and announced include: the first seminar between Japan and ASEAN on the rule of law and security in the space domain; further support for confidence building and improvement of situational awareness in both maritime and air domains; seeking synergies between the Official Security Assistance (OSA) and existing projects such as the transfer of defense equipment and technology as well as capacity building in both hardware and software; cooperation between ASEAN, Japan and Pacific Island countries through the Ship Rider Cooperation Program, and others, and the launch of a new Japan-ASEAN Capacity Building programs on WPS.

(3) Specific Initiatives for Japan-ASEAN Security Cooperation

Japan has accumulated practical cooperation through the Japan-ASEAN Invitation Program on HA/DR, the seminar on international maritime law, the Japan-ASEAN Ship Rider Cooperation Program, the Professional Airmanship Program (PAP),[26] the Japan-ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Program and the Japan-ASEAN WPS Cooperation Program.

In June 2024 a Japan-ASEAN and Timor-Leste Ship Rider Cooperation Program[27] was held aboard the Destroyer JS Izumo with Navy officers and personnel from ASEAN member states. In July 2024, the Japan-ASEAN Cyber International Law Seminar[28] was held in conjunction with the Japan-ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Program in Viet Nam. The Professional Airmanship Program (PAP) was also held in the same month, and the Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference, which was co-chaired with the Ministry of Defense of Indonesia, was held in December 2024, contributing to mutual understanding among the ADMM-Plus participating countries, Timor-Leste, the Pacific Island countries and others and to enhancing connectivity in the region.

See Reference 57 (Vientiane Vision 2.0), Reference 58 (Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE))

(2) Security Dialogues in the Pacific Islands Region

a. South Pacific Defense Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM)

SPDMM is an important framework for the security of the Pacific Islands Region, where defense ministers from seven

24 In addition to the ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat, Timor-Leste, which is admitted in-principle to be the member of ASEAN, participated as observers.
25 Japan and ASEAN have confirmed their shared view to promote a rules-based Indo-Pacific region that is free and open.
26 Exchange program inviting ASEAN air force officers and ASEAN secretariat officers to some seminar, for the promotion of mutual understanding, confidence building, and contribution to the consolidation of the rule of law in the region.
27 This Program was held concurrently with "2nd Japan-Pacific Island Countries Ship Rider Cooperation Program."
28 JSDF personnel serve as instructors in capacity building programs for ASEAN countries' cybersecurity personnel with the aim of enabling them to respond more appropriately to cyberspace incidents.

countries,[29] including three Pacific Island countries (Tonga, Papua New Guinea and Fiji) that have their own militaries and others gather, and Japan has been attending this meeting as an observer since 2022.

b. Multilateral Security Dialogues Hosted by the MOD/JSDF, etc.

(a) Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (JPIDD)

Since 2021, the MOD has been hosting the JPIDD and inviting both Pacific Island countries and regional partner countries to further promote defense and security cooperation and strengthen cooperation among Japan, Pacific Island countries and partner countries in addressing regional security challenges. Although the first meeting in 2021 was held online due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, in March 2024, then Defense Minister Kihara held the second meeting in Tokyo, the first face-to-face meeting.

(b) Concept of Cooperation for Integrated Security Initiatives in the Pacific Islands Region

During the 2nd JPIDD in 2024, the "5 Point Cooperation Concept" was presented, combining three principles and two coordination points to be emphasized to further promote defense and security cooperation in the Pacific Islands region. The three proposed principles are (1) Respecting Centrality, Unity, and Ownership of Pacific Island Countries, (2) Strengthening Equal, Mutually Beneficial and Supportive Relationships and (3) Supporting Collaboration between the Pacific Island Countries, Japan, and ASEAN, and the two proposed coordination points are (1) Strengthening Coordination between JPIDD and SPDMM and (2) Strengthening Coordination between JPIDD and PALM. The MOD/JSDF is set to further promote defense and security cooperation based on this Cooperation Concept.

(3) Others

a. International Conferences Hosted by Private Organizations and Others

International conferences on security include not only intergovernmental conferences but also meetings organized by private organizations in which various people, such as government officials, scholars and journalists, participate to discuss medium- to long- term security issues.

Major international conferences include the IISS Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) and IISS Regional Security Summit[30] (Manama Dialogue) as well as the Munich Security Conference,[31] one of the most prestigious meetings on security in Europe and the United States. By actively participating in these conferences, Japan's Defense Minister and MOD officials build trust and share understanding with high-level officials of various countries and send out positive messages through meetings with defense ministers and representatives from other countries and delivering speeches at plenary sessions.

In May 2025, Defense Minister Nakatani attended the 22nd Shangri-La Dialogue and gave a speech. In the speech, as the foundations of peace and prosperity in regional and international communities are being significantly shaken, he emphasized the importance for defense authorities of each country to reaffirm the following: (1) "a shared spirit-a collective commitment to restoring the rules-based international order, strengthening accountability, and advancing the international public good though cooperation, openness, inclusivity, and transparency," and (2) "a shared determination among defense authorities sharing common values and interests to take a broad and panoramic view of the Indo-Pacific, to generate synergy through enhanced cooperation and collaboration, and to create new values and benefits for the entire region." Defense Minister Nakatani proposed calling this direction the spirit of OCEAN-One Cooperative Effort Among Nations: Perspective for the Indo-Pacific.

See Reference 81 (22nd Shangri-La Dialogue Speech by Defense Minister Nakatani)

b. Initiatives of Each Service

In September 2024, General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan attended the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) Conference, hosted by the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, to share awareness on the situation and security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and to state that Japan will further strengthen multilateral cooperation for regional peace and stability.

29 In addition to the Pacific Island countries with military forces, Australia, Chile, New Zealand and France are member countries, with Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom participated as observers.

30 An international conference hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), where foreign and defense authorities and other stakeholders mainly from Middle Eastern countries exchange views on security issues. It is held annually in Manama, Bahrain.

31 This is one of the most prestigious international security meetings organized by private bodies in Europe and the United States and has been held annually (usually in February) since 1962. Usual participants in the meeting include officials at the ministerial level from major European countries as well as top leaders, ministers and lawmakers from countries in the world and key executives of international organizations.

General Yoshida, the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan, participated in discussion at the Indo-Pacific CHOD Conference (September 2024)

General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF, participated in the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) 2024 held in Hawaii in May 2024; the Indo-Pacific Army Management Seminar (IPAMS) held in Fiji in August of the same year; and the Chief of Army Staff Symposium (CAS), hosted by the Australian Army, in Australia in September of the same year. Furthermore, in December 2024, the GSDF hosted the Land Forces Summit (LFS) in Japan and agreed to construct a multilayered network between the army forces of allies and like-minded countries and to contribute to the peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region to realize FOIP.

General Morishita, the Chief of Staff, GSDF participating in a discussion at the Land Force Pacific Symposium and Exposition (LANPAC) 2024 (May 2024)

In May 2024, Admiral Sakai, then Chief of Staff, MSDF attended for the first time the U.K. Royal Navy's First Sea Lord's Sea Power Conference held in London in the United Kingdom. He gave a speech themed on the security environment in the 2040s. In October 2024, Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF participated in the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium (T-RSS) held in Italy and gave a speech on underwater security, emphasizing the significance of FOIP.

Admiral Saito, the Chief of Staff, MSDF attending the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium (T-RSS) (October 2024)

General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF attended the Space Chiefs Forum and the CSpO (Combined Space Operations) initiative[32] Principals' Board held in the U.S. in April 2024, and together with participants from other countries, he fostered mutual understanding to promote responsible space utilization. In October 2024, General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF organized the Air Force Forum in Japan (AFFJ) with the participation of 20 delegates from 19 countries[33] as part of the 70th anniversary celebration of the establishment of the ASDF. During the AFFJ, the Indo-Pacific Air chiefs Conference in Tokyo (InPACT), a multilateral consultation, was held along various meetings to firmly promote defense cooperation and exchanges with allies, like-minded countries, etc.

General Uchikura, the Chief of Staff, ASDF delivering a speech to Chiefs of Staff from various countries' Air Forces at the AFFJ (October 2024)

32 A multilateral framework comprising the United States and other like-minded countries that conduct various discussions on policy, operational, regime and legal issues necessary for space security. Launched in 2014 by the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, it now includes New Zealand, Germany, France, Japan, Italy, and Norway, for a total of 10 countries.

33 Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Finland, India, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, Viet Nam, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States

See Chapter 1, Section 2-4-1 (6) (Strengthening Cooperation with Our Ally, Like-Minded Countries, and Others)

2 Promoting Practical Multilateral Security Cooperation Initiatives

(1) Pacific Partnership

The Pacific Partnership[34] (PP) is an initiative in which naval vessels, primarily those from the U.S. Navy, visit countries in the Asia-Pacific region to provide medical care, conduct facility repair activities and engage in cultural exchange to strengthen cooperation between countries participating in the initiative and facilitate international peace cooperation activities through cooperation with governments, military forces, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in those countries.

In FY2024, medical activities, facility repair activities, musical performances, and other exchanges were conducted in Vanuatu and Micronesia to strengthen collaboration with participating countries.

(2) Multilateral Exercises

The multilateral relationships have recently shifted from the phase for building trust to the phase for developing more concrete and practical cooperative relationships. Various multilateral training and exercises have been actively conducted as important initiatives to effectively help this shift.

In particular, in the Indo-Pacific region, the MOD/JSDF has actively participated in multilateral training and exercises in non-traditional security fields, such as HA/DR and Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO). It is important to participate in such multilateral exercises not only to improve the skills level of the JSDF, but also to create a cooperative platform with relevant countries. In light of this perspective, the MOD/JSDF intends to continue to engage in such training.

Through the Indo-Pacific Deployment (IPD), the MSDF has been promoting initiatives to realize FOIP, including joint training with coastal states in the region as well as allies and like-minded countries, etc., port calls to important ports and support for capacity building in cooperation with other ministries and agencies as well as like-minded countries, etc. The IPD is highly significant as it embodies Japan's will to continuously engage in the Indo-Pacific region and Japan's positive pacifism.

See Section 4-2-2 (1) (FY2024 Indo-Pacific Deployment "IPD24"), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

Medical activities in Pacific Partnership 2024 (September 2024)

34 The U.S. forces began the Partnership in 2006 and the JSDF has been participating in it annually since 2007.

VOICE

Measures Through The Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024 (IPD24)

YOKOTA Kazushi, Rear Admiral, Maizuru, Commander, Escort Flotilla 3

The Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) is conducting the Indo-Pacific Deployment (IPD) to contribute to the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). In IPD24, we conducted a variety of multilateral and bilateral training exercises and joint training with the Japan Coast Guard. In particular, in the multilateral joint exer-cise organized by the U.S. Navy (RIMPAC), held in the largest scale in history, not only the MSDF but also the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) and Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) participated in humanitarian aid and disaster relief exercises and a variety of tactical events, demonstrating leadership in the international community by the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Self-Defense Forces (JSDF). Furthermore, in the multilateral exercise organized by the Royal Australian Navy (KAKADU), the Japan-U.S.-India-Australia joint naval exercise (MALABAR), and the Japan-U.S.-Australia-Republic of Korea-Canada joint naval exercise (Pacific Vanguard), allies and like-minded countries participated in highend tactical training, contributing to further enhancing interoperability to maintain stable and free access to the oceans, which are international public goods.

Explaining the overview of HADR to senior commanders at RIMPAC (this author is in the middle)

Commanders from MALABAR participating countries with this author (third from the left in the front row)

4 Proactive and Strategic Initiatives for Capacity Building

1 Significance of Capacity Building

Capacity building is an initiative to actively create regional stability and enhance the global security environment by improving the capabilities of recipient countries through continuous human resource development, technical support, etc. on a steady-state basis in the fields related to security and defense.

By implementing these programs with other countries, in particular those in the Indo-Pacific region, the MOD/JSDF will encourage the partner countries' forces, etc., to adequately fulfill their roles in maintaining international peace and regional stability to create a desirable security environment for Japan.

Such activities also have the effects of (1) strengthening bilateral relationships with partner countries, (2) enhancing relationships with countries such as the United States and Australia by providing capacity building through cooperation with them and (3) improving trust in the MOD/JSDF and Japan as a whole by raising awareness at home and abroad of Japan's proactive and independent efforts to realize regional peace and stability.

In doing so, the MOD/JSDF will make effective use of the knowledge that the JSDF has accumulated to date and will work efficiently to maximize effectiveness through a combination of various means, while fully coordinating with diplomatic policies.

2 Specific Activities

The MOD/JSDF has provided capacity building in such areas as HA/DR, PKO, military medicine, air rescue and vessel maintenance to 19 countries, one organization and one region mainly in the Indo-Pacific region.

The MOD/JSDF's capacity building are aimed at improving the capabilities of partner countries in a concrete and steady manner over a certain period of time. Programs are carried out by dispatching MOD/JSDF officials to the partner country, by inviting the partner country's officials to Japan, or a combination of both.

With the dispatch method, JSDF officials with technical knowledge are dispatched to the partner country to help said country's forces and their related organizations improve their capacity through seminars, lectures and technical guidance. With the invitation method, the partner country's officials are invited to the MOD/JSDF's units and organizations to improve their capacity and to share knowledge of current

human resources development efforts by the MOD/JSDF through seminars, lectures, practical exercises and training programs. In addition, online lectures and practical training have been introduced as a new means of capacity building from 2021, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In FY2024, a total of 29 dispatch and invitational programs were conducted for 14 countries, one organization and one region.

Specifically, as part of the dispatch programs, the MOD/JSDF conducted knowledge sharing, practical skill-building support, and other programs in the following fields: Outboard Motor Maintenance for Tonga, PKO (civil engineering) and HA/DR (medical care) for Mongolia, underwater unexploded ordnance clearance for Viet Nam, Military band training for Papua New Guinea, HA/DR for the Philippines, Engineering for Timor-Leste, Engineering for Djibouti, PKO (civil engineering) for Cambodia, unexploded ordnance disposal for the Solomon Islands, and Air rescue for Sri Lanka, Military medicine for Fiji, Japanese language education support for Indonesia.

The implemented invitational programs included knowledge sharing, practical skill-building support and practical capacity-building support in the following fields: Japanese language education support and HA/DR for Indonesia; HA/DR (medical care) and air traffic control for Mongolia; military band training and HA/DR (engineering equipment maintenance) for Papua New Guinea; aviation medicine and vessel maintenance for the Philippines; HA/DR for Malaysia; air rescue for Viet Nam; medical care for Kazakhstan; outboard motor maintenance for Tonga; and cybersecurity for ASEAN countries.

See Fig. III-3-1-5 (Recent Capacity Building Initiatives (from April 2024 to March 2025))

3 Collaboration with Related Countries

The MOD/JSDF conducts capacity building for third-party countries in collaboration with the United States, Australia and other countries.

Fig. III-3-1-5 Recent Capacity Building Initiatives (from April 2024 to March 2025)

Capacity Building

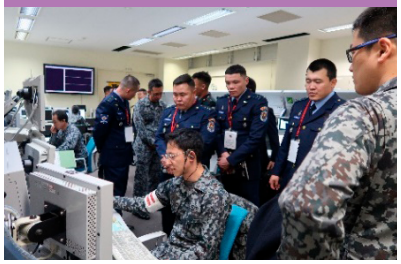
Capacity building … Project aiming to improve the capabilities of partner countries in a concrete and steady manner over a certain period of time through the dispatch of JSDF personnel, and invitation of personnel from recipient countries, etc.
Dispatch … Dispatch JSDF personnel or others with expert knowledge to partner countries to conduct seminars, exercises and lectures, and provide technical guidance, etc., with the aim of improving the capabilities of military forces and related knowledge of recipient countries.
Invitation … Invite officials of partner countries to the MOD, JSDF units or other related organization to enhance the capacity of partner countries' officials through training such as seminars, exercises, lectures, education drills, etc., while sharing knowledge about MOD and JSDF personnel development initiatives.

Some examples of countries and fields in which capacity building has been provided (April 2024-March 2025)

Philippines

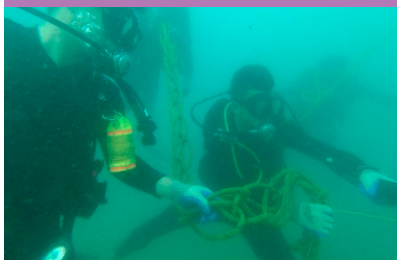
HA/DR
Training on the maintenance of life-saving equipment

Mongolia



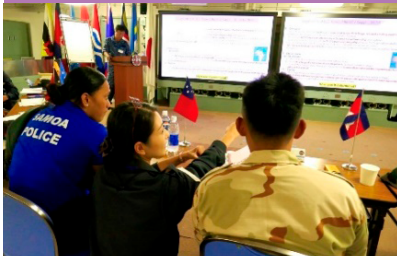
Air Traffic Control
Training on approach and landing control

Viet Nam



Underwater explosive ordnance disposal
Underwater search in progress

ASEAN and Timor-Leste



Onboard cooperation program
International law seminar

Papua New Guinea

Military band training
Performing technique (ensemble) lesson

Kazakhstan

Health and medical affairs
Trauma surgery training

Specific quadrilateral cooperation by Japan, the United States, Australia and New Zealand includes participation by the JSDF, U.S. Armed Forces and others in the "Hari'i Hamutuk" capacity building exercise for Timor-Leste organized by Australian Defence Forces (ADF), during which technical guidance on engineering and heavy equipment maintenance was provided to logistic support units of the Timor-Leste Defence Forces.

In May 2024, the MSDF IPD 24 Unit, in collaboration with the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Mobile Cooperation Team (MCT),[35] conducted a goodwill exercise with the Republic of Marshall Islands Sea Patrol, helping to strengthen the country's maritime law enforcement capabilities.

As such, it is important for Japan to effectively and efficiently work on capacity building by closely coordinating with and mutually complementing concerned countries.

5 Initiatives to Promote Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

1 What is Women, Peace and Security (WPS)?

Women, Peace and Security (WPS), is a concept that encapsulates the idea that peace is more sustainable when women take the lead and actively participate in all levels of conflict prevention, reconstruction, and peacebuilding, as well as disaster prevention, response and reconstruction, while recognizing the importance of protection and relief for women and girls, and those in need, as they are more vulnerable during conflicts and disasters.

In the 1990s, the large-scale of sexual violence in conflict as seen in former Yugoslavia, the civil war in Rwanda, and other conflicts drew worldwide attention. Furthermore, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Increasing the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protecting women living in situations of armed or other conflicts or under foreign occupation was stipulated as one of the key strategic objectives in the document. In addition, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court adopted in 1998 stipulated sexual violence in conflict as a war crime.

Against this international backdrop, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in 2000. This was the first Security Council Resolution focusing on the issues surrounding women in conflict. The resolution requires **gender** mainstreaming[36] in all efforts of its four pillars: Participation, Prevention, Protection, and Relief and Recovery. Since then, nine Security Council Resolutions related to WPS have been successively adopted, complementing UNSCR 1325. The efforts described in these ten resolutions are collectively referred to as the "WPS agenda."

In recent years, given increasing uncertainty in the international situation, the concept of WPS has increased in significance.

2 Japan's Initiatives

In 2015, Japan adopted its first National Action Plan to implement the Security Council Resolutions on WPS. The action plan has been since revised, and the WPS initiatives are currently progressing in line with the third National Action Plan, which was adopted in 2023.

A unique feature of Japan's National Action Plan, is that it expands its scope to not only conflicts but also disasters. It is based on the experiences that Japan has overcome numerous large-scale natural disasters, such as the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, and has recognized the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into all stages of disaster prevention, disaster response, climate change, and reconstruction. The action plan prescribes not only international but also domestic initiatives and states that the ministries and agencies of Japan, including the MOD, will promote the appointment and participation of women in decision-making related to diplomacy, security, disaster prevention, and disaster response, and promote the development and implementation of policies and measures with gender perspectives.[37]

KEY WORD "Gender"

Gender refers to "the socially and culturally constructed differences that society attributes to sexes." While the term of "sex" defines differences of biological and physiological characteristics, gender defines socially and culturally constructed characteristics of women and men including stereotypes, roles and norms. While the term "sex" defines differences in biological and physiological characteristics acquired at birth, the term "gender" defines differences in socially constructed characteristics of the image of "a man" and of "a woman" commonly found in society and customs. These "socially and culturally constructed differences that society attributes to sexes" (genders) do not in themselves contain positive or negative values and are used internationally.

35 A dedicated division formed in the JCG in 2017 to provide capacity building to foreign coastguard agencies. Initially, the Team had seven members and mainly supported Japan's sea lane coastal states. As of April 2024, the Team has 18 members and is expanding its support to the Indo-Pacific region, including Pacific Island countries.

36 Incorporating gender perspectives into all policies, measures and projects to achieve gender equality in all areas.

37 Focusing on differences arising from gender-based status and power relations to examine how such differences affect the formation of men's and women's immediate needs and long-term interests

3 MOD/JSDF and WPS

(1) Rationales and Significance of Promoting WPS

Promoting WPS contributes to the protection of life, person, etc., of Japanese nationals and fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities as well as international peace and stability. With this standpoint, the MOD/JSDF must promote WPS.

First, specifically with regards to the protection of life, person, etc., of Japanese nationals, there are increased opportunities in recent years to conduct operations such as the transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, as well as tailored livelihood support for populations affected by disasters. In this context, the MOD/JSDF will directly protect the life, person, etc., of Japanese nationals by systematically responding to situations by incorporating gender perspectives based on the needs of women and girls who compose about half of the population and who are put in a particularly vulnerable position in conflicts and such situations.

Second, regarding the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, the WPS Agenda includes the promotion of the participation of women in decision-making processes. This includes in the field of security, and is closely related to the measures that MOD has been taking to promote the active engagement of female personnel. Promoting WPS will produce an environment where diverse individuals, including women, can demonstrate their abilities. Diversity is also important for improving operational efficiency. Accordingly, promoting WPS is essential for reinforcing defense capabilities as it will lead to the development of human resources and organizational capacity building in the MOD.

Third, with regards to contributing to international peace and stability, the "New Plan for a FOIP" was announced by then Prime Minister Kishida in 2023. Based on the idea that "the principles for peace and rules for prosperity are the backbone of FOIP," the plan clearly states the need for action from a WPS perspective in order to create an international environment where the weak are not beaten by force. WPS perspectives are essential to ensure more effective implementation of JSDF's overseas activities, including PKO and international disaster relief activities. As a responsible member of the international community, the MOD will also promote WPS and contribute to peace and stability, while cooperating with defense authorities of other countries pursuing respect for fundamental human rights and ensuring the rule of law.

(2) Strengthening the WPS Promotion Structure in the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF has been promoting a number of initiatives to support female personnel actively engage in activities in Japan and abroad, and also been conducting activities incorporating gender perspectives as a main actor in peacekeeping operations and large-scale disaster response. Meanwhile, there was an overall challenge of failing to make each and every personnel fully aware of WPS and appreciate the significance of reflecting gender perspectives in policy planning and development.

Given this challenge, the HQ for WPS Promotion in MOD was established in 2023, headed by the Parliamentary Vice-Defense Minister, to raise awareness among all JSDF personnel and strengthen international cooperation efforts. In addition, Director for International Cooperation on WPS was newly appointed.

The HQ for WPS Promotion in MOD has held four meetings up to now and the MOD WPS Promotion Plan was adopted for the first time during the third meeting held in April 2024. This Promotion Plan sets forth items to be implemented by FY2028 by the MOD and is based on the National Action Plan for WPS.

It provides the following four pillars: (1) Change of Mindset of all MOD personnel, (2) Structural development for the promotion of WPS, (3) International cooperation with other countries and organizations and (4) Reflection of Gender Perspective in JSDF Activities. In order to facilitate the Promotion Plan from 2024 onward, Gender Advisors, who are responsible for advising and assisting senior leadership who play a leading role in WPS, have been assigned to the MOD's Internal Bureau and Staff Offices. Additionally, in April 2025, the Office of International Cooperation on WPS was established in the MOD's Internal Bureau and the WPS Promotion Office was established in the Ground Staff Office. In addition, at the fourth meeting of the HQ for WPS Promotion held in March 2025, the HQ evaluated the initiatives made from April 2024, when the Promotion Plan was formulated, to December 2024.

Based on the MOD WPS Promotion Plan and its evaluation, the MOD will strongly promote WPS as a whole of Ministry effort, and contribute to protecting Japanese nationals and international peace and stability by conducting activities incorporating gender perspectives.

The first Japan-ASEAN WPS Cooperation Project (October 2024)

(3) Recent Major Initiatives and Activities on WPS

In the fourth cycle (2021-2024) of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), Japan co-

chaired the EWG with Viet Nam and led on the promotion of WPS initiatives. As the co-chair, Japan set the promotion of WPS as one of the main objectives of the EWG activities, and established a WPS platform.[38] Japan also invited experts from the U.N. to participate, including in four WPS seminars, to contribute to raising awareness on WPS in each country. Moreover, Japan is co-chairing the fifth cycle (2024–2027) of the ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security with the Philippines, and continues to advance its activities setting WPS promotion as one of its main objectives.

Since 2023, WPS elements have been newly incorporated into the ongoing capacity building framework such as in the fields of PKO and HA/DR for Indo-Pacific countries by conducting WPS Seminars and opinion exchanges, to raise awareness about WPS among defense officials in each country. In addition, in the first Japan-ASEAN WPS Cooperation Project held in October 2024, not only ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat participated, but also defense authorities from Timor-Leste, Fiji, and Tonga participated as observers. The Project contributed to raising awareness and understanding of the participants through lectures by an external expert and sharing of the status of initiatives by participants.

Additionally, the Director for International Cooperation on WPS and uniformed JSDF personnel are dispatched as speakers or lecturers for training and international conferences on WPS hosted by other countries and international bodies such as NATO to introduce the MOD/JSDF's initiatives and gain insights from those countries that are promoting WPS. The outcomes of these activities are referred in charting the direction of WPS promotion in the MOD/JSDF.

In Japan, gender perspectives have been applied during disaster response and similar incidents. Disasters threaten the lives of all people, but it is known that different people are affected in different ways depending on their gender, age, etc. Japan responded to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake promptly and appropriately by, for example, involving female JSDF personnel interviewing female victims, taking into consideration various needs including sensitive details such as the kinds of infant milk required.

Moreover, the scope of Japan's disaster response goes beyond domestic disasters. In the event of a large-scale natural disaster in the Indo-Pacific region, Japan has conducted emergency humanitarian assistance activities including the dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Team (JDR). Disaster response by the JSDF can be expected both domestically and internationally.

The MOD/JSDF as a whole-of-ministry will reflect gender perspectives to enable them to systematically respond to women, girls, and other people appropriately during various activities, including disaster relief.

Female JSDF personnel providing bathing support during the disaster relief operations for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake (February 2024)

See Part IV, Chapter 3, Section 3-2 (Reform to Promote Women's Participation)

REFERENCE: Ministry's Website: Initiatives on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/wps/index.html

38 Established in 2021 under the 4th cycle of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on PKO, which helped raise awareness of WPS by continuously consolidating the knowledge and experiences of ADMM-Plus participating countries and providing a forum to invite WPS experts to hold seminars on a regular basis.

6 Ensuring Maritime Security

The National Defense Strategy of Japan (NDS) states that for Japan, a maritime nation, reinforcing the free and open maritime order and ensuring the freedom and safety of navigation and overflight are essential for peace and security.

To this end, the Ministry of Defense (MOD)/Self-Defense Force (JSDF) will promote maritime security cooperation to realize the vision of Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) together with coastal states in the Indo-Pacific.

To ensure the stable use of sea lanes, MOD/JSDF is making the necessary efforts to conduct counter-piracy operations and ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels in cooperation and collaboration with relevant organizations.

See Part I, Chapter 4, Section 5 (Maritime Trends)

(1) Initiatives towards Ensuring Maritime Security

a. The Fundamental Idea of the Government

The National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS) states that, as a maritime nation, Japan will work with its ally, like-minded countries and others to promote efforts to ensure the freedoms of navigation and overflight and to ensure safety, as well as maintain and develop the international maritime order based on universal values, including the rule of law. The NSS specifically mentions promotion of maritime surveillance, joint training and exercises with other countries and overseas port calls, as well as the implementation of counter-piracy and information gathering activities.

Furthermore, the NSS states that Japan will ensure freedoms of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea and other waters, promote peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law, strengthen relations with coastal states along the sea lanes, actively utilize the Arctic sea route and continue to actively utilize the JSDF facility in Djibouti and address other things.

The fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, approved by the Cabinet[39] in April 2023, continues to take a broad view on ocean policy from the perspective of maritime security. It promotes government-wide efforts for "comprehensive maritime security." Therefore, it also promotes measures necessary for the "maintenance and development of an international maritime order," mainly through Japan's own efforts to "secure our national interests in our country's territorial waters" and by strengthening ties with allies, like-minded countries and others.

Concerning the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), which China and ASEAN are continuing to discuss, Japan has stated its position that the COC should be effective, substantive, consistent with international law including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and respect the legitimate rights and interests of all stakeholders that make use of the South China Sea.

b. Initiatives of the MOD/JSDF

The MOD/JSDF is conducting counter-piracy operations to ensure stable use of sea lanes and information gathering activities to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East. In addition, the MOD/JSDF has also taken opportunities to appeal to the international community on the importance of strengthening the international maritime order and freedom of navigation and has been consistently appealing to ensure the "rule of law" in maritime areas, which are essential to human prosperity. In particular, regarding the ongoing unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts in the East China Sea and the disputes surrounding the South China Sea, the MOD/JSDF emphasizes the importance of all parties making efforts towards the peaceful resolution of these disputes based on international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

See Chapter 1, Section 1-2-7 (1) (Counter-Piracy Operations), (2) (Information Gathering Activities for Ensuring the Safety of Japan-related Vessels in the Middle East)

(2) Cooperation in Maritime Security

The fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy states that maritime security cooperation with other countries will be strengthened through bilateral and multilateral security dialogue and defense exchanges among defense authorities at various levels to maintain and develop the "free and open ocean."

In response to this, the MOD/JSDF has been working on cooperation for maritime security within regional security dialogue frameworks such as the ADMM-Plus and the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) and is co-chairing with the Philippines the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Maritime Security from 2024 to 2027.

In addition, the MOD/JSDF provides capacity building for maritime security to the Indo-Pacific coastal states,[40] helping them improve their Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) capabilities and strengthening cooperation with the ally and like-minded countries in maritime security.

In cooperation with the navies and other stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific region, the MSDF conducts maritime security training with the navies and police forces, etc. of

39 This plan is formulated by the government of Japan to comprehensively and systematically promote measures for the oceans and is reviewed approximately every five years.

40 To date, the MOD/JSDF has provided capacity building on maritime security to Indonesia, Viet Nam, the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Brunei and Sri Lanka.

coastal states in the same region. In particular, the Pacific Island countries have an urgent need to strengthen their maritime security capabilities due to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing[41] and crime at sea. In response, the MSDF Indo-Pacific Deployment (IPD 24) Unit conducted maritime security training in the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau[42] in collaboration with the JCG, the United States and Australia in some training exercises.

In addition to the counter-piracy operations, the DSPE and DAPE promote defense exchanges with the forces of other countries deployed in Djibouti such as making port calls on ports of the coastal states in the Middle East and conducting bilateral/multilateral exercises with the EUNAVFOR and other forces[43] to improve tactical skills and strengthening cooperation with the armed forces of each country.

Strengthening cooperation with coastal states of the Indo-Pacific region through such defense exchanges and cooperation contributes to maintaining maritime security, which has extremely high significance.

See Section 1-4-3 (Collaboration with Related Countries), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

VOICE

Voice of an JSDF Member Who Participated in the Malabar 2024 Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Multilateral Exercise

KANEKO Masahiro, Lieutenant Junior Grade, Damage Control Officer, JS Ariake, Sasebo

In the Malabar 2024 Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Multilateral Exercise held in India, I participated as the Damage Control Officer on the destroyer JS Ariake, one of the naval vessels dispatched to the 2nd Surface Unit of the FY2024 Indo-Pacific Deployment (IPD24) exercise.

Malabar 2024 is a multilateral exercise in which navy vessels and other forces from the four countries of Japan, the U.S., India, and Australia participated. In the harbor phase, we held a range of coordination meetings, technical briefings, and mutual visits of naval vessels and so on for synchronization at the tactical level of unit operations in the exercise period and to understand the culture and ideas of each country's navy. In the sea phase, we reinforced mutual understanding and collaboration between each country's navy through a range of combat training and War At Sea exercise.

I planned and coordinated a range of harbor events and public relations with the top liaison officials in the Indian Navy, and was involved in coordination between sites concerning logistical supply of the main fuel and fresh water. In particular, we recognized that for the sake of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) it was important to transcend "language differences" and "cultural differences" to understand each other's values and build strong relationships of trust, by communicating at the crew level through naval vessel public relations and a range of meetings. Being able to share culture and values with the navies of other countries through this exercise was an extremely meaningful experience for me as well.

Exchanges with Indian Navy officers

41 Fishing activities which do not comply with the domestic laws of each country or international operation rules, including unauthorized, unreported, or falsely reported operations; proscribed operations by stateless fishing vessels, fishing vessels from countries that are not members of regional fisheries management organizations; or similar operations, posing a serious threat to the sustainable use of marine resources and directly affecting food security

42 In Palau, the IPD 24 Unit conducted training with the Palau Coast Guard Patrol Vessel (KEDAM) provided by a Japanese organization. In the Marshall Islands, they conducted training with the Marshall Islands Sea Patrol in cooperation with the Japan Coast Guard (JCG). In Micronesia, an on-site inspection unit was dispatched by air to conduct on-site inspection training in order to contribute to the enhancement of the country's maritime security capabilities.

43 In 2024, the DSPE conducted joint counter-piracy exercises with EUNAVFOR (Italian Navy) in April and with EUNAVFOR (Spanish Navy) in September and December.

Section 2 Efforts to Support International Peace Cooperation Activities

1 Frameworks for International Peace Cooperation Activities

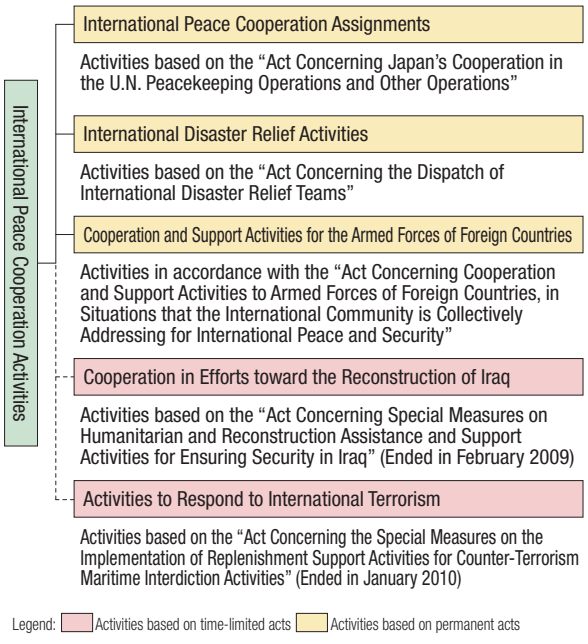
1 Frameworks for International Peace Cooperation Activities

The Ministry of Defense/Self-Defense Forces (MOD/JSDF) is proactively conducting international peace cooperation activities and other activities in tandem with diplomatic activities.

International peace cooperation activities as primary missions[1] by the MOD/JSDF include international peace cooperation assignments such as cooperation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO), international disaster relief activities in response to large-scale disasters overseas and cooperation and support activities in response to Joint International Peace Response Situations.

See Fig. III-3-2-1 (International Peace Cooperation Activities Conducted by the JSDF), Part II, Chapter 5, 5 (Framework for Contributing to the Peace and Stability of the International Community), Reference 10 (Conditions Required for Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces (Including Diet Approval) and Authority for the Use of Weapons Concerning Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces), Reference 12 (Summary Comparison of Laws Concerning International Peace Cooperation Activities), Reference 61 (The JSDF Record in International Peace Cooperation Assignments)

Fig. III-3-2-1 International Peace Cooperation Activities Conducted by the JSDF



2 Continuous Initiatives to Promptly and Accurately Carry Out International Peace Cooperation Activities

To be a proactive contributor to world peace, it is important for the JSDF to be fully prepared for any future operations. For this reason, all the three branches of the JSDF, namely the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF), designate dispatch stand-by units and always maintain a state of readiness. In addition, engineering units, staff officers and others as well as C-2 transport aircraft and C-130H transport aircraft are registered with the UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS) to enable the UN Headquarters to grasp the PKO dispatch preparation status of each country more specifically.

The JSDF is also enhancing information-gathering capabilities and protection capabilities, which are required for the JSDF units to carry out their missions while ensuring the safety of personnel and units in international peace cooperation activities and other similar ones. Furthermore, in order to respond to various mission environments and prolonged missions, the JSDF is improving its capabilities for transport, deployment and information communication, as well as developing a structure of logistics and medical support for conducting smooth and continuous operations.

With regard to the education necessary for engaging in international peace cooperation activities, the GSDF International Peace Cooperation Activities Training Unit, which belongs to the Ground Component Command, provides training for GSDF personnel to be deployed to international peace cooperation activities, as well as supports their training. In addition, the Japan Peacekeeping Training and Research Center (JPC) of the Joint Staff College offers not only basic education courses on international peace cooperation activities, but also specialized education to train personnel who can be appointed as contingent commanders of UN PKO missions and staff officers of mission headquarters. These specialized courses are conducted by using UN standard training materials and foreign instructors. Based on the current situation of more multi-dimensional and complicated international peace cooperation activities, JPC has also provided education for personnel from foreign militaries and

1 Missions as the combination of "main duties" and "the secondary duties" defined in the Article 3 of the JSDF Law. "The primary mission" is defense of Japan while "the secondary missions" are the maintenance of public order and activities in response to Important Influence Situations as well as international peace cooperation activities.

other Japanese ministries and agencies. The initiative aims to promote the coordination and cooperation and contribute to more effective international peace cooperation activities.

3 Welfare and Mental Health Measures for Dispatched JSDF Units

The MOD/JSDF is implementing various family support and mental health support measures for dispatched JSDF personnel and their families to alleviate any anxieties they may go through during the dispatch. For example, depending on the characteristics of the duties of the unit to be dispatched, the MOD/JSDF provides JSDF personnel with necessary measures such as the following: (1) education before the dispatch on necessary knowledge on how to reduce stress; (2) mental health checks before and during the dispatch as well as after returning to Japan; (3) counseling on anxieties and concerns during the dispatch, conducted by staff specially trained for carrying out mental health care; (4) dispatch of a mental health care team mainly including a medical officer with expertise on mental health care; (5) stress reduction education upon returning to Japan; and (6) special medical checkup after returning to Japan.

2 Initiatives to Support UN PKO and Other Activities

As a means to promote peace and stability in conflict regions around the world, UN PKO have expanded their missions in recent years to include such duties as the Protection of Civilians (POC), the promotion of political processes, providing assistance in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) into society of former soldiers, Security Sector Reform (SSR), the rule of law, elections, human rights and other fields, in addition to such traditional missions as ceasefire monitoring.

International organizations, such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), respective governments and NGOs conduct relief and restoration activities for the victims of conflicts and large-scale disasters from a humanitarian perspective and from the viewpoint of stabilizing affected countries.

Japan has been promoting international peace cooperation assignments in various regions, including Cambodia, the Golan Heights, Timor-Leste, Nepal and South Sudan for more than 30 years and these activities have been highly praised both inside and outside of Japan. Currently, Japan dispatches staff officers to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO).

Japan will actively keep contributing to international peace cooperation activities through such activities as dispatch of personnel to mission headquarters, capacity building in Japan's fields of expertise and dispatch of JSDF personnel to the UN Headquarters, while using accumulated experience so far and working on human resource development.

1 Dispatch to the MFO

(1) Significance of Dispatch to the MFO

The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) was established by the Protocol to the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty (August 1981) as an organization to undertake the tasks and responsibilities of the UN force and observer mission stipulated in the treaty. The MFO is tasked with monitoring the ceasefire between Egypt and Israel and since its inception in 1982, has contributed to peace and stability in the Middle East, which is a foundation of peace and prosperity for Japan, by helping to facilitate dialogue and confidence building between the two countries.

Amidst this, the MFO requested that Japan send staff officers to its headquarters, and, with a view to making proactive contributions to international peace efforts, Japan has dispatched staff officers to the MFO as Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security since 2019.

(2) Activities by Staff Officers and Others

Currently, four GSDF personnel are engaged in the operations at the MFO Headquarters (Liaison branch and Force Engineering Office, Support branch) located in the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula.

The Liaison branch has been staffed with two staff officers since 2019, with staff who are working on liaison and coordination with Egypt and Israel, as well as preparing medium- and long-term operational policies related to the same.

Since 2023, two staff officers have been dispatched to Force Engineering Office, Support branch to work on planning and progress

Reference: 30th anniversary of participating in UN PKO: The journey and development of the GSDF's international activities
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/about/pko30/index.html

Reference: The Sinai Peninsula international peace cooperation assignments (Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/kokusai_heiwa/pko/201904_egy.html

management related to the renewal of various facilities at the MFO.

Additionally, one liaison staff member has been dispatched to Cairo to liaise and coordinate with the relevant organizations in order to help the officers dispatched to the MFO carry out activities smoothly and effectively.

These activities demonstrate Japan's more active involvement in the peace and stability of the Middle East. This is also expected to promote collaboration with the U.S. and other countries dispatching officers, and to provide opportunities for human resources development.

See Fig. III-3-2-2 (MFO Relevant Maps), Fig. III-3-2-3 (Organizational Chart of MFO)

Fig. III-3-2-2 MFO Relevant Maps

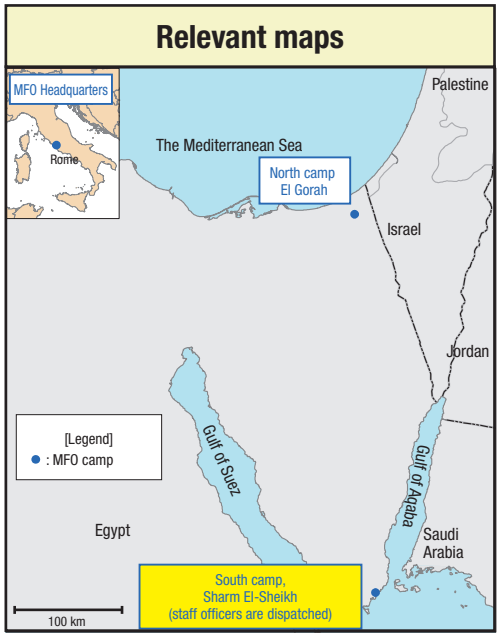
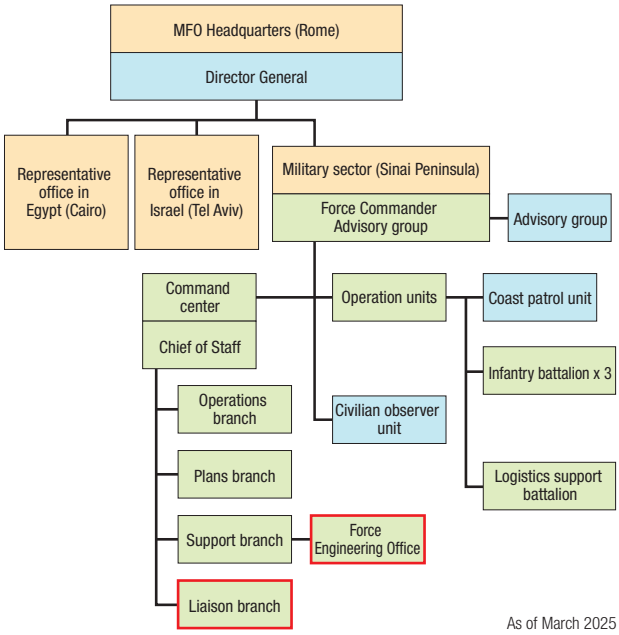


Fig. III-3-2-3 Organizational Chart of MFO



(Note) Red line indicates a department/division in which Japanese personnel are placed.

2 UNMISS

(1) Significance of the Dispatch of Personnel to UNMISS

In July 2011 following South Sudan's independence, with the objective of consolidating peace and security as well as helping South Sudan to establish necessary conditions for the development, the UNMISS was established. In response to requests from UN for cooperation with UNMISS, particularly for dispatching GSDF engineering units, Japan has dispatched units and personnel including staff officers to the Headquarters and JSDF engineering units.

South Sudan shares borders with six countries and is positioned in a highly important location, connecting the African continent on all four points of the compass. The peace and stability of South Sudan is essential not only for the country itself; but also for the peace and stability in its neighboring countries, which leads to those of the whole Africa, as well as a crucial issue that should be dealt with by the international community. Based on the experiences gained through past UN PKO, the MOD/JSDF has contributed to the peace and stability of South Sudan by providing personnel cooperation in infrastructure development, which is highly expected by the UN.

UNMISS is the only UN PKO to which Japan currently dispatches its personnel and the dispatch of staff officers supports the progress of the peace process in South Sudan together with the international community. It is significant for Japan to continue dispatching its staff officers from the perspectives of maintaining close involvement in the UN, cooperation with neighboring African countries, and securing opportunities for human resource development.

See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 10-2 (Africa)

(2) Activities by Staff Officers and Others

As of the end of March 2025, at the UNMISS Headquarters located in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, six GSDF personnel (Deputy Chief of Staff in charge of Personnel, Evaluation and Training (DCOS (PET)) and his personal assistant (PA), logistics staff officer, intelligence staff officer, engineering staff officer and aviation operation staff officer) have been carrying out their duties. The DCOS (PET) manages and supervises the personnel, evaluation and training divisions at the UNMISS force headquarters, while the PA provides business support for the DCOS (PET). The logistics staff officer procures and transports necessary supplies for UNMISS activities; the intelligence staff officer collects and compiles information on public safety conditions; the engineering staff officer plans and proposes UNMISS engineering activities; and the aviation operation staff officer prepares flight plans for aircraft operated by UNMISS.

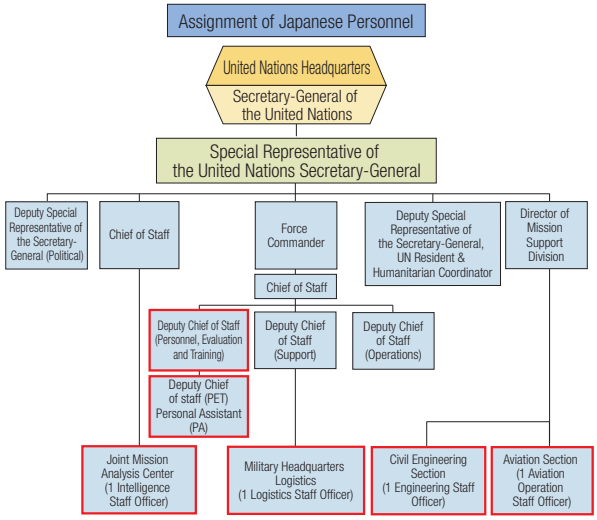
Additionally, one liaison staff member has been dispatched to the liaison office in the Embassy of Japan in South Sudan to support the activities of Japanese staff officers. This member liaises and coordinates with the South Sudan Government and the International Peace Cooperation Corps in South Sudan to ensure Japan's smooth and efficient cooperation with UNMISS.

In this way, Japan will continue to contribute to UNMISS activities.

See Fig. III-3-2-4 (Organizational Chart of UNMISS)

Dispatched JSDF personnel operating at the UNMISS force headquarters (May 2024)

Fig. III-3-2-4 Organizational Chart of UNMISS



As of March 2025

(Note) Red lines indicate a department/division in which Japanese personnel are placed.

3 Dispatch of MOD Personnel to the UN Secretariat

The MOD/JSDF dispatches personnel to the UN Secretariat for the purpose of actively contributing to the UN efforts to achieve international peace and for the purpose of utilizing their experiences in Japan's PKO activity. As of March 2025, three JSDF personnel (chief level and action officer level) are involved in the military planning for UN peacekeeping missions and competency evaluation of personnel dispatched from various countries at the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and one JSDF personnel and one defense official (both action officer level) are working on the United Nations Triangular Partnership Programme[2] (UNTPP) at the UN Department of Operational Support (DOS).

See Reference 60 (Dispatch of Ministry of Defense Personnel to International Organizations)

4 Dispatch of Instructors to PKO Training Centers

To support the self-help efforts of African countries and others in PKO, the MOD/JSDF has dispatched JSDF personnel as instructors to PKO training centers in Africa and other countries that provide education and training for UN peacekeepers to contribute to peace and stability by enhancing the capacity of the centers.

See Reference 60 (Dispatch of Ministry of Defense Personnel to International Organizations)

Reference: United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/kokusai_heiwa/pko/201111_ssd.html

2 A cooperative framework for training and providing necessary equipment for PKO personnel deployed to UN PKO through cooperation among the UN as well as countries dispatching the personnel and supporting UN PKO (third countries providing technology and equipment)

5 Support to the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (UNTPP)

Japan has so far gained solid credibility in the fields of engineering and transport that are essential for promoting smooth peacekeeping operations. To continue to support the rapid deployment of peacekeeping missions and implement high quality activities, Japan expressed its active support at the PKO Summit in 2014 and it was embodied by the UNTPP.

The UNTPP was founded using funds from Japan as a program to support training for military engineers and the procurement of heavy equipment by the UN DOS. From the start of the program to March 2025, a total of 207 GSDF personnel have been dispatched to the African region to provide 11 training sessions for a total of 336 members from nine African countries.

Considering that 30% or more of PKO personnel are from Asia, Japan has been conducting the program in Asia and the surrounding area since 2018.

In June 2024, 24 GSDF personnel were dispatched to the Indonesia Peace and Security Centre to contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for infrastructure development and building camps in PKO for the military engineers of Indonesia and neighboring countries. In November of that year, 20 GSDF personnel were dispatched to the Training School of Multinational Peacekeeping Forces in Cambodia to tackle the threat posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) faced by PKO missions in recent years. Alongside the heavy equipment operation training sessions offered by Japan, they partnered with Australia and the ROK to deliver IED-response and outdoor-aid training to PKO personnel from neighboring Asian countries—marking the first multilateral coordination of its kind. From the start of the program until March 2025, a total of 160 GSDF personnel were dispatched to provide a total of seven training sessions for 127 personnel from 14 countries in Asia and the surrounding regions.

Closing ceremony for the inaugural Japan-ROK-Australia collaborative project under the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (November 2024)

Additionally, the UN decided to extend the scope of support under the UNTPP to the field of medical care and established the UN Field Medical Assistant Course[3] (UNFMAC), given that strengthening medical capacity to ensure the safety of deployed personnel has become an issue in UN peacekeeping operations. In November 2024, the MOD/JSDF dispatched one GSDF personnel as the instructor to said course held at the UN Regional Service Centre Entebbe in Uganda, providing education to 30 personnel dispatched.

Besides, as part of the UNTPP, the MOD/JSDF holds an online Construction Process Management (CPM) Course for engineering personnel. This course provides education on construction management and problem-solving methods for UN PKO missions. In September 2024, five GSDF instructors provided education for 32 engineering personnel from Indonesia, Cambodia, the Philippines, Viet Nam, and Mongolia, as well as for 22 engineering personnel from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in December of the same year.

3 International Disaster Relief Activities

In recent years, the role of military has become more diverse and opportunities to leverage military capabilities for Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) are growing. The JSDF has also been proactively engaged in international disaster relief activities from the viewpoint of humanitarian contributions and improving the global security environment.

To this end, the JSDF maintains its readiness to take any necessary actions based on prepared disaster relief operation plans. The JSDF has proactively conducted international disaster relief activities in consultation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, leveraging its features and capabilities, while considering specific requests by the governments of affected countries and disaster situations.

1 Outline of the Japan Disaster Relief Team Law

Since the enforcement of the Japan Disaster Relief Team Law[4] in 1987, Japan has been engaged in international disaster relief activities upon requests from the governments of affected countries or the international organizations. In 1992, the Japan Disaster Relief Team Law was partially amended to allow the JSDF to participate in international disaster relief activities and to transport its personnel and equipment for this purpose.

3 A course designed to train personnel to provide first aid in PKO areas of operations before specialized treatment is provided by medics or medical personnel
4 Law Concerning the Dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Team

2 International Disaster Relief Activities by the JSDF and JSDF's Posture

Considering specific requests by the governments of affected countries and the scale of disaster situations, the JSDF's international disaster relief activities encompass (1) medical services, such as first-aid medical treatment and epidemic prevention; (2) transportation of supplies, patients and personnel by helicopter and other means; (3) water supply activities using water-purifying devices; (4) cooperation in search and other activities by MSDF fixed-wing patrol aircraft. In addition to such cooperation, (5) the JSDF may use transport aircraft and ships to carry disaster relief personnel and equipment to the affected area.

GSDF units including those of the Ground Component Command and regional Armies are always in readiness for such operations autonomously. The Self Defense Fleet of the MSDF and Air Support Command of the ASDF are always in readiness as well to transport personnel and their supplies to affected areas.

3 International Disaster Relief Activities in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

On March 28, 2025, the earthquake with its epicenter in central Myanmar caused significant damage in the country. Following consultations initiated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to seek cooperation in transporting medical equipment and materials necessary for international disaster relief activities using JSDF aircraft, the Defense Minister directed the Commander of JJOF to transport the necessary medical equipment and materials for the international disaster relief activities in Myanmar. In response to the direction, a Field Coordination Headquarters was established to conduct on-site information gathering, communication, and coordination. From April 8 to 9 of that year, a C-130 transport aircraft conveyed the necessary medical equipment and materials from Japan to Mandalay International Airport, enabling the Japan Disaster Relief Team and Japanese medical teams in the affected areas to sustain their humanitarian assistance activities. Subsequently, although the Field Coordination Headquarters continued its information-gathering efforts, its mission concluded on April 22 of that year after a comprehensive assessment determined that the number of disaster-affected patients had declined markedly since the outset. As the first international disaster relief activity since the Joint Operations Command was established, unit members—under the direction of the C-JJOF—executed the mission smoothly in line with the Japan's policy of solidarity with the people of Myanmar.

Reference: International Disaster Relief Activities
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/kokusai_heiwa/kokusai_enjyo/

VOICE

Voice of an JSDF Member Participating in UNMISS

MINAKAWA Momoko, Major, Engineering Staff Officer, UN Tomping base, UNMISS headquarters

I have been working as an Engineering Staff Officer of the UNMISS headquarters in the Republic of South Sudan since September 2024. Mainly focusing on development of main supply routes in the country, I coordinate on site with the relevant sections in the headquarters and with the Army Engineer units dispatched from six countries, and create the development plans. On site, I try to interact with my colleagues in the Engineering and other sections through welfare activities in order to develop relationships with them.

During my assignment, I will keep on doing my best with my tasks, with the expectations of my family in Japan including my two children, and from the Self-Defense Forces, while contributing to the peace and stability of the Republic of South Sudan, and to further strengthen the trust with the people here, which have been built up by my predecessors.

A scene of on-site confirmation for the main supply routes development (the author is the second person from the right)

A scene at a prize-giving ceremony for a cycling race held as a part of the welfare activities (the author is on the left)

Section 3 Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and missiles that can deliver them, as well as the proliferation of not only conventional arms but also goods and sensitive technologies of potential military use, pose a pressing challenge to the peace and stability of the international community. Moreover, many countries are working on the regulation of certain conventional weapons, considering the need to maintain a balance between humanitarian perspectives and defensive needs.

In order to deal with these issues, the international frameworks for **arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation** have been developed under which Japan has played an active role.

The National Security Strategy of Japan (NSS) describes arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, including for weapons of mass destruction, etc., as one of the key measures among efforts to strengthen a free and open international order. In addition, the NSS also states that Japan will cooperate to improve the effectiveness of international organizations and multilateral export control regimes.

See Fig. III-3-3 (Framework for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Relating to Conventional Weapons, Weapons of Mass Destruction, Missiles and Related Materials, etc.)

KEY WORD

Arms Control, Disarmament, and Non-proliferation

Arms Control
Regulation and verification/inspection of armaments or weapons, confidence-building, regulation of transfers of conventional weapons, etc.

Disarmament
Reduction or elimination of specific armaments or weapons under international agreements

Non-Proliferation
Prevention of the proliferation of weapons that pose a threat to Japan and the international community (weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as missiles and conventional weapons that carry such weapons) and related materials and technologies used in their development

Fig. III-3-3 Framework for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Relating to Conventional Weapons, Weapons of Mass Destruction, Missiles and Related Materials, etc.

Category	Weapons of Mass Destruction, etc.				Conventional Weapons
	Nuclear Weapons	Chemical Weapons	Biological Weapons	Delivery Systems (Missiles)	
Conventions on Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, etc.	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)	Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)	Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)	The Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC)	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Convention on Cluster Munitions Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Treaty) U.N. Register of Conventional Arms U.N. Report on Military Expenditures Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)
Export Control Frameworks Aimed at Non-Proliferation	Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)	Australia Group (AG)		Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)	Wassenaar Arrangement (WA)
New International Initiatives Aimed at Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction	Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540				

1 Initiatives Focused on Treaties Relating to Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

Japan actively participates in international initiatives for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in regard to WMDs, in the form of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as missiles that can deliver them and associated technologies and materials.

Japan has contributed to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) by offering its knowledge in the field of chemical protection since the negotiating stage. Following the entry of the CWC into force, Japan has dispatched eight Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) experts on protection against chemical weapons to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was established to continuously implement verification measures. As small quantities of the chemical substances subject to the regulation of the CWC are synthesized to be used for research on protection at the GSDF Chemical School (Saitama City), the school has submitted annual reports and undergone inspections 13 times in total, in accordance with the CWC

regulations, since the establishment of the OPCW and it has been confirmed that there is no problem.

The GSDF Chemical School was certified as an OPCW Designated Laboratory[5] in August 2024. By being certified as a designated laboratory, the school will contribute to (1) further improving the security environment through arms control and disarmament; (2) acquiring chemical-weapons-related expertise and enhancing Japan's international standing; and (3) strengthening Japan's deterrence capabilities by obtaining analytical capabilities that meet international standards.

Moreover, Japan is also working on projects to destroy abandoned chemical weapons in China, based on the CWC.[6] The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) has seconded GSDF and other personnel to the Cabinet Office to be in charge of this project and since 2000, GSDF personnel with expertise in chemicals and ammunitions have been dispatched to conduct excavation and recovery projects 21 times in total (as of November, 2024).

In addition, MOD officials have been dispatched to major conference such as the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group (AG) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which are international export control regimes and have made proposals to contribute to non-proliferation of key technologies from security perspectives. Moreover, Japan has been cooperating to enhance the effectiveness of regulations and decisions, such as by dispatching JSDF personnel to training conducted by the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

Japan has concluded various conventions on the regulation of conventional weapons such as the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW), based on humanitarian perspectives and security needs. In addition, Japan has signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Oslo Convention)[7], which was adopted outside the framework of the CCW. Following the entry of this Convention, the disposal of all cluster munitions possessed by the JSDF was completed in February 2015.

In addition, the MOD/JSDF dispatches its personnel to the Group of Governmental Experts meetings related to Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and other events as necessary under the CCW framework. Discussions related to LAWS are underway considering their characteristics, human involvement, international law and other perspectives. Japan will continue to be actively involved in the discussions, while considering the national security standpoint.

The commemorative ceremony marking the GSDF Chemical School's certification as an OPCW Designated Laboratory (September 2024)

Additionally, international discussions about the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the military domain have been intensifying in recent years. In 2024, the MOD dispatched its personnel to the meetings related to the "Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM)," which has taken place since 2023.

Regarding the prohibition of anti-personnel mines, Japan has actively cooperated in the initiatives of the international community that focus on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines by submitting annual reports that include data on Japan's exceptional stocks to the U.N. Secretary-General through the Secretariat of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Treaty)[8].

Japan has also submitted an annual Confidence-Building Measures report in relation to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and reported on the facilities of the National Defense Medical College and the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) in that report.

In addition, the MOD/JSDF has provided an annual report in accordance with the UN Register of Conventional Arms, the UN Report on Military Expenditures and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)[9], which aim to increase the transparency of military readiness and military expenditure. Regarding the U.N. Register of Conventional Arms, the MOD/JSDF also dispatches personnel as needed to Group of Governmental Experts meetings and other meetings set for reviewing and improving these systems.

See Reference 60 (Dispatch of Ministry of Defense Personnel to International Organizations)

5 A laboratory designated by the OPCW for performing off-site analytical surveys of samples collected by its inspectors at chemical production or storage facilities, as well as at sites of incidents where the use of chemical weapons is suspected. This facility is instrumental in ensuring that the OPCW's verification activities are conducted appropriately and impartially.

6 Abandoned chemical weapons from the former Japanese army have been confirmed in wide-ranging areas from primarily around Northeast China through Guangdong Province in southern China, and Japan has been promoting excavation, recovery, and disposal projects in various regions.

7 The United States, China, Russia and others as major producer and holder of cluster munitions have not yet concluded the Convention.

8 A convention prohibiting the use, production, transfer, etc. of anti-personnel landmines. The United States, China, Russia, the ROK, India and others have not yet concluded the Convention.

9 A treaty regulating the international transfer of conventional weapons that could be used to undermine peace and security or commit serious violations of international humanitarian law and other laws. The United States, Russia and others have not yet concluded the Treaty.

2 International Initiatives Aimed at Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Deeply concerned about the development of WMDs and missiles by countries such as North Korea and Iran, the United States announced its Proliferation Security Initiative[10] (PSI) in 2003 and sought the participation of other countries therein. Various initiatives are being undertaken based on PSI, including PSI interdiction exercises aimed at improving the ability to thwart the proliferation of WMDs and related items and meetings to consider issues on policies and legislations.

The MOD/JSDF collaborates with relevant organizations and countries, dispatching MOD officials including uniformed JSDF personnel to various meetings, as well as engaging in ongoing participation in these exercises.

In September 2024, the JSDF participated in "Pacific Protector 24," a PSI interdiction exercise[11] held in Australia. Through tabletop training and maritime interdiction exercises, the JSDF improved its PSI-related skills and strengthened cooperation with other participating countries.

Based on the proliferation cases in the areas surrounding Japan and from the perspectives of preventing the proliferation of WMDs and improving the response capability of the JSDF, the MOD/JSDF strives to strengthen non-proliferation frameworks including PSI, including by holding various relevant training exercises and meetings and participating in the same kind of activities which other countries hold.

See Reference 62 (Participation of MOD/JSDF in PSI Interdiction Exercise (Since FY2013))

Participating in the PSI maritime interdiction exercise (September 2024)

REFERENCE: Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/exchange/dialogue/fukakusan/index.html

10 An initiative that considers measures that participating countries can jointly take while complying with existing domestic and international laws in order to prevent the proliferation of WMDs/missiles as a threat to international peace and stability as well as their related materials and at the same time seeks to strengthen the relevant domestic laws of respective countries to the maximum possible extent.

11 A PSI exercise in the Indo-Pacific region has been hosted annually by six countries on a rotating basis since 2014: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore and the United States.

Section 4 Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries

It is essential to strengthen deterrence and response capabilities and stabilize the security environment surrounding Japan to maintain peace in Japan. To this end, the MOD/JSDF is actively promoting bilateral/multilateral exercises with Japan's ally, like-minded countries, and others in the wider Indo-Pacific region as part of its efforts to achieve the vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." In particular, MOD/JSDF is strengthening its partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region, which is closely connected to Japan's national security, and is working to create a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts, by maintaining and improving the capabilities and skills of each country through common efforts such as bilateral/multilateral exercise with allied, like-minded countries, and by strengthening deterrence and response capabilities through collaboration and cooperation, thereby creating a synergistic effect.

1 Bilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries

1 Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF)

(1) Field exercise with the French Army in Japan "Brunet-Takamori 24"

In September 2024, the GSDF conducted a bilateral exercise with French army which was the inaugural one between Japanese and French ground forces in Japan. In this exercise, combat shooting and comprehensive field training exercises were conducted to improve operation execution and tactical capabilities for counter-guerilla and commando operations, and to promote mutual understanding and trust with the French Army.

(2) Field exercise with the U.K. Army in Japan "Vigilant Isles 24"

In January 2025, the GSDF conducted a bilateral exercise with the British Army in Japan. During this exercise, the two countries conducted heliborne operations, infiltration and reconnaissance drills, medical training, and other field training exercises for island defense, improving operational capability and tactical capabilities and promoting mutual understanding and trust with the British army.

(3) Bilateral exercise with the Indian Army in Japan "Dharma Guardian 24"

The GSDF conducted a bilateral exercise with the Indian Army in Japan from February to March 2025. The joint exercise was designed to improve operation execution and tactical capabilities for the war against terrorism and to promote mutual understanding and trust with the Indian Army.

2 Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF)

The MSDF conducts bilateral exercises and goodwill exercises[12] with other countries, taking advantage of port and airport visits by naval vessels and aircraft, and continues to conduct bilateral exercises such as "Trident" with the Royal Australian Navy, "JIMEX" with the Indian Navy, "Oguri-Verny" with the French Navy, and "KAEDEX" with the Royal Canadian Navy. "JIMEX 2024," held in June 2024 with the Indian Navy, has improved interoperability between the MSDF and the Indian Navy, including anti-submarine warfare training using MSDF submarines.

3 Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF)

(1) Japan-Philippines HA/DR bilateral exercise "Doshin-Bayanihan 4-24"

In October 2024, the ASDF participated in the Japan-Philippines HA/DR bilateral exercise "Doshin-Bayanihan 4-24" conducted in the Philippines. This exercise, aimed at improving the ASDF's HA/DR capabilities and strengthening cooperation with the Philippine Air Force, involved airdrop exercises and large-scale patient-evacuation drills, enhancing the cooperation with the Philippine Air Force.

(2) Japan-Italy bilateral exercise "Rising Sun 24"

In August 2024, the ASDF conducted a bilateral exercise with the Italian Air Force in Japan. In this exercise, F-35A fighter jets of the Italian Air Force, Eurofighter jets, and KC-767 air refueling aircraft conducted bilateral exercises to promote

MOVIE: FY2024 field training exercise with the British Army (Vigilant Isles 24)
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDt9aV48mgc

12 In FY2024, exercises were conducted with Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, the Seychelles, Sri Lanka, the Marshall Islands, South Africa, Singapore, the U.K., Qatar, the ROK, and other countries.

mutual understanding between Italian and Japanese air force services, deepen defense cooperation, and improve the ASDF's tactical capabilities.

Personnel from Japan and the Philippines engaged in the large-scale patient-evacuation drill (October 2024)

2 Multilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries and Others

1 Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF)

(1) Exercise Super Garuda Shield 24 (Multilateral Exercise)

From August to September 2024, the GSDF participated in Super Garuda Shield 2024, a multilateral exercise hosted by the U.S. and Indonesian armies and participated by Australia, the United Kingdom, and Singapore. In this exercise, the GSDF jointly conducted airborne and amphibious operations. In addition, during combat shooting, the countries demonstrated joint attack combat with live fire and live bombs to strengthen their operational capabilities in island recapture and cooperation with the participating countries.

(2) Multilateral Exercise "Khaan Quest 24"

The GSDF participated in a multilateral exercise organized by Mongolia and the United States from July to August 2024. This exercise is one of the world's largest multilateral exercises aimed at improving capabilities associated with UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), and the GSDF has been dispatching units for the exercise in Mongolia since 2015. During the "Khaan Quest 24" exercise, the GSDF participated in command post training, convoy escort operations, U.N.-designated facilities protection, and other field training exercises to preserve and improve various capabilities that are useful when dispatched for PKOs, to acquire and accumulate the relevant expertise, and to promote mutual understanding and strengthen relationships of trust with the various participating countries.

Civilian protection exercise in "Khaan Quest 24" (August 2024)

2 Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF)

(1) FY2024 Indo-Pacific Deployment "IPD24"

The MSDF dispatched surface and submarine units, including one transport ship, five destroyers and several submarines for more than six months from May to December 2024, to visit ten countries and 14 ports of call while sailing in the Indo-Pacific region, and conducted 23 bilateral/multilateral exercises and three goodwill exercises.

Some of the IPD units participated in the multilateral exercise "RIMPAC 2024," during which they conducted missile launch training and HA/DR exercises in the surrounding waters and airspace of the Hawaiian islands. In addition, the MSDF conducted "JIMEX 2024" with the Indian Navy and the Japan-U.S.-Australia-

MOVIE: "Super Garuda Shield 23" (GSDF)
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqCKKjBDfg0

ROK-Canada multilateral exercise "Pacific Vanguard 24" with the U.S. Navy, Royal Australian Navy, ROK Navy, and Royal Canadian Navy. The MSDF also participated in multilateral exercises hosted by the Royal Australian Navy, including the Royal Australian Navy-hosted multilateral exercise "KAKADU 24" and the Japan-U.S.-India-Australia multilateral exercise "Malabar 2024."

In the Pacific Island countries, in May 2024, MSDF vessels for the first time participated in the HA/DR multilateral exercise "MARARA 24," hosted by the French Armed Forces stationed in Polynesia. In this exercise, they conducted multilateral command post exercises and other field exercises for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities on remote islands, thereby enhancing their capability for international disaster relief activities. In July of the same year, the MSDF joined the Tongan International Fleet Review to foster mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill among participating countries.

(2) The Indo-Pacific and Middle East Deployment "IMED25"

From January to May 2025, the MSDF dispatched minesweeper carriers and other vessels to the Indo-Pacific region and the Middle East to participate in the International Maritime Exercise/CUTLASS EXPRESS 2025 (IMX/CE25) held in the Persian Gulf (Kingdom of Bahrain and its surrounding waters), and strengthened cooperation with the U.S., which hosted the exercise, and the navies of participating countries (the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, etc.). Through this dispatch, the MSDF made port calls in India, Cambodia, and other countries, and demonstrated Japan's deep commitment to stability and prosperity of the region through goodwill exercises with the navies of various countries including these countries.

Destroyer "Ariake" participating in "Pacific Vanguard 24" (September 2024)

(3) U.S.-hosted multilateral missile warning exercise "Pacific Dragon 24"

From July to August 2024, the MSDF participated in "Pacific Dragon 24" conducted in the waters surrounding Hawaii. This multilateral exercise, hosted by U.S. forces, was participated by seven countries, including Japan, the U.S., Australia, and the ROK, in the same year. This exercise involved multilateral ballistic missile defense training and anti-aircraft combat training, strengthening the MSDF's tactical skills and fostering mutual understanding and relationships of trust among the participating countries.

3 Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF)

(1) U.S.-hosted search and rescue exercise "Pacific Angel 24-1"

In August 2024, the ASDF participated for the first time in the search and rescue exercise "Pacific Angel 24-1," hosted by the U.S. Air Force and the Papua New Guinea Defense Forces. The exercise aimed to enhance search and rescue interoperability with U.S. forces and strengthen cooperation among the participating countries' air forces. During the exercise, the ASDF took part in command post activities and expert exchanges to bolster interoperability with the U.S. Air Force and foster collaboration among the participating countries' air forces.

(2) Multilateral HA/DR exercise "Christmas Drop" hosted by the U.S. Air Force

In December 2024, the ASDF participated in "Christmas Drop" conducted by the U.S. Air Force in the Federated States of Micronesia, etc. A C-130H transport aircraft from the ASDF participated in the exercise, during which airdrop training was conducted to drop daily necessities and other donated goods at sea to improve the ASDF's HA/DR capabilities and strengthen cooperation with the participating countries.

(3) Exercise with the Royal Australian Air Force "Pitch Black 24"

From July to August 2024, the ASDF participated a multilateral exercise at RAAF Base Darwin in Australia with the host Royal Australian Air Force, the U.S. Air Force, and many other participating countries' air forces. The exercise involved the ASDF's first deployment of E-767 early warning aircraft to Australia and the inaugural bombing training using F-2 fighters. ASDF personnel engaged in the space domain also participated in the exercise as observers. Additionally, General Uchikura, Chief of Staff of the ASDF, observed the exercise and signed a document formalizing training cooperation among the air forces of Japan, the United States, and Australia.

MOVIE: RIMPAC2024

URL: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=pnJV8WqTj9A&list=PL6FF5226D69C6957F&index=5&pp=iAQB

(4) Multilateral exercise with air forces from European countries and others

In July 2024, the ASDF conducted training in Japan with the French Air and Space Force, the German Air Force, and the Spanish Air Force. In these occasions, bilateral and trilateral training involving each country's air force fighters helped foster mutual understanding, deepen defense cooperation, and enhance the ASDF's tactical skills. This was also the first visit by Spanish Air and Space Force fighters to Japan, strengthening mutual understanding between the Japanese and Spanish air forces.

See Fig. III-3-4 (Major Bilateral/Multilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries and Others), Reference 59 (Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond))

Japan-France bilateral exercise (July 2024)

Fig. III-3-4 Major Bilateral/Multilateral Exercises with Like-Minded Countries and Others

VOICE

Participating in Super Garuda Shield (SGS) 24

CHOKAI Hiroshi, Sergeant 1st Class, Jump Master, 1st Airborne Brigade, Narashino

I participated as the Jump Master for the joint airborne jump in the Super Garuda Shield 24 multilateral exercise organized by the U.S. military and the Indonesian military and implemented in September 2024. Feeling the heavy responsibility of being the Jump Master to ensure that the personnel jumped safely and reliably, I jumped myself after controlling the paratrooper team. The Sumatra horizon spreading out below me and my colleagues' parachutes hovering in the sky reminded me of the honor of being Self-Defense Forces personnel protecting peace and independence. Furthermore, although I felt the difficulty of coordinating with the militaries of other countries in an environment completely different from Japan, I was able to complete the mission of the Jump Master with the help of a variety of people, which gave me great confidence. I am proud to have participated in this training and will continue to work hard to execute my duties.

Paratroopers jumping at the Baturaja jump site in Indonesia

Paratroopers jumping out of the aircraft

VOICE

Participating in Royal Australian Air Force Exercise Pitch Black 24

KOREEDA Namiki, Airman 1st Class, Armament Maintenance Squadron, 8th Air Wing, Tsuiki

I participated as aircraft maintenance personnel in the F-2 fighter aircraft training squadron for the Royal Australian Air Force exercise Pitch Black 24 from July 12, 2024 to August 2 the same year.

During the one-month training period, I shared clothing, food, and housing with the soldiers from other countries at an accommodation facility called DAP-D, and I was able to deepen my interactions with them. During that time, I had many opportunities to exchange badges and I was able to experience the easy-going personalities of the soldiers from other countries. Furthermore, I participated in a forum which was a gathering of women soldiers, where I was impressed by a statement by a woman soldier from Singapore who said "if you don't give up just because you're a woman, and keep working hard towards your goals, you can change the conventional wisdom," and I resolved to continue challenging myself to achieve the things I wanted to do.

Finally, I was able to actually see the various kinds of aircraft in other countries' air forces and learn about their respective characteristics and advanced technological capabilities. I am also proud to be maintenance personnel for the F-2 fighter aircraft and I will continue my efforts to deepen my skills and knowledge.

Group photograph of the participants in the women's forum held during the exercise (the author is the second person from the right in the third row from the front)

Part IV

Reinforcing Foundation for JSDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities

Chapter 1 Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel

Chapter 2 Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 3 Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 4 Other Initiatives

Chapter 1 Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel

Amid an increasingly challenging security environment, it is an urgent priority to improve the treatment of JSDF personnel who firsthand fulfill their duties to safeguard Japan's peace and independence, as well as to enhance their working environments and establish new lifetime career plans. Accordingly, the "Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel" was established in October 2024, chaired by Prime Minister Ishiba and composed of a broad range of relevant cabinet ministers, including Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi and Defense Minister Nakatani. The first meeting was held in the same month, during which the chair ordered that the direction of measures to be taken through coordination among the relevant ministries and agencies, as well as the items to be included in the FY2025 budget, be determined by the end of the year. In response to this direction, the "Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel" (hereinafter the "Basic Policy") was formulated in December of the same year, following four meetings. Moving forward, based on the Basic Policy, the relevant cabinet ministers will continue to collaborate to establish a comprehensive system that enables JSDF personnel to serve with peace of mind and dedicate themselves to the vital missions of national defense.

The Public Opinion Survey on the Self Defense Forces and Defense Issues conducted by the Cabinet Office shows that 90% of the citizens hold a favorable impression of the Self-Defense Forces. This survey result is undoubtedly a testament to the unwavering efforts of JSDF personnel, who have been sincerely engaged in disaster relief and various other missions over the 70 years since the JSDF's establishment. Despite the favorable impression of the JSDF, recruitment of JSDF personnel remains a significant challenge. In FY2023, approximately 20,000 positions were open for recruitment, and approximately 10,000 personnel were employed. In FY2024, approximately 15,000 positions were offered, and approximately 10,000 personnel were employed. The JSDF continues to fall short of its target personnel levels, with the sufficiency rate[1] standing at approximately 90%. To achieve the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities to address the most challenging security environment since the start of the postwar period, securing JSDF personnel to carry out this mission is a matter of critical importance. If fundamental measures are not implemented, the situation will only continue to deteriorate.

The JSDF's organizational culture—where personnel undertaking the demanding mission of national defense are inherently expected to endure harsh conditions on a daily basis—poses a significant obstacle to securing and retaining personnel. The organization needs to place greater emphasis on individual personnel's satisfaction and ease of working, while also enhancing job satisfaction. The MOD/JSDF needs to address this issue with a strong sense of urgency.

JSDF personnel firsthand safeguard Japan's peace and independence and maintain national security; given the unique nature of their duties, it is inevitable that they must bear various burdens and restrictions. Therefore, JSDF personnel need to be provided with treatment that reflects the unique nature of their duties. Accordingly, personnel management and salary systems that differ from those of other national public employees have been established for JSDF personnel as special national public employees. It is crucial to continue appropriately valuing the unique nature of their duties and to provide treatment that ensures they feel proud and honored to choose a career as JSDF personnel. Furthermore, given that many JSDF personnel retire at age 56, it is crucial to ensure they do not feel insecure about re-employment and subsequent career opportunities and income security in order to effectively secure personnel. To address JSDF personnel's future concerns, it is essential to expand re-employment opportunities in which they can leverage their acquired knowledge, skills, and experience, and to guarantee income security for their livelihood.

In the Basic Policy, under the recognition of these issues, it was determined to implement the following concrete measures to improve the treatment and working environment of JSDF personnel and to establish their new lifetime career plans.

See Reference 63 (Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel)

REFERENCE: Initiatives to improve JSDF personnel treatment (ministerial meeting)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/profile/treatment/index.html

1 The percentage indicating the extent to which the current number of JSDF personnel meets the authorized strength.

Section 1 Improvement of Treatment for JSDF Personnel

To truly realize the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, it is essential to continually and stably secure outstanding JSDF personnel. To this end, it is necessary to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa period, in which the generations, who will be responsible for Japan's future defense capabilities, can perform demanding duties with peace of mind and take pride and honor in choosing a career as JSDF personnel. In light of this situation, a variety of measures are being implemented, such as improvement of compensation by accounting for the unique nature of the duties and working environment, including to newly establish or raise the amounts and increase in the amounts of over 30 different allowances, etc., which is an unprecedented change and increase in the amount of allowances; enhancement of conditions for securing a wide range of personnel including enlisted personnel; improvement of treatment for JSDF Reserve Personnel and others; and a review of appropriate conferment for distinguished service with decorations.

Section 2 Improvement of Living and Working Environments

To enhance the overall performance of the JSDF as an organization, it is essential to build an environment that improves both job satisfaction and ease of working, where each JSDF personnel member feels a sense of purpose in their work. To this end, the MOD/JSDF will take initiatives that include reforming organizational culture, introducing individual space for each personnel in barracks, improving the living and working environments for onboard crews, improvement of housing environments, promoting the development of the communication environment, and improving access to bases and garrisons located in areas with limited public transportation. In addition, efforts will be made to build environments where JSDF personnel can focus on their duties without anxiety about balancing childcare or nursing care, to enhance environments that promote the active role of women, and to improve clothing, food services, and health management systems, including daily uniforms and workwear of personnel.

Section 3 Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans

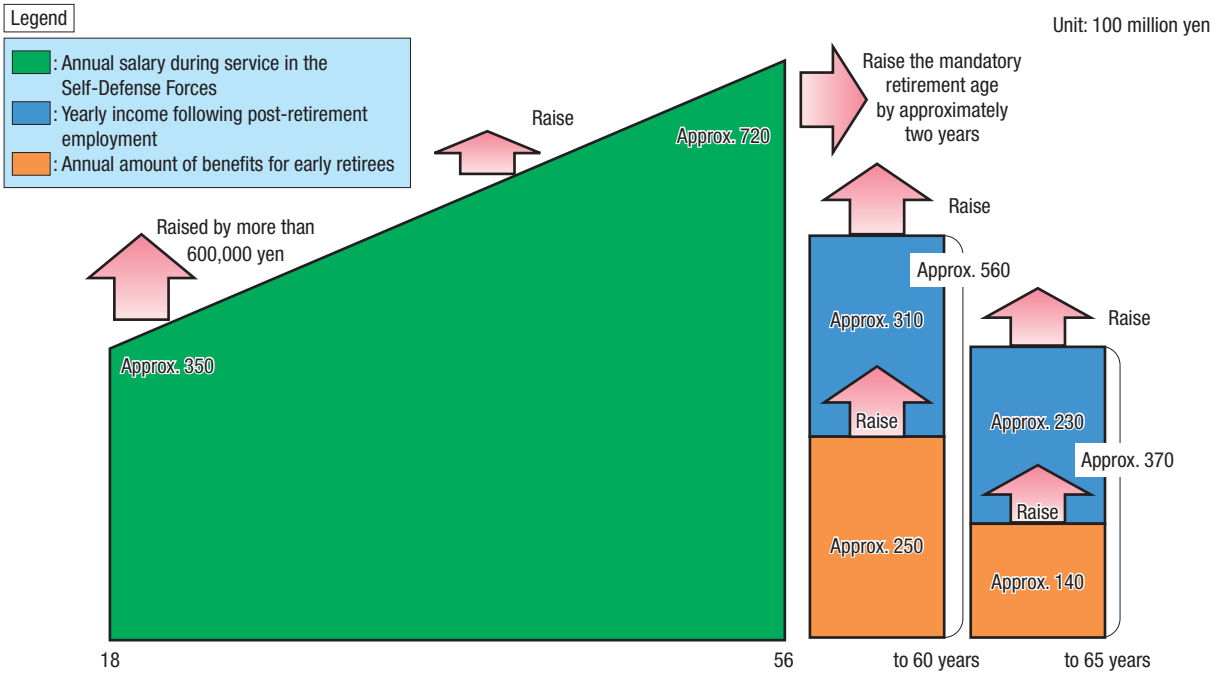
Given that many JSDF personnel retire at age 56 due to the early retirement system, it is crucial to ensure they do not feel insecure about re-employment and subsequent career opportunities and income security in order for the JSDF to effectively secure personnel. Therefore, to foster an environment in which retired JSDF personnel can leverage the knowledge, skills, and experience gained during their service, the MOD will collaborate with the relevant ministries and agencies to encourage local governments and a broad spectrum of industries and business organizations to hire the retirees, thereby expanding re-employment opportunities for them. Additionally, consideration will be given to simplifying the procedures by which retired JSDF personnel can easily obtain public qualifications—such as marine technician and aircraft mechanic—based on the skills they gained during their service, and to establishing financial measures for the Regional Disaster Prevention Manager System.[2]

Moreover, to ensure that JSDF personnel who retire at an early age can continue working in society with peace of mind until reaching the pension eligibility age of 65, the government will consider measures—such as providing re-employment support until age 65 and raising the retirement age. The specific retirement age and eligibility criteria will be determined by summer 2025. With the aim of launching Compensation for Retirees under Young-Age Retirement in FY2026 based on external experts' opinions, the government will consider increasing the subsidy's benefit level. In addition, consideration will be given to leveraging retired JSDF personnel as external resources.

See Fig. IV-1-1 (Increase in the Lifetime Income of JSDF Personnel (image) Model Case of the Current Income for a Member Who Enlisted as a Private and Retired as a Sergeant Major)

2 A system that certifies external human resources specialized in disaster prevention as possessing necessary knowledge and experience for appointment as "disaster prevention officers" and "crisis management officers" in local governments.

Fig. IV-1-1 Increase in the Lifetime Income of JSDF Personnel (image) Model Case of the Current Income for a Member Who Enlisted as a Private and Retired as a Sergeant Major



Section 4 Other Initiatives

In addition to the above, Japan will also strengthen efforts to secure high-quality human resources as JSDF personnel and to gain broad public understanding of their contributions to safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of the people of Japan. The Japanese people have high expectations especially of the JSDF, and it is indispensable for the JSDF to gain their support and trust all the time to fully exercise its ability to complete its duties. Regarding this, the series of incidents[3] disclosed in July and December 2024, which undermine such support and trust, should never have happened. The MOD/JSDF will continue to treat these matters with the utmost seriousness, uphold strict discipline, and take thorough measures to prevent any recurrence. Furthermore, compliance and auditing functions will be continually enhanced—including prevention of human error and misconduct through systemization and digitization—to create an environment in which the JSDF and its individual personnel always perform their duties with a high sense of mission and ethics. Additionally, the MOD/JSDF will promote public understanding of JSDF activities in defense, security, and disaster response through the dispatch of instructors to courses at relevant institutions and other initiatives by leveraging the MOD/JSDF's knowledge and experience. Moreover, from the perspective of reinforcing the MOD/JSDF's human resource base, an office dedicated to strengthening the base will be established within the MOD's Bureau of Personnel and Education to enhance the ministry's human resource consideration framework. Accordingly, a range of initiatives will be undertaken, including collaborating with local governments on JSDF personnel recruitment and enhancing public relations and recruitment efforts to promote JSDF personnel employment.

3 Unauthorized disclosure of specially designated secrets at the MOD, power harassment by senior officials in the MOD's internal bureau, service-related misconduct in the MSDF (benefit fraud and unauthorized food consumption), and improper conduct associated with a submarine repair contract

Chapter 2 Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

The MOD/JSDF is required to ensure the development of the capabilities outlined in the National Security Strategy of Japan and other policies and to undertake all initiatives necessary for national defense. However, JSDF personnel recruitment has declined in recent years, while a growing challenge has emerged in securing administrative officials, such as technical and engineering officials in research positions to support the expanding operations of the Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Agency. To this end, in July 2024, the MOD/JSDF established the Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base, chaired by the State Defense Minister. After discussions at three Expert Panel meetings, an interim report was compiled in August of the same year. Taking into account various social challenges stemming from population decline and recent technological trends including AI, the report identified three consideration directions to reinforce the human resource base essential for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities: (1) enhancing the appeal of the profession, including in terms of treatment, (2) boosting unit capabilities through labor-saving and unmanned systems utilizing AI and other such means, and (3) utilizing external human resources, including the veteran and the private sector.

Regarding the direction of initiative (1)—enhancing the appeal of the profession, including in terms of treatment—in addition to the initiatives outlined in the Basic Policy, efforts will be made to further heighten Japan's social recognition of the JSDF personnel's unique and noble profession, thereby attracting higher-quality personnel. As for initiative (2)—boosting unit capabilities through labor-saving and unmanned systems utilizing AI and other such means—to address new requirements on the organizational structure and the human resource base amid emerging new ways of warfare, efforts will include a review of existing units, the discontinuation and early removal of obsolete equipment in light of changing character of warfare, and the introduction of labor-saving and unmanned equipment and AI. With respect to initiative (3)—utilizing external human resources, including retired personnel and the private sector—private contractors and other stakeholders will be actively leveraged, and JSDF personnel will be assigned to roles tailored to new ways of warfare. Furthermore, from the standpoint of ensuring operational continuity during contingencies, JSDF Reserve Personnel will be fully leveraged and their roles expanded aboard Private Finance Initiative (PFI) vessels and across other industries.

REFERENCE: The Report of the Expert Panel on Reinforcing the Human Resource Base of the MOD/JSDF (Japanese Only)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/meeting/kiban/index.html

REFERENCE: Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/meeting/human_resource/index.html

Chapter 3 Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Section 1 Initiatives to Reinforce the Human Resource Base

The core element of defense capability is JSDF personnel. To demonstrate defense capability, the MOD/JSDF will secure the necessary personnel and reinforce the human resource base to create an environment that enables all JSDF personnel to demonstrate their own abilities while maintaining high morale and pride.

1 Strengthening Initiatives in the Recruitment Phase

1 Recruitment

In order for the MOD/JSDF to execute its various missions properly, it is vital to stably secure excellent human resources even in the severe recruiting environment with a decreasing number of people eligible for recruitment due to a declining birth rate. The competition to secure human resources remained fierce, continuing from the previous fiscal year. However, the number of recruitments in FY2024, especially for candidates for uniformed JSDF personnel and general candidates for enlistment (Upper) who will be E1-E3 level, was approximately 8,000. The number of recruitments for uniformed JSDF personnel candidates increased for the first time in five years, while that of general candidates for enlistment (Upper) continues to decline but shows signs of bottoming out. The sufficiency rate of uniformed JSDF personnel as a whole is approximately 90%, and securing human resources remains an urgent issue. For this reason, it is necessary to recruit those with a strong desire to join the JSDF by further sufficiently explaining to potential applicants about the missions, roles, and duties of the JSDF.

To strengthen the recruitment capabilities, the MOD/JSDF is promoting digitization and online dissemination of recruitment PR videos and materials as well as dissemination of information via social networking services. Since November 2024, to enhance graduate recruitment, the MOD has partnered with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare to recruit general candidates for enlistment (Upper) and candidates for JSDF personnel through Public Employment Security Offices, and will continue to actively promote this effort.

Additionally, the Provincial Cooperation Offices based in 50 locations throughout Japan recruit and employ JSDF personnel, etc., attentively with the cooperation of local governments, schools, recruitment counselors, and others. Since October 2024, efforts have been underway to further promote the activities of recruitment counselors. Furthermore, in line with the Basic Policy, the personnel and material infrastructure of the Provincial Cooperation Offices will be strengthened to bolster recruitment activities. Accordingly, in February 2025, the Ota and Yokohama Branches were relocated to sites better suited for recruitment and PR activities.

Moreover, local governments carry out some of the administrative activities regarding the recruitment of uniformed JSDF personnel and candidates for uniformed JSDF personnel, including announcing the recruitment period and promoting the JSDF as a workplace, with the MOD bearing the requisite cost. The number of municipalities

State Defense Minister Honda inspecting the Maritime Self Defense Force Exhibition (March 2025)

MOVIE: JSDF recruitment channel
URL: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwvH00eFWmfs-FGkRCorzdA

VOICE

Personnel Recruitment Initiatives by the MOD/JSDF are Standing on a New Starting Line

TANAKA Hirohisa, Lieutenant, Director of the Ota Branch, Tokyo Provincial Cooperation Office

The Ota Branch of the Self-Defense Forces Tokyo Provincial Cooperation Office where I work is the office which has served as the entry point for approximately 2,500 JSDF personnel since 1974. When I took up my post in 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic was just coming to an end and competition to acquire human resources had become extremely fierce. Even in these circumstances, we have proactively carried out public relations activities at local events and explained about being JSDF personnel as an occupation, so that people can feel closer to the JSDF.

The author giving an explanation at the recruitment booth

In February 2025, the Ota Branch was relocated to a new office as a part of our reinforcement of public relations and recruitment aimed at the promotion of hiring. The new Ota Branch has been reborn as an office equipped with design and functionality, with a consistent theme and design which will increase the likability and trustworthiness of the JSDF and instill a positive brand image in the hearts of potential recruits, making them feel "I want to go and see it," "it is an agreeable place to be," "I want to come here again" and "I want to invite my friends." I am grateful to the many people who helped with the office relocation. The Ota Branch, which is standing on a new starting line, will continue to grow going forward with guidance from everyone in the region. Without forgetting the spirit of "challenge," all of our staff will continue working together to spread the word about the appeal of the JSDF to many people, so that they can be sent to serve in the JSDF.

Ota Branch of the Self-Defense Forces Tokyo Provincial Cooperation Office

providing information on recruitment targets to the JSDF, whether electronically or on paper, has risen year by year, reaching about two-thirds of all municipalities in FY2024. The MOD has partnered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, aiming to collect necessary information on recruitment targets from all applicable municipalities—whether electronically or on paper—to streamline recruitment administration, and will reinforce cooperation with local governments for necessary support.

2 Employment

(1) Uniformed JSDF Personnel

Based on a voluntary system that respects individuals' free will, uniformed JSDF personnel are recruited under various categories. Additionally, personnel management[1] of uniformed JSDF personnel differs from that of general civilian public employees due to the need to maintain the JSDF's strength. With consideration given to the knowledge, experience, physical strength, and other factors necessary to perform the duties of the respective ranks, the JSDF has an "Early Retirement System" where the majority of uniformed personnel retire after their mid-50s and a "Fixed-Term System" where one term lasts two or three years.

The upper age limit for the recruitment of candidates for uniformed JSDF personnel and general candidates for enlistment (Upper) was raised in 2018 from "under 27" to "under 33" in order to secure diverse human resources from a broader range, including people with work experience in private companies. Also, the upper age limit for the recruitment of ASDF aviation cadets has been raised from "under 21" to "under 24" in FY2024. As a new adoption system, the MOD/JSDF has newly established Officer Candidate Sergeants, for which individuals are recruited to become future officers

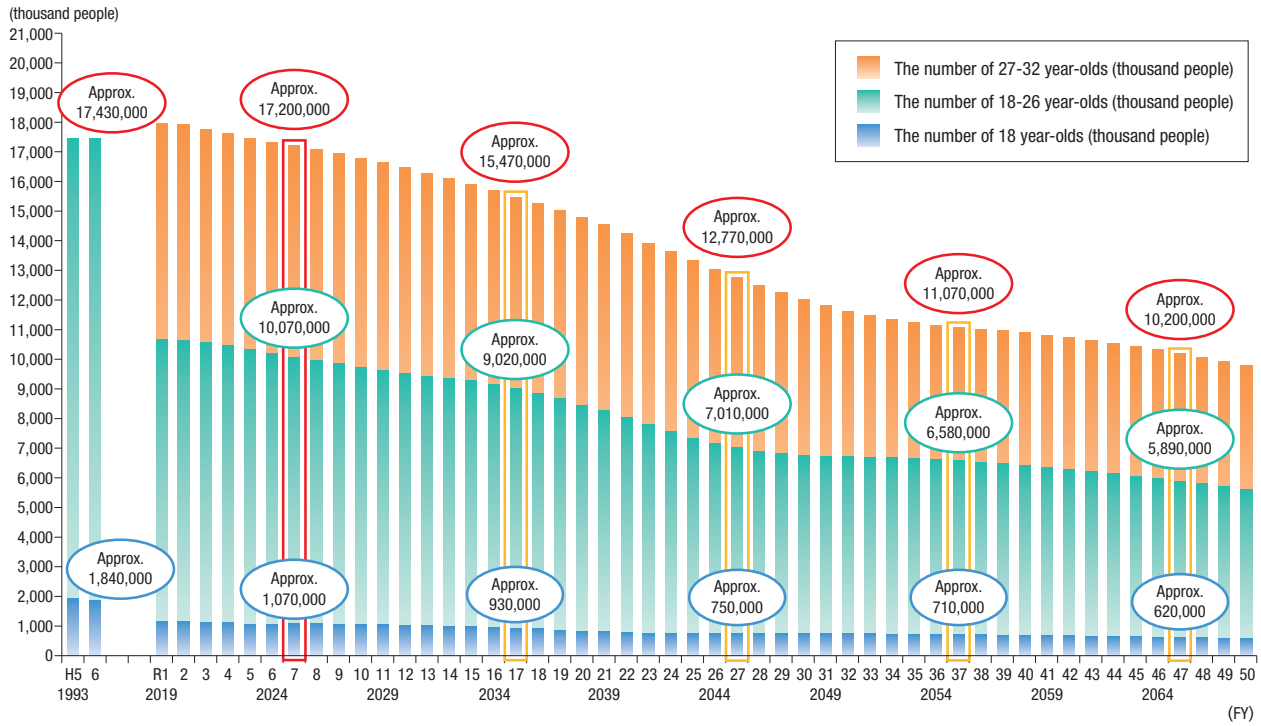
1 JSDF personnel are designated as special national public employees under Article 2 of the National Civil Service Law.

after serving approximately five years as enlisted personnel and non-commissioned officers. Its recruitment has begun in 2025. Furthermore, in line with the Basic Policy, with regard to fixed-term JSDF personnel who are appointed for two- or three-year terms, the existing JSDF Personnel Candidate System will be abolished. A new fixed-term JSDF Personnel will be established, for which individuals will be recruited as JSDF personnel from the outset. Its recruitment is scheduled to begin in FY2026. In addition, as a measure that lasts until the new fixed-term JSDF Personnel system is established, the lump-sum allowance for enlisted JSDF personnel was raised to 344,000 yen in FY2025, an increase of 123,000 yen over the current amount. Moreover, to strengthen the JSDF's human resource base in anticipation of future ways of warfare, the JSDF Scholarship Program[2] will be further expanded, raising the amount to 960,000 yen, an annual increase of 312,000 yen over the current amount. As well, the PR for support programs will be enhanced to facilitate "new JSDF graduates" in pursuing next steps after completing their duties, and re-employment opportunities will also be broadened. Additionally, the employment examination will be reviewed. The employment examination for candidates for JSDF personnel and general candidates for enlistment (Upper) will be conducted partially online. Concurrent applications to the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF general enlistment examinations, which are currently not permitted, will be allowed starting in FY2025. Revisions to reduce examinees' burden will also be considered for other recruitment categories.

In terms of utilizing human resources from the private sector, efforts have been made to strengthen mid-career recruitment, including recruiting mid-career officers and technical sergeants with national qualifications and licenses for specialized skills and recruiting more former uniformed JSDF personnel who had retired mid-career. In addition, a bill was submitted to the Diet in February 2024 and passed in May of the same year for the introduction of a Fixed-Term Uniformed JSDF personnel System, under which highly skilled individuals from outside the MOD/JSDF with specialized knowledge and skills in domains such as cyberspace will be hired as uniformed JSDF personnel for a term of up to five years.

See Section 1-6 (Initiatives for Retirement and Re-employment), Fig. IV-3-1-1 (Changes in the Number of People Eligible for Recruitment), Fig. IV-3-1-2 (Overview of Appointment System for JSDF Personnel), Reference 64 (Authorized and Actual Strength of Uniformed JSDF Personnel and Changes in Them (Over the Past 10 Years)), Reference 65 (Status of Application and Recruitment of Uniformed JSDF Personnel)

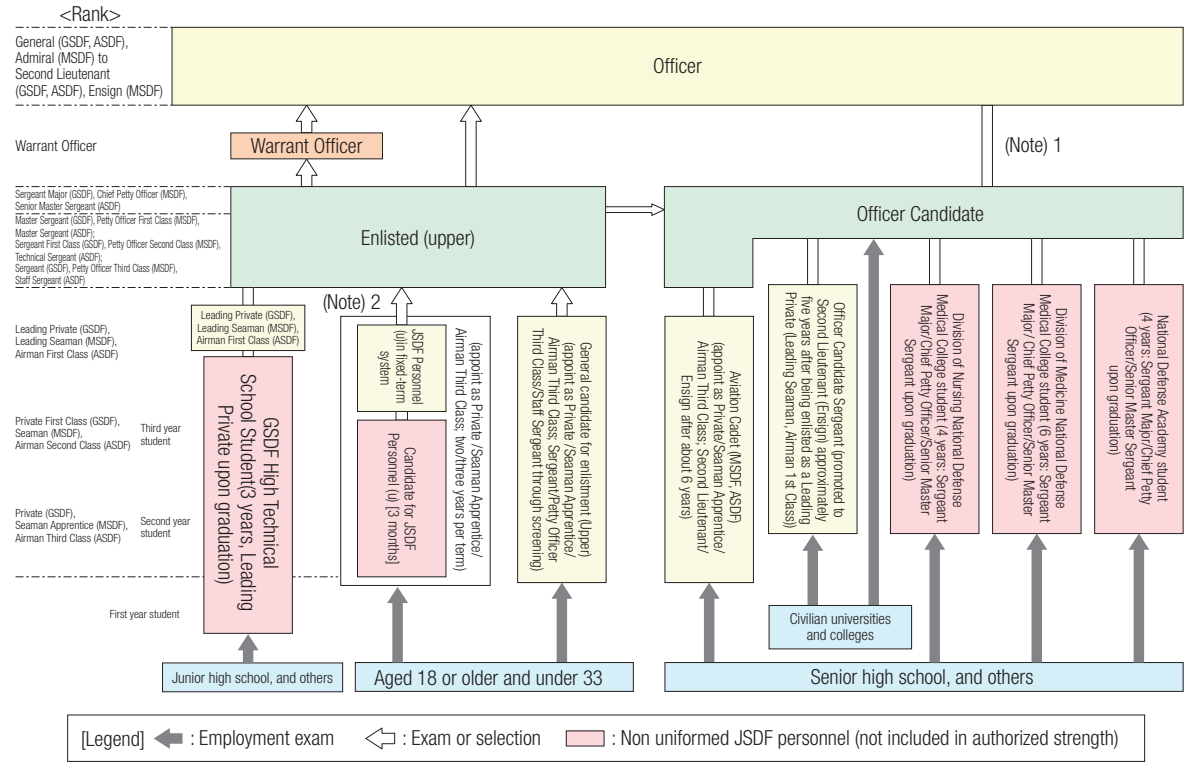
Fig. IV-3-1-1 Changes in the Number of People Eligible for Recruitment



Material sources: The numbers for FY1993, FY1994 and FY2019 are based on "Population Estimates of Japan 1920 - 2000" and "Current Population Estimates," Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
Data from FY2020 onward are based on "Population Projection for Japan" (medium estimates in April 2023), National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

2 A scheme whereby the MOD extends educational loans to individuals who are majoring or intend to major in science, engineering, literature (languages), or law at universities (including junior colleges and graduate schools), colleges of technology, or technical schools as specified by the School Education Act, or foreign institutions equivalent to these schools and who, upon graduation (or completion), intend to apply their specialized academic expertise to continued service in the JSDF.

Fig. IV-3-1-2 Overview of Appointment System for JSDF Personnel



(Notes) (1) The graduates from prescribed education and training course are commissioned as a Second Lieutenant (GSDF and ASDF) or an Ensign (MSDF,) while the graduates with master's degree of civilian universities and colleges passed through the master's degree graduate exam as well as the graduates from National Defense Medical College School of Medicine, Dental Officer Candidates, and Pharmacist Officer Candidates are commissioned as a First Lieutenant (GSDF and ASDF) or a Lieutenant Junior Grade (MSDF).

(2) Fixed-term enlistees are to engage exclusively in fundamental education and training as non-regular MoD personnel for three months after enlistment, in order to enrich their initial education and training from July 2010.

(2) Defense Officials, Instructors, and Other Talent

There are approximately 21,000 talent—defense officials, instructors, and others[3]—in addition to uniformed JSDF personnel in the MOD/JSDF. They are recruited through interviews from those who have passed the Recruitment Examination for Comprehensive or General Service National Public Employees conducted by the National Personnel Authority (NPA), and those who have passed the Recruitment Examination for Ministry of Defense Specialists conducted by the MOD. In recent years, initiatives have been undertaken to recruit experienced talent, fixed-term employees on two- to five-year contracts, and part-time staff.

Among hired employees, administrative officials are responsible for planning and developing various policies pertaining to overall security policy, including defense administration and JSDF operations, at the internal bureaus of the MOD and the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency (ATLA), etc. They also handle the collection, analysis, and evaluation of international affairs at the Defense Intelligence Headquarters (DIH) and perform administrative tasks at JSDF facilities, the Regional Defense Bureaus, and other locations nationwide.

Technical and engineering officials are engaged in policy planning and development related to defense facilities (headquarters, runways, magazines, etc.) and physical infrastructure such as defense equipment at the internal bureaus of the MOD and ATLA, etc. They are also responsible for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating cutting-edge technology information at the DIH, as well as constructing defense facilities, carrying out research and development, efficient procurement, maintenance and development of equipment essential for JSDF's operations, providing mental health care for JSDF personnel, and performing other duties at JSDF facilities, the Regional Defense Bureaus, and other locations nationwide.

Instructors conduct advanced research across a broad spectrum of security domains and provide high-quality education to JSDF personnel at the National Defense Academy, National Defense Medical College, National Institute for Defense Studies, and other organizations.

With the Japan's working-age population on a downward

3 Among the employees of the MOD, special national public employees are called "JSDF personnel," including administrative officials, technical and engineering officials, instructors, and others, in addition to uniformed JSDF personnel.

trend and competition for securing talent expected to become increasingly fierce, Japan's defense policies have been more expanded, diversified and complicated for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities. In light of these circumstances, it is essential to secure and retain talent with expertise and those necessary for the expansion, diversification, and growing complexity of tasks while undertaking various work efficiency initiatives, such as reviewing existing operations and organizational structures.

With applicants for the National Public Employee Recruitment Examinations declining, securing defense officials for the MOD has become an urgent task. Accordingly, through the proactive use of widely adopted private sector employment and career information channels and strengthened university outreach, the MOD will actively promote the appeal of working within the Ministry and intensify efforts to recruit experienced talent.

Improvements in management across the MOD/JSDF, coupled with the provision of career development opportunities for employees, will transform the organization into an attractive environment where employees can fully exercise their abilities with a sense of fulfilment. For this purpose, management education and expertise improvement training will be enhanced, while to properly recognize the efforts of outstanding talent and achieve more effective outcomes, appointments irrespective of recruitment categories will be conducted. The working environments will also be improved, including measures to alleviate the burden on defense officials responsible for the increasingly diversified and complex defense administration.

See Reference 66 (Breakdown of Ministry of Defense Employees, etc.)

2 Utilization of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others

It is essential to secure the required number of uniformed JSDF personnel promptly depending on situational changes in the event of a crisis. To secure the required number promptly and systematically, the MOD maintains the following three systems:[4] the JSDF Reserve Personnel system, the JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel system, and the Candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel system.

JSDF Reserve Personnel, upon receiving a defense call-up order or other orders, will be commissioned as JSDF personnel and carry out logistical support and base guard duties alongside active-duty JSDF personnel. On the other hand, JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel, upon receiving a defense call-up order or other orders, will be commissioned as JSDF personnel and, as part of frontline units, undertake missions alongside active-duty JSDF personnel. Candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel, some of whom are recruited among those with no prior experience as uniformed JSDF personnel, are appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel after completing the necessary education and training.

Until now, JSDF Reserve Personnel and Ready Reserve Personnel have been summoned during large-scale disasters such as earthquakes or typhoons, and the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Disaster Relief Operations, JSDF Reserve Personnel and Ready Reserve Personnel qualified as doctors or nurses were dispatched to provide medical support (mobile medical visits) and daily life support (transportation of goods) in the affected areas.

In FY2024, which marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the JSDF Reserve Personnel System, a 70th-anniversary project hosted by the GSDF Chief of Staff was held alongside the annual JSDF Reserve Personnel central training, actively boosting personnel morale and promoting the system.

Project for the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of the JSDF Reserve Personnel System (May 2024)

Since the majority of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others are engaged in their respective jobs in peacetime, the understanding and cooperation of their employers are essential for them to attend training, etc. For this purpose, a "special subsidy for companies employing JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel" is provided to employers that implement necessary measures to ensure that JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel can participate in training and other activities with peace of mind.

Moreover, in order to secure their understanding and cooperation regarding the duties of JSDF Reserve Personnel and JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel, employers of these personnel are provided with a "special subsidy to secure understanding and cooperation from employers regarding the duties of JSDF Reserve Personnel" in the event that JSDF Reserve Personnel or JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel respond to a defense operation call-up order or disaster relief

4 Many other countries also have reserve personnel systems.

call-up order, etc., or if they have no choice but to leave their regular occupations due to injuries during their duties, etc. Moreover, a "special subsidy for companies cooperating with training of JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel" is provided to employers when individuals who, after serving as Candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel and being appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel, complete the prescribed education and training and are subsequently appointed as JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel.

The MOD is currently reviewing the systems related to JSDF Reserve Personnel based on the Defense Buildup Program (DBP). Specific initiatives include relaxing the age requirements for recruiting Candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel (general) and permitting appointment of JSDF Reserve Personnel up to the system's statutory age limit. In addition, starting in April 2025, efforts to secure JSDF Reserve Personnel are promoted by uniformly raising the upper age limit for recruitment of Sanso (Sergeant (GSDF)/ Staff Sergeant (ASDF)/Petty Officer 3rd Class (MSDF)) and above to under 62.

Furthermore, to actively utilize JSDF Reserve Personnel—from the perspective of leveraging them for routine JSDF duties and ensuring operational continuity in contingencies—the MOD/JSDF will consider expanding their deployment to Private Finance Initiative (PFI) vessels and other industrial sectors and is also striving to promote their employment by external contractors.

Among others, as part of the Basic Policy for improving

Fig. Ⅳ-3-1-3 Overview of the System for JSDF Reserve Personnel and Others

As of April 1, 2025

	JSDF Reserve Personnel	JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel	Candidate for JSDF Reserve Personnel
Basic concept	● Upon the issuance of a defense call-up order or other orders, serve as JSDF Personnel	● Serve as JSDF Personnel in a pre-designated GSDF unit, as part of the basic framework of defense capability	● Appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel in the GSDF or MSDF upon completion of education and training
Call-up duty and other duties	● Defense call-up, civil protection call-up, disaster call-up, training call-up	● Defense call-up, civil protection call-up, security call-up, disaster call-up,training call-up	● Education and training call-up
Eligibility	● Former JSDF Personnel, former JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel, former JSDF Reserve Personnel	● Former JSDF Personnel, former JSDF Reserve Personnel	(Common to General and Technical Employment Categories) ● Those with no experience as JSDF personnel (including those with less than a year of JSDF experience)
Age	● Leading privates and lower JSDF Reserve Personnel: 18 to under 55 years old ● Officer, Warrant Officer, NCO: Aged 18 or older and under 62	● Leading privates and lower JSDF Reserve Personnel: 18 to under 50 years old ● Officer, Warrant Officer, NCO: Under the age of three years subtracted from respective retirement age	● General: 18 to under 52 years old; Technical: between the age of 18 and under 53 or 55 depending on technical skills possessed
Employment	● Employed by screening, based on application ● Candidate for JSDF Reserve Personnel is appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel upon completion of education and training	● Employed by screening, based on application	● General: Employed by examination, based on application ● Technical: Employed by screening, based on application
Rank designation	● Former JSDF Personnel, former JSDF Reserve Personnel and former JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel; Designated rank at the point of retirement in principle ● Enlisted from Candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel • General: Private • Technical: Designated according to skills and length of experience	● Former JSDF Personnel and former JSDF Reserve Personnel: Designated rank at the point of retirement in principle	● Not designated
Term of service	● Three Years (continuation of appointment is possible) [Maximum age limit for appointment: Under 65 years] * The age limit has been temporarily lifted for the continuation of appointment of certain JSDF Reserve Personnel with specific skills [Common] Medical [GSDF] Maintenance, electricity, construction and radiation management [MSDF] Vessels [ASDF] Language	● Three Years (continuation of appointment is possible [Maximum age limit for appointment: Same as the mandatory retirement age of JSDF personnel]	● General: Within three years ● Technical: Within two years
(Education) Training	● Although the Self-Defense Forces Law designates a maximum of 20 days per year, actual implementation is 5 days per year as a standard	● 30 days per year	● General: 50 days within three years (equivalent to Candidate JSDF personnel (private level) course) ● Technical: 10 days within two years (training to serve as JSDF Personnel by utilizing their special skills)
Promotion	● Promotion is determined by screening the service record of personnel who have fulfilled the service term (actual serving days)	● Promotion is determined by screening the service record of personnel who have fulfilled the service term (actual serving days)	● Since there is no designated rank, there is no promotion
Benefits, allowances, and other terms	● Training Call-up Allowance: 11,000 yen/day ● JSDF Reserve Allowance: 12,300 yen/month ● Continuous Service Incentive Allowance: 70,000 yen/term (newly introduced) * The Training Call-up Allowance of 13,200 yen/day supports the training of JSDF Reserve Personnel who are former candidates for JSDF Reserve Personnel in order for them to become JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel.	● Training Call-up Allowance: 17,100-26,300 yen/day ● JSDF Ready Reserve Allowance: 18,500 yen/month ● Continuous Service Incentive Allowance: 215,000 yen/one term	● Education and Training Call-up Allowance: 8,800 yen/day
Special subsidy for companies employing JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel	● Special subsidy for companies cooperating with training of JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel: 560,000 yen/personnel * Provided when an JSDF Reserve Personnel who is a former candidate for JSDF Reserve Personnel is appointed as an JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel.	● Special subsidy for companies employing JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel: 42,500 yen/month	–
	● Special subsidy to secure understanding and cooperation from employers regarding the duties of JSDF Reserve Personnel: 34,000 yen/day		

Note: Allowances, including those for JSDF Reserve Personnel, reflect the increased amounts as of FY2025.

VOICE

Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of the JSDF Reserve Personnel System and the Voices of an Active Member of the JSDF Reserve Personnel and an Employer

TAKEDA Sho, Representative Director, P&A Co., Ltd.

Our company is based in Osakasayama City, Osaka Prefecture, and sells oral care preventive products exclusively for dental clinics via online mail order. We aim to be a company that can provide the items our customers want by stocking a wide range of more than 10,000 specialized products, including toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Currently, we have one member of the JSDF Reserve Personnel working for our company. She has gained the fundamental qualities of a member of society, such as courtesy, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to respond to questions in an assured manner, which she cultivated during her time as JSDF personnel. She also learned the job quickly and now has become an indispensable member of our workforce.

When she participates in the JSDF Reserve Personnel call-up training, our company provides her with as much backup as possible, including flexibly adjusting her work hours and days, and assigning our other members to support her work when she takes time off suddenly, and so on. She is necessary human resources for our country, able to play an active role when there is a contingency, and so we would like to make a contribution to society to the best of our ability through employment of JSDF Reserve Personnel and others and use of the systems.

Mr. TAKEDA Sho, Representative Director, P&A Co., Ltd.

HATTORI Tomoko, Reserve Sergeant 1st Class, P&A Co., Ltd.

I am now working at P&A Co., Ltd., “a specialty store for the mouth” which sells oral care preventive products.

Although I have only been working here for a short time, I feel that my job is rewarding thanks to my great superiors and colleagues, and they understand my participation in training, so it is a very pleasant workplace. I am currently in charge of product management and shipping management operations, and I take care to be “accurate, careful, and prompt” to ensure there are no losses for our corporate or individual customers, or our own company. I served in the 37th Infantry Regiment stationed at Camp Shinodayama for two years and immediately after retiring I was commissioned as JSDF Reserve Personnel. As of this year, 21 years have passed since then. I was honored to receive a certificate of commendation directly from the Chief of Staff, Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) in recognition of my long service. I am grateful to my family for the fact that I have been able to continue as JSDF Reserve Personnel until now.

In the current fiscal year, I have participated in the central training conducted at Camp Asaka, where I learned about the high aspirations and achievements of JSDF Reserve Personnel chosen and called up from regions all over Japan, which was very inspiring. During the life-saving training simulating a disaster at the exercise ground, I realized that quick situational awareness and teamwork are extremely important and that it is also important to be aware of these things on a daily basis. Therefore, I volunteered to be JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel because I wanted to participate in training more actively. I am a little anxious about my physical strength and experience, but I will increase the things I can do so that I will not have any regrets. Going forward, I intend to act with a goal in mind each day and work diligently to balance my work life and my role as JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel.

Working while utilizing the sense of responsibility she cultivated during her time as JSDF personnel (Reserve Sergeant 1st Class Hattori)

benefits, JSDF Reserve Allowance and Training Call-up Allowance is increased.[5] Also, a new "Continuous Service Incentive Allowance" is granted to JSDF Reserve Personnel who complete one term of service with outstanding performance.[6] In addition to expanding the Higher Education Support Benefits System,[7] the renewal of uniforms and equipment used by JSDF Reserve Personnel, etc. will be promoted. Additionally, "Special Subsidy for Ensuring Business Continuity of JSDF Reserve Personnel" has been established to support JSDF Reserve Personnel or JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel who run their own businesses, such as sole proprietors, when they are called up for defense duties or if they incur service-related injuries in the course of their duties. Measures will also be taken to facilitate training participation for public servants who concurrently serve as JSDF Reserve Personnel, etc.

See Fig. IV-3-1-3 (Overview of the System for JSDF Reserve Personnel and Others)

REFERENCE: Overview of systems related to JSDF Reserve Personnel and others
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/reserve/

3 Improvement of Treatment and Other Initiatives for JSDF Personnel

In line with the Basic Policy, amid the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, to duly recognize the special nature of the JSDF duties and working environment and to continue securing highly qualified personnel, allowances for those engaged in particularly specialized duties will be enhanced. In FY2025, new allowances were introduced[8] for JSDF personnel performing air traffic control operations, for aircraft maintenance technician responding to scrambling against airspace incursion, and for personnel engaged in major field exercises and similar operations. Furthermore, flying allowances for aircrew and disaster dispatch allowances were increased,[9] while special operations allowances[10] were also newly granted for personnel in each JSDF service's cyber unit.

Among others, since recruitment of "shi" (E1-E3 level) personnel has become particularly stringent and is an urgent issue, a new benefit (Designated Place Living Adjustment Allowance) will be established. This allowance provides a total of 1,200,000 yen over the six years following enlistment to JSDF personnel, regardless of fixed-term or indefinite-term status, who reside together under special living conditions, such as in barracks, to maintain immediate readiness.

The JSDF personnel salary schedule was established in 1950 with the formation of the National Police Reserve, based on the Public Security Service Salary Schedule (I)[11]—originally applied to primarily police officers—and incorporating a certain amount equivalent to overtime allowances. This salary schedule has remained largely unreviewed to the present day. To ensure that salaries reflect the special nature of JSDF personnel's duties, working environment, and the constraints and burdens imposed on them, surveys on actual overtime practices of JSDF personnel and on the salary systems of military personnel in other countries have been conducted in line with the DBP. Based on the findings of the 2024 working conditions survey and the opinions of external experts to ensure fairness and impartiality, the appropriate standards of the salary schedule and the mechanism for calculating monthly salaries will be reviewed for revision of the salary schedule. Accordingly, the new "Personnel Treatment and Salary Subcommittee" was established within the Defense Personnel Review Board in February 2025. The Subcommittee is currently surveying and deliberating on a wide range of issues concerning JSDF personnel salary and other aspects of personnel treatment.

At the same time, to ensure that JSDF personnel can execute their missions with high morale and pride, measures related to honors and privileges, including expansion of the scope of recipients for conferment of decorations and

5 The JSDF Reserve Allowances will be raised from 4,000 yen to 12,300 yen per month, and the Training Call-up Allowance from 8,100 yen to 11,000 yen per day.
6 The Continuous Service Incentive Allowance currently provided to JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel will be increased from 120,000 yen to 215,000 yen, and a new allowance of 70,000 yen will be provided to JSDF Reserve Personnel. As a result, combined with the JSDF Reserve Allowances and the Training Call-up Allowance, the total payment per term for JSDF Reserve Personnel will increase from approximately 270,000 yen to approximately 680,000 yen, and for JSDF Ready Reserve Personnel at the rank of Sanso (Sergeant (GSDF)/Staff Sergeant (ASDF)/Petty Officer 3rd Class (MSDF)), it will increase from approximately 1,710,000 yen to approximately 2,740,000 yen per term.
7 A scheme providing a fixed amount of subsidy to retired fixed-term JSDF personnel who, upon completing their term, enroll in a university or similar institution in Japan and are appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel during their studies.
8 Allowances for JSDF personnel performing air traffic control operations will, for example, amount to approximately 32,000 yen per month for the rank of Ichii (Captain (GSDF, ASDF)/Lieutenant (MSDF)), while allowances for aircraft maintenance personnel responding to scrambling against airspace incursion will amount to 1,200 yen per day. Allowances for personnel engaged in major field exercises and similar operations will be 1,400 yen per day.
9 The aviation allowances for aircrew will, for example, amount to approximately 289,000 yen per month, an increase of 32,000 yen, while the disaster dispatch allowances will be raised from 1,620 yen to 2,160 yen per day, for fighter pilots at the rank of Ichii.
10 The special operations allowances for personnel of each JSDF service's cyber-specialized units at the rank of Ichii will, for example, amount to approximately 32,000 yen per month.
11 Applicable to national public employees who are police officers, Imperial Guard officers, immigration control officers and personnel serving in prisons and similar institutions.

the appropriate commendation of achievements, will be promoted. In line with the Basic Policy, "the conferment of decorations on living persons" will be reviewed to expand the scope of recipients and appropriately to reflect their achievements into them so that those who have not previously had the opportunity to be recognized.

4 Improvement of Living and Working Environments

The NDS calls for the continued improvement of the living and work environments to enable all JSDF personnel to demonstrate their own abilities while maintaining high morale and pride. Even under the Basic Policy, to enhance the overall performance of the JSDF as an organization, it is essential to build an environment that improves both job satisfaction and ease of working, where each JSDF personnel member feels a sense of purpose in their work. Conversely, living environments within the JSDF are not always privacy-conscious; for example, multiple personnel may reside together in the same room without any private space. However, given the significant impact of the current personnel shortage on the JSDF amid the broader trends of a declining birthrate and an aging population, the JSDF will confront these societal changes head-on and establish living and working environments aligned with the lifestyles of younger generations. Specifically, while JSDF personnel at the rank of Sergeant Major (GSDF), Chief Petty Officer (MSDF), Senior Master Sergeant (ASDF) and below are, in principle, required to reside in barracks, the scope of those permitted to live outside barracks has been relaxed to improve work-life balance. To ensure interpersonal bonds remain strong among personnel while maintaining opportunities for them to acquire basic collective-action skills, efforts will be made to expedite, in a planned manner, the introduction of individual space for each personnel—creating privacy-conscious living environments even within the barracks—with the goal of early completion. In addition, meticulous maintenance work including necessary refurbishments and repairs—taking into account JSDF personnel needs—will continue to improve living and working conditions in office buildings and barracks. Moreover, since JSDF personnel maintain various states of readiness for emergency response, etc., appropriate readiness protocols will be examined for necessary arrangements. For vessel crew members, who are required to reside onboard, the living quarters are particularly cramped and lack privacy, resulting in significant psychological strain during voyages. Accordingly, the living and work environments for these personnel will be improved through measures such as enhancing the appeal of living quarters on new types of vessels and expanding their standby areas. To enable the JSDF to fully demonstrate its capabilities and carry out its missions with high morale, it is also crucial to improve the living environments of personnel and their families. Efforts to renovate the aging of housing have been made continuously, and it is essential to continue promoting these initiatives in the future. To this end, renovations of existing housing and PFI-based rebuilding will be expedited in a planned manner. In parallel, initiatives will be pursued to upgrade housing facilities in line with recent residential trends and to balance living convenience with readiness, thereby further enhancing efficiency of mission execution. Given that communication environment is an indispensable infrastructure of modern society, the JSDF will enhance its communication environment to secure each member's fulfilling life. Specifically, the GSDF will expand wireless LAN coverage in the common areas of welfare facilities and barracks at camps and bases, including equipping every barracks' common area at all camps with at least one wireless LAN access point by FY2025. Furthermore, a communication environment will be established on major vessels by FY2027 through the use of commercial low-Earth-orbit satellite networks[12] that complement operational communications, enabling crew members to contact their families and access the Internet onboard. On the other hand, certain JSDF bases and camps are located in remote areas with limited public transportation and inadequate daily amenities. Thus, external resources will be leveraged to expand bus services to the nearest stations and implement car-sharing services, thereby improving living convenience. [13]

Moreover, routinely worn clothing items, such as uniforms and workwear, will be properly maintained and renewed, with allotments increased and specifications enhanced based on actual usage. With respect to food provisions, food supply will be attractive in accordance with the nutritional intake standards required for personnel activities, and efforts will be made to continuously enhance their appeal. In addition, the actual conditions at bases across Japan will be assessed, and costs arising from price increases will also be appropriately reflected. The health management systems will continue to be reinforced through foundational initiatives, such as expanded medical checkups and the procurement of training equipment. In parallel, new consideration will be given to acquiring devices to monitor each personnel member's health status during education and training.

12 Broadband Internet service utilizing low Earth orbit satellites. Interconnecting network links through numerous low-altitude satellites enables high-speed, low-latency communications.

13 By FY2024, Hyakuri Air Base, Nyutabaru Air Base, and Hofu Minami Air Base contracted with external service providers to transport personnel from each base to the nearest railway station by bus. Beginning in FY2025, bus transportation services will also be available at Komatsu Air Base. Among all JSDF camps and bases, car-sharing services have been introduced at 28 locations as of FY2024, taking into account personnel needs, and their introduction at 19 additional locations is under consideration for FY2025.

5 Human Resources Development

Enhancing the ability of the individual uniformed JSDF personnel who comprise JSDF units is essential for the execution of the units' duties. For this purpose, the respective JSDF training units and schools have been nurturing the necessary qualities and instilling knowledge and skills based on the ranks and duties of uniformed JSDF personnel.

Based on the DBP, the GSDF High Technical School will be jointly operated by the Ground, Maritime and Air JSDF as well as transformed into a coeducational school. The MOD/JSDF will strengthen the joint education in each JSDF service as well as education and research including those of the cyber domain in each JSDF service and at the National Defense Academy. At the same time, the MOD/JSDF will promote standardization of the educational curriculum and utilization of state-of-the-art technologies. Additionally, beginning in FY2025, the National Defense Academy has introduced a curriculum enabling its students to undertake four-year study programs at the U.S. military academies and other institutions.

Furthermore, education requires considerable human, time, and economic commitment, including securing instructors with special skills as well as improving equipment and educational facilities. In the event that personnel need to further improve their professional knowledge and skills, or that it is difficult for them to acquire such knowledge and skills within the JSDF, the MOD/JSDF commissions education to external institutions, including those abroad, as well as domestic companies and research institutes.

REFERENCE: Improvement of Treatment for JSDF Personnel
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/jieikanbosyu/treatment/index.html

6 Initiatives for Retirement and Re-employment

1 Raising of Mandatory Retirement Age

To adapt to increasingly sophisticated equipment, diversified missions, and internationalization, it is important to more effectively utilize personnel who possess extensive knowledge, skills, and experience. Accordingly, between 2020 and 2024, the mandatory retirement ages for JSDF personnel holding ranks from Issa (Colonel (GSDF, ASDF)/ Captain (MSDF)) through Sanso (Sergeant (GSDF)/Staff Sergeant (ASDF)/Petty Officer 3rd Class (MSDF)) were each extended by two years. In line with the Basic Policy and with a view to effectively utilizing personnel's accumulated knowledge, skills, and experience and establishing their new lifetime career plans, a detailed consideration is underway to raise the retirement age for JSDF personnel by approximately two years from FY2028 onward, while balancing extended healthy longevity with the maintenance of their strength. Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF is considering the extension of the current retirement age of 60—currently applied to select service areas—to areas such as space, cyber, and medical sectors where physical demands are recognized low. The specific retirement age and target areas will be determined by around summer 2025.

See Fig. IV-3-1-4 (Rank and Retirement Age of JSDF Personnel)

2 Reappointment

Reappointments, under which retired JSDF personnel are rehired as JSDF personnel on fixed-term contracts

Fig. IV-3-1-4 Rank and Retirement Age of JSDF Personnel

Rank Designation	abbrev.	Retirement Age
General / Lieutenant General (GSDF), Admiral / Vice Admiral (MSDF), General / Lieutenant General (ASDF)	Sho	60
Major General (GSDF), Rear Admiral (MSDF), Major General (ASDF)	Shoho	
Colonel (GSDF), Captain (MSDF), Colonel (ASDF)	Issa	58
Lieutenant Colonel (GSDF), Commander (MSDF), Lieutenant Colonel (ASDF)	Nisa	57
Major (GSDF), Lieutenant Commander (MSDF), Major (ASDF)	Sansa	
Captain (GSDF), Lieutenant (MSDF), Captain (ASDF)	Ichii	56
First Lieutenant (GSDF), Lieutenant Junior Grade (MSDF), First Lieutenant (ASDF)	Nii	
Second Lieutenant (GSDF), Ensign (MSDF), Second Lieutenant (ASDF)	Sani	
Warrant Officer (GSDF), Warrant Officer (MSDF), Warrant Officer (ASDF)	Juni	
Sergeant Major (GSDF), Chief Petty Officer (MSDF), Senior Master Sergeant (ASDF)	Socho	
Master Sergeant (GSDF), Petty Officer First Class (MSDF), Master Sergeant (ASDF)	Isso	
Sergeant First Class (GSDF), Petty Officer Second Class (MSDF), Technical Sergeant (ASDF)	Niso	55
Sergeant (GSDF), Petty Officer Third Class (MSDF), Staff Sergeant (ASDF)	Sanso	
Leading Private (GSDF), Leading Seaman (MSDF), Airman First Class (ASDF)	Shicho	—
Private First Class (GSDF), Seaman (MSDF), Airman Second Class (ASDF)	Isshi	
Private (GSDF), Seaman Apprentice (MSDF), Airman Third Class (ASDF)	Nishi	

(Notes)1 The mandatory retirement age for JSDF personnel who hold the rank of General or Admiral and serve as Chief of Staff of Joint Staff Office, Chief of Staff GSDF, Chief of Staff MSDF, Chief of Staff ASDF, or Commander of the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC), is 62.
2 The mandatory age of retirement for JSDF personnel who hold positions such as physician, dentist, pharmacist, musician, military police officer, or information analyst, is 60.

VOICE

Voices of Reemployed Personnel and the Employer

Open House Co., Ltd.
Ms. SHIIBA Mitsuki, Contact Center, Nagoya Marketing Division, Nagoya Branch Office

After my two terms in the 35th Infantry Regiment at GSDF Camp Moriyama terminated, I joined Open House Co., Ltd. In the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), I was in charge of the major divisions for ensuring communications for command and liaison between units during field training and other such activities, using a full range of electronic communications equipment. Currently, I provide a series of support services from contract to delivery to customers who purchase detached houses.

Initially, I felt anxious about the gap between my work and the JSDF, but our company sets high goals, and I feel that it is very rewarding to work to support my colleagues, who are serious about achieving the goals, and their ideas and stances. Above all, I feel a great sense of accomplishment when I receive words of gratitude from the customers I've worked for and see their smiles when we hand over their home. I feel that the ability to collaborate and spirit of compassion for others I developed during my life in the JSDF as well as the perseverance and ambition I acquired through daily training are of great use in my current job.

I aim to continue to utilize the experience I gained in the JSDF to further my career going forward.

Ms. SHIIBA Mitsuki

Open House Group Co., Ltd.
Mr. SHIZUKA Harumichi, Section Chief, Western Japan Division, Career Recruitment Group, Human Resources Development Department

Our company operates both domestically and internationally, mainly in major cities such as Tokyo, and is a general real estate developer now in its 28th year, striving to be number one in Japan's real estate industry, with its core businesses being detached houses, condominium development, real estate distribution, and American real estate.

Based on our corporate philosophy of "We will create an organization which welcomes motivated people and rewards results," we hire mid-career employees, and in fact I am one of them.

The reason that we considered the hiring of fixed-term JSDF personnel was that we had employees who were former JSDF personnel working for us. The stance of enduring rigorous training every day in a disciplined organization and working hard towards an objective for someone else. This has proven to be quite viable in the business world as well. I expect that Ms. Shiiba will demonstrate her natural leadership skills and drive the organization forward.

Mr. SHIZUKA Harumichi

until reaching the age of 65, will also be further advanced. Specifically, the scope of duties available to reappointed JSDF personnel was expanded and included auxiliary vessel crew operations and aircraft pilotage tasks in 2023; cyberspace and flight inspection tasks in 2024; and space-domain awareness tasks in 2025. Moreover, in line with the Basic Policy, measures will be implemented to secure reappointments of retired JSDF personnel, such as extending reappointment eligibility to those who have once left JSDF service after reaching the mandatory retirement age.

3 Re-employment

In order to maintain the JSDF's strength, most uniformed JSDF personnel retire after their mid-50s, while fixed-term uniformed JSDF personnel retire in their 20s or mid-30s. For many uniformed JSDF personnel, re-employment is essential to safeguard their livelihood. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to provide re-employment support for active uniformed JSDF personnel in order to relieve their anxiety about the future and allow them to devote themselves to their duties.

The DBP also affirms that securing the post-retirement

livelihood of JSDF personnel is a national obligation. Under the Basic Policy, the MOD will cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies to (1) expand re-employment opportunities and (2) enhance vocational training opportunities and strengthen outreach for re-employment, thereby further enriching and reinforcing re-employment support. Currently, the MOD's re-employment support is limited to a single instance upon leaving the JSDF. Therefore, it is impossible for retired JSDF personnel to receive government support once again. Accordingly, a more well-developed lifetime career-planning framework needs to be established. To ensure that JSDF personnel who retire at an early age can continue working in society with peace of mind until reaching the pension eligibility age of 65, the MOD will consider measures, such as providing re-employment support until age 65 and increasing the early-retirement subsidy's benefit level.

(1) Expanding re-employment opportunities

Retired uniformed JSDF personnel have excellent abilities in planning, leadership, faculty, cooperativeness, and responsibility gained through their work performance, education and training. Furthermore, they have various qualifications and licenses acquired through their duties and vocational training. Therefore, they are making positive contributions in a broad range of sectors, including manufacturing and service industries, as well as finance, insurance, real estate, and construction industries, in addition to the areas of disaster prevention and crisis management at local governments. Specifically, as of the end of March 2025, a total of 690 retired JSDF personnel work as crisis management officers and others at the disaster prevention and crisis management departments of local governments: 47 prefectural bureaus have 117 of them in total, and 493 municipal bureaus have 573 all over Japan. Additionally, enabling retired JSDF personnel to apply their knowledge and experience within local governments' disaster prevention and crisis management departments will strengthen cooperation between the MOD/JSDF and these governments and enhance their crisis management capabilities. Accordingly, in March 2025, the Cabinet Office, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and the MOD jointly urged prefectural governors and municipal mayors to further leverage retired JSDF personnel while also reinforcing other re-employment support. At the same time, to facilitate local governments' hiring of retired JSDF personnel, consideration will be given to establishing an appropriate Regional Disaster Prevention Manager System, including necessary financial measures.

In addition, as part of strengthening collaboration with the public sector, in March 2025, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency and the MOD agreed to bolster cooperation in securing personnel for fire departments (auto technicians, marine technicians, etc.) and fire-defense equipment-related companies, as well as in providing seamless re-employment support for retired JSDF personnel. Furthermore, to deepen cooperation with various industries, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), the MOD, and the Nihon Bus Association (along with other business groups) concluded a partnership in June 2024 to secure human resources in relevant sectors and provide seamless re-employment support for retired JSDF personnel; a similar agreement was finalized in March 2025 with the MLIT, the MOD, and the Japan Private Railway Association (and other business groups).

(2) Enhancing vocational training opportunities and strengthening outreach for re-employment

Life planning courses will be newly established for retired JSDF

REFERENCE: Re-employment support (assistance) by the MOD (Japanese Only)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/profile/reemploy/index.html

REFERENCE: Retired JSDF personnel employment guide (GSDF)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/retire/index.html

MOVIE: The GSDF is a rich reservoir of talent – Ready to meet your HR needs! (GSDF)
URL: https://youtu.be/Qaz9KwOeX2U?si=EAOTGgKJed7CXLXb

REFERENCE: Retired JSDF personnel recruitment guidance (MSDF) (Japanese Only)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/recruit/engo/

REFERENCE/MOVIE: Re-employment support (assistance) by the MOD (ASDF) (Japanese Only)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/asdf/rehire/

Fig. IV-3-1-5 Major Occupational Training Provided to Support Re-employment

Re-employment support for uniformed JSDF personnel serving under the fixed-term service system

Career guidance → Occupational aptitude testing → Occupational training → Joint job fair for uniformed JSDF personnel serving under the fixed-term service system → Support for application, job interview, etc. → Re-employment

Re-employment support for uniformed JSDF personnel retiring at an early age

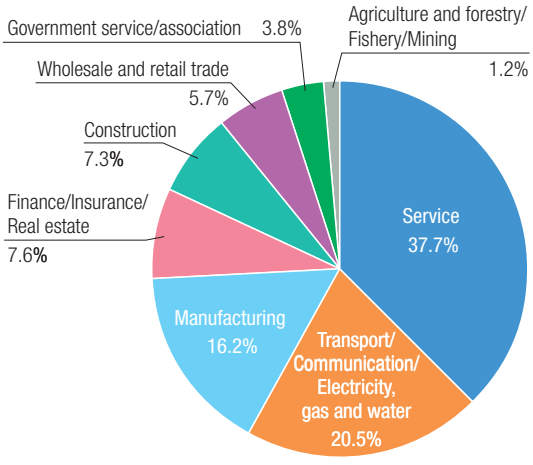
Business management training → Occupational aptitude testing → Occupational training → Employment placement → Support for application, job interview, etc. → Re-employment

Major Occupational Training Provided to Support Re-employment (Accomplishment in FY2024)

Category	Training topics
Vehicle operation	● Large-sized vehicles ● Regular-sized vehicles ● Special (large-sized) ● Semi-medium-sized ● Tractors
Operation of construction and transport machineries and other installations	● Forklifts and shovel loaders ● Heavy-duty vehicle ● Boiler engineer ● Crane
Telecommunication technology	● Electrician ● Licensed electrician ● Installation technician for telecommunication facilities
Handling of dangerous materials	● Hazardous material engineer ● Person responsible for class 3 refrigerating machinery ● Person responsible for manufacturing safety of high pressure gas
Labor management practice, etc.	● Drone operator ● Marine technician (Grades 3 to 6) ● Operation manager ● Labor and social security attorney ● Comprehensive crisis management seminar ● Security guard certification examination ● Career consultant
Information processing technique	● Microsoft office specialist ● IT passport ● Office automation equipment ● Fundamental (applied) information technology engineer
Social welfare	● First-level training for nursing care workers ● Nursing care administration ● Care fitter ● Certified caregiver
Medical affairs	● Medical affairs ● Pharmacy insurance claims administration ● Pharmacy administration ● Registered vendor
Legal practice, etc.	● Real estate transaction specialist ● Administrative scrivener ● Certified professional secretary examination
Other job categories	● Disaster prevention and crisis management education ● Financial planner ● Fire defense equipment officer ● Official Business Skill Test in Book-keeping ● Health officer ● Food and nutrition education seminar ● Preparatory course for civil service examination ● Condominium manager ●TOEIC ● DIY consultant ● EIKEN test in practical English proficiency ● Automobile mechanic ● Welding technician(Gas/arc welding, etc.) ● Fire prevention manager

(Note) The names of the occupational training topics for each category are listed in descending order of the number of participants.

Fig. IV-3-1-6 Re-employment Support in FY2024



Termination of a term
Result of re-employment support for retired personnel

Number of personnel who applied for re-employment support	923
Number of personnel who found a job	919
Percentage of personnel who found a job	99.6%

Early age retirement
Result of re-employment support for retired personnel

Number of personnel who applied for re-employment support	2,456
Number of personnel who found a job	2,440
Percentage of personnel who found a job	99.3%

personnel seeking re-employment, and vocational training will be enhanced by incorporating IT-related subjects or other courses. In doing so, collaboration will also be pursued with relevant institutions such as universities and technical schools to integrate the learning opportunities they offer. Additionally, measures will be taken to simplify the procedures by which retired JSDF personnel can easily obtain public qualifications, such as marine technician and aircraft mechanic, based on the skills they gained during their service. To broaden re-employment opportunities, videos will be produced outlining JSDF personnel's career paths. In addition, to enhance convenience for retiring JSDF personnel and give them access to a wider range of job listings, the Employment Support Information Network System will be introduced to the JSDF Personnel Support Association, which facilitates matching between retiring JSDF personnel and private-sector employers. Currently, the MOD's re-employment support is limited to a single instance upon leaving the JSDF, leaving retired JSDF personnel who seek further employment ineligible for government support; accordingly, a more well-developed lifetime career-planning framework needs to be established. To ensure that JSDF personnel who retire at an early age can continue working in society with peace of mind until reaching the pension eligibility age of 65, the MOD will consider providing re-employment support until age 65 and increasing the early-retirement subsidy's benefit level.

See Fig. IV-3-1-5 (Major Occupational Training Provided to Support Re-employment), Fig. IV-3-1-6 (Re-employment Support in FY2024)

Section 2 Recruiting the Cyber Workforce

The Defense Buildup Program states that the establishment of posture, even under cyberattacks, to secure the JSDF's command and control capabilities as well as its high-priority equipment systems, ensure JSDF's mission accomplishment, and build a framework to support the cyber defense of the defense industry. Accordingly, by around FY2027cyber units such as the JSDF Cyber Defense Command will be expanded to approximately 4,000 personnel. Besides, by providing an education to those engaged in cyber-related duties such as system procurement, maintenance, and operation, the total number of cyber workforce within the MOD/JSDF is planned to reach to about 20,000.

Amid this situation, the environment surrounding the human resources recruitment of the MOD/JSDF is becoming increasingly difficult, while cybersecurity is a common challenge for the entire world, and the importance of cyber workforce is increasing not only within the MOD/JSDF but also in society as a whole. In light of this, it is essential to integrate MOD/JSDF cyber workforce development initiatives with national initiatives.

To this end, the MOD/JSDF will (1) ensure consistency within its policy for securing and developing its workforce and promote consideration of measures for workforce and cross-organizational cooperation related to human resources, and (2) clarify the ideas of the MOD/JSDF regarding cyber workforce and approaching those who aspire to join the MOD/JSDF and external cyber workforce while developing and deepening cooperative relationships with external entities. For these purposes, in July 2024, the MOD/JSDF consolidated the basic review directions into a strategy and published the "JMOD Cyber Workforce Comprehensive Strategy."

1 The MOD/JSDF's Duties and Cyber Workforce

In response to the recent dramatic technology evolution in cyberspace, the threat is becoming more advanced and complex by organized cyber-attackers based on the specialization of tasks. Given this trend, the defense side also needs to respond to advanced threats by utilizing the technical capabilities of each individual and implementing team initiatives in a systematically organized manner. This is no exception even within the JSDF and, in the cyber units, COs, NCOs, AOs, TOs, and others play each role and work together as a team.

In addition, the JSDF cyber workforce must understand not only cyber domains but also JSDF activities as well as the operations within the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF fields supported by the cyber domains before performing their activities. They are also required to have a certain level of understanding of the operations of the various assets of tanks, warships, and fighter aircraft that are connected through cyberspace and to be able to take appropriate action.

The MOD/JSDF possesses specialized institutions including the GSDF System and Signal/Cyber School. It is not necessary to have knowledge of JSDF operations or cyber-related knowledge in advance. Personnel can acquire cyber knowledge, depending on their level, after joining the JSDF with additional opportunities for training and studying externally. In addition, environments are currently in place for persons well-skilled in the cyber field to hone their skills through a wealth of opportunities such as practical training and exchange of opinions. Leveraging these strength, the MOD/JSDF will recruit human resources interested in engaging in the MOD/JSDF cyber operations in the MOD/JSDF and becoming part of a highly skilled cyber workforce.

2 Initiatives for Recruiting the Cyber Workforce

In order to recruit an excellent cyber workforce for the MOD/JSDF, the organizations must recruit and train a wide range of human resources, including those who are interested in MOD/JSDF cyber operations and those with a wealth of cyber knowledge. To this end, efforts will be guided by five pillars: (1) accurate "identification" of the skills and capabilities required of a cyber workforce, (2) appropriate "recruitment" for cyber workforce, (3) appropriate "development," (4) "retention" of a workforce, and (5) "unification" of the entire HR measures. Under these pillars, the following initiatives will be advance the recruit of human resources:

1 Establishing a System That Enables Personnel to Serve Continuously as Cyber Workforce from the Initial Enlistment Stage

In order to further enhance the expertise of those who aspire to work in the cyber field, the MOD/JSDF will establish a career path to continuously engage in cyber-related work from the beginning of service. In addition, those who already have specialized expertise, qualifications, and work experience related to the cyber will be hired as specific fixed-term JSDF personnel, mid-career COs, or technical sergeants and will be flexibly appointed to jobs and posts where they can make use of their experience. Furthermore, The MOD/JSDF will reinforce recruitment by reaching out to an external cyber workforce while making it easier for people to imagine working at the MOD through more visible career paths of personnel engaged in cyber operations and more attractive work experiences in the MOD by establishing a career path accordingly to each individual's working environment for COs, NCOs, AOs, TOs, and others.

2 Expanding "Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel"[14]

For cyber JSDF reserve personnel with cyber skills to engage in the different military missions together with regular JSDF personnel, efforts are underway to broaden operational capabilities with the aim of having such personnel play a part in the operation of the JSDF in such a way as to engage in missions that strongly complement regular JSDF personnel. In order to secure the human resources, the cyber workforce with no experience as JSDF personnel but who play an active role in external organizations are hired as candidates for JSDF reserve personnel, and the initiatives for appointment of the candidates as cyber JSDF reserve personnel are reinforced. To this end, consideration is made to relax physical examination standards and to adapt an early employment of candidates for JSDF reserve personnel as cyber reserve JSDF personnel or as regular JSDF personnel.

3 Leveraging the JSDF Scholarship Program

In order to recruit excellent students who are interested in JSDF cyber operations at an early stage, the JSDF scholarship program, which provides a fixed amount of educational funding each month, is utilized and the assistance is provided to excellent students who are interested in cyber operations while reinforcing outreach activities through the MOD cyber contest and recruitment information sessions, to encourage students to work in JSDF cyber units in the future.

4 Holding the Ministry of Defense Cyber Contest

The MOD/JSDF will reinforce proactive approaches for those who are motivated to work at the MOD by enhancing initiatives, such as MOD cyber contest to discover talented human resources and nationwide recruitment information sessions at universities, high schools, and vocational schools.

5 Conducting Effective PR Activities through Recruitment Information Sessions at Universities, High Schools, and Vocational Schools, as Well as via Online Platforms

The MOD/JSDF introduces the various recruitment categories, such as recruitment of those with experience as an AO/TO, and recruitment as a mid-career CO/technical sergeant and as specific fixed-term JSDF personnel or cybersecurity adviser.

To further promote the acceptance of external human resources with specialized qualifications and work experience, in addition to detailed explanation of the various recruitment categories which meet each individual's lifestyle and desired career, we will reinforce communication with potential candidates for JSDF personnel by providing recruitment information on the MOD cyber workforce and attractive work experiences.

For example, the MOD/JSDF will place advertisements aligned with the gathering times and places targeting the cyber workforce to communicate the attractiveness of the duties, career paths, rewarding experiences, and treatment of the JMOD cyber workforce, and the available JSDF-specific opportunities including joint exercises with the cyber unit of foreign military, thereby actively showcasing the MOD/JSDF-specific attractiveness.

14 JSDF Reserve Personnel with System Protection (Cyber) Skills

Commentary

Toward the Expansion of Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel (MOD Cyber Workforce Comprehensive Strategy)

As cyber attacks become more sophisticated and ingenious every day, securing and developing an excellent cyber workforce is truly a key element in fundamentally reinforcing cyber defense capabilities and building defense capabilities going forward.

Moreover, I believe that as the importance of the cyber workforce increases throughout society, if we can create a virtuous cycle of the cyber workforce between the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the private sector, this will lead to raising the level of the cyber response capabilities of Japan overall.

Based on this recognition, on July 2, 2024, the MOD formulated the MOD Cyber Workforce Comprehensive Strategy to comprehensively explain the basic thinking of the MOD and the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) with regard to securing and developing the cyber workforce.

As part of the various measures outlined in this strategy, we have decided the JSDF Reserve Personnel in the field of cyberspace, who have previously been hired under the skill category of System Protection (Cyber), will be named Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel in order to further motivate the active JSDF personnel and to further expand hiring by making it easier for outsiders to imagine being JSDF Reserve Personnel of this category.

In order to further expand the Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel, the Ministry of Defense will enhance training programs to enable highly skilled external personnel to actively contribute as Cyber JSDF Reserve Personnel, while also continuing to examine their operational roles within JSDF activities.

VOICE

As JSDF Reserve Personnel in the Cyber Domain

OSHIMA Makoto, Reserve Captain, University Academic (Part-Time Lecturer), xFADE Co., Ltd. (Minato-ku, Tokyo/system development and information security consulting)

I worked at a system development company and then established my own company in 2007. While managing my main business, I was hired as a Candidate for JSDF Reserve Personnel through a skills recruitment program in 2011, and after undergoing training, I was appointed as JSDF Reserve Personnel for the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) in April 2013.

My father is former JSDF personnel, so I grew up in a town with a U.S. military camp. I also have memories of camping at a training area with the cooperation of the JSDF when I was a member of the Boy Scouts. These memories have given me an interest in work that protects my country. In the end, I followed a path into the private sector, but with the situation in neighboring countries changing, I continued to have the sense that we were leaving national defense to others and that national defense shouldn't be considered to be someone else's problem. For that reason, I volunteered immediately when I learned about the Candidate for JSDF Reserve Personnel scheme.

In the JSDF Reserve Personnel skills recruitment program, a "Cyber (System Protection)" skills category was newly created from FY2022. Through my activities as JSDF Reserve Personnel, I have been greatly inspired by the members of the training units and my colleagues in the JSDF Reserve Personnel who have a passion for national defense. Even in peacetime, I always make sure that I strive to improve myself, including by obtaining and maintaining international qualifications, and strive to gather information in the cyber domain.

In the FY2024 MOD Staff Cyber Contest, I received a perfect score, and was blessed by the opportunity to bask in the glory of receiving a commendation. Going forward, I will continue to prepare for national defense by honing my skills together with my colleagues.

The author receiving a commendation

Section 3 Further Promotion of Work-Life Balance and Women's Participation

As the security environment surrounding Japan becomes more challenging, a rapidly declining population and falling birth rate are making it more difficult than ever to secure JSDF personnel who are the core of defense capabilities. Under these circumstances, it is expected that an increasing number of MOD/JSDF personnel, both male and female, who are responsible for various duties, will face time and commuting constraints for childcare, and nursing care and other reason due to major changes in the social structure.

Amid such circumstances, ensuring preparedness capable of consistently responding to various situations requires creating an environment that enables staff to be both mentally and physically sound, maintain high morale and pride, and fully demonstrate their abilities. To this end, the MOD/JSDF is promoting better work-life balance and women's active participation based on initiatives such as the NDS.

In 2015, the MOD/JSDF drew up the "Action Plan for Promoting the Active Participation of Female Employees and Work-Life Balance at the MOD" (Action Plan), and in 2021 established a new Action Plan based around the pillars of (1) working style reform to promote work-life balance and (2) reform to promote women's active participation. In 2023, the MOD/JSDF further enhanced initiatives through endeavors by revising the Action Plan to focused on the following five items: (1) promotion of work from home, (2) transitioning to a paperless work environment, (3) rigorous management of working hours, (4) promotion of paternity leave, and (5) establishment of a workplace environment in which all employees can comfortably work.

1 Working Style Reform to Promote Work-Life Balance

1 Value and Mentality Reform

In order to promote working style reform, focus needs to be placed especially on reforming the values and mentality of staff in managerial positions regarding working style. The MOD/JSDF has been issuing top management messages, and conducting seminars and lectures aimed at raising awareness of working style reforms and work-life balance. With the increase of employees facing time/commuting constraints for child/family care, the MOD/JSDF is also promoting correction of long working hours, encouraging taking leave, and telework to ensure proper work-life balance so that all employees can exert their full potential.

In addition, the MOD/JSDF is conducting initiatives for "management reform" aimed at enhancing the management ability of administrative staff. The MOD/JSDF is actively promoting the reassessment and education of capabilities required for JSDF management by fostering JSDF personnel who have acquired leadership skills appropriate for the times, with a particular focus on skills needed for intergenerational management. It is also creating an environment of zero tolerance for any harassment by explicitly stating the direction the JSDF is aiming for as an organization, and working toward the creation of an organization in which all JSDF personnel are highly engaged. Given that harassment erodes trust between personnel and undermines strength, the MOD/JSDF is striving for the understanding and observation of harassment standards by all personnel so that the standards become ingrained throughout the organization.

As improvements in the quality and quantity of operations are being sought after in defense administration, internal bureaus are encouraging endeavors to boost the sense of worthwhile engagement of all employees to maximize organizational performance. Boosting sense of worthwhile engagement requires increasing both (1) a work motivation that arises from a sense of mission, feedback from others, and a keen sense of personal growth, and (2) sense of comfort derived from the workplace environment, personal relationship, and mental and physical well-being, and then combining them. Based on this basic concept, the MOD/JSDF fosters (1) a work motivation, business execution and performance appraisals based on MVV (Mission, Vision and Values) of each division and department, as well as reassignment of talent (internal open recruitment) that encourages self-directed career building based on members' stated interests and ambitions. Moreover, rewards are being given to employees engaged in highly intensive work, such as emergency response. Also, to foster (2) sense of comfort, efforts are being made that include office reform, introduction of online platforms, and significantly bolstering management-related training. It is crucial to implement these measures continuously in a manner that is acceptable to employees, and the entire organization, from top management to general employees, strives to pursue them.

REFERENCE: Promote active participation and work-life balance of female personnel
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/profile/worklife/index.html

2 Working Style Reform in the Workplace

Efforts aimed at the promotion of work-life balance will lead to effective initiatives and the creation of a culture in which employees consider specific measures for improving their workplace environment based on the actual conditions of their workplace. Based on this perspective, the MOD has been holding the "Competition for Initiatives to Promote Working Style Reform at the Ministry of Defense" with awards presented to particularly outstanding initiatives, which are then introduced within the MOD to help other employees reform their working styles.

3 Flexible Working Hours and Location

The MOD/JSDF has introduced early/late shift hours and flexible work schedules so that employees can flexibly choose their working hours. In 2025, it is striving to promote even more flexible working styles through actions such as making flexible work schedules even more accommodating. Work from home has now been made possible at all institutions, except for those jobs where it is not feasible due to the unique nature of the professional duties. The MOD/JSDF will continue to promote digitalization, including the computerization of documents, to encourage establishing work processes enabling tasks to be completed at home.

4 Rigorous Management of Working Hours

Through the systemization of working hour management, surveys conducted on overtime work, etc., efforts are being made to rectify the long working hours that may be detrimental to the physical and mental health and welfare of employees.

5 Development of an Environment that Enables Employees to Play an Active Role while Engaging in Childcare and Nursing Care

The MOD/JSDF is developing schemes that enable employees to balance work with their childcare/nursing care commitments by hiring fixed-term staff to secure alternate staff who take over for those on childcare or other leave. In particular, the MOD/JSDF is endeavoring to support the use of paternity leave or time off work by all male employees with a newborn to encourage them to play a part in home life. The goal is to enable them to take paternity leave or time off for approximately one month or more.

The MOD/JSDF is also developing an environment that enables its employees to balance work life with their family life through various initiatives, such as by providing explanations on systems related to childcare and nursing care, introducing role models, and creating "childcare forms" to help managers and the human resources department better understand the details of the situation surrounding their employees' childcare. A system has also been established to allow JSDF personnel who retired mid-career due to childcare or nursing care commitments to be re-employed.

Support for emergency attendance at work for personnel engaged in disaster relief operation in association with the approach of Typhoon No. 10 (Camp Yufuin; August 2024)

6 Ensuring Childcare Services

To maintain a permanent state of readiness, it is important to develop an environment in which MOD/JSDF personnel can devote themselves to their duties without worrying about childcare or other concerns due to the unique nature of the JSDF personnel's work and the change of the supply-demand balance related to childcare in society as a whole. The MOD/JSDF has set up workplace nurseries at camps and bases in 8 locations across Japan. In addition, in the event of situations where a quick response is required such as disaster relief operation, the MOD/JSDF promotes support measures to provide temporary childcare in JSDF camps and bases for children of JSDF personnel when emergency attendance at work is needed, and has recently been experimenting with temporary childcare services at JSDF camps and bases.

2 Reform to Promote Women's Participation

For the further expansion of the recruitment and promotion of female talent, the MOD/JSDF has been making various efforts to promote the activities of motivated and qualified female talent by setting up specific goals under the Action Plan. Moreover, as part of its efforts related to Women, Peace and Security[15] (WPS), Japan is promoting the participation of women in disaster prevention and disaster response efforts and decision-making for security policy.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-5 (Initiatives to Promote Women, Peace and Security (WPS))

1 Expansion of the Recruitment and Promotion of Female Talent

The MOD/JSDF has set numerical targets in the Action Plan for the systematic expansion of the recruitment and promotion of female talent. In addition, based on NSS, the MOD/JSDF will hasten to systematically promote the development of an educational infrastructure that supports women's activities, as well as women's quarters, toilets, and baths in military buildings and naval vessels in anticipation of a greater number of female JSDF talent.

(1) Female JSDF Personnel

As of the end of March 2025, the number of female JSDF personnel is about 20,000 (about 9.1% of the total JSDF personnel). Compared with ten years ago (end of March 2015 when female JSDF personnel made up about 5.7% of the total JSDF personnel), this is a rise of 3.4 percentage points, indicating that the ratio of female JSDF personnel has been on the rise in recent years.

Regarding the recruitment of female JSDF personnel, the targets for the proportion of newly employed female JSDF personnel among total newly employed JSDF personnel in and after FY2021 and the proportion of female JSDF personnel among total JSDF personnel by FY2030 have increased to at least 17% and 12%, respectively. In 2024, the ASDF abolished the separate recruitment quota for female personnel. In addition, with regard to promotion, the MOD/JSDF aims to increase the proportion of women among JSDF personnel with a rank of field officer or higher to at least 5% by the end of FY2025.

(2) Female Defense Officials, Instructors, and Other Female Talent

As of the end of March 2025, the number of female civilian talent—defense officials, technical and engineering officials, instructors, and others—is approximately 5,600 (about 28.1% of the total). Compared with ten years ago (end of March 2015 when females made up 23.6% of the total), this is a rise of 4.5 percentage points, indicating that the ratio of female talent has been on the rise in recent years.

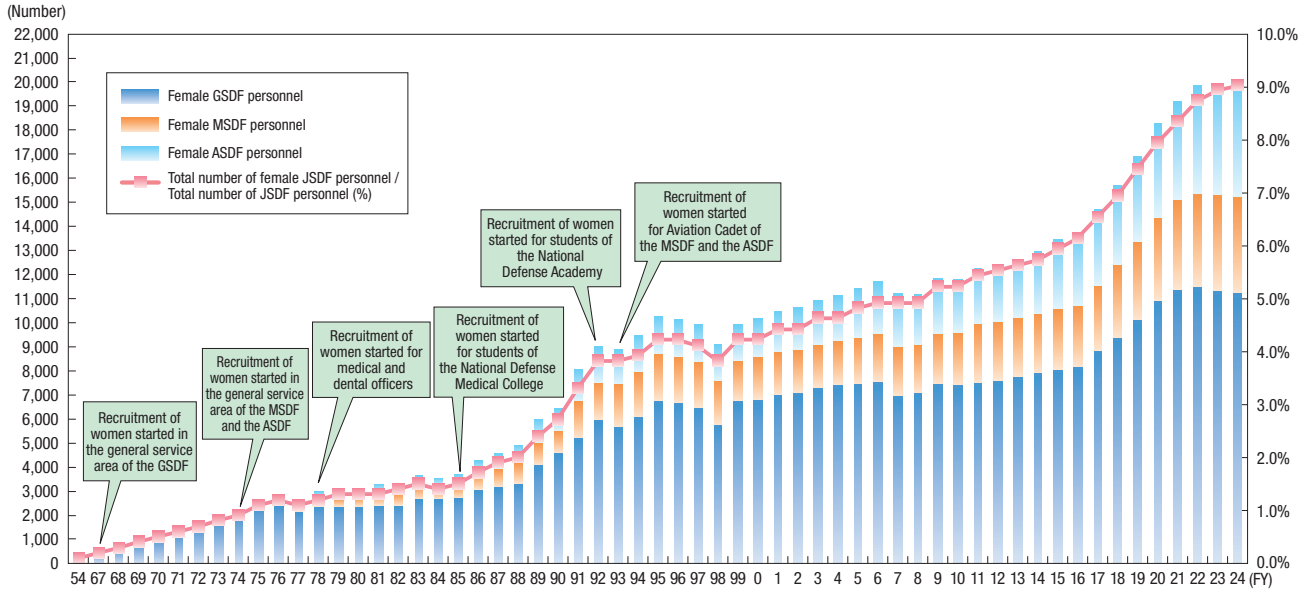
With regard to recruitment, in line with the overall government target, the MOD has set the goal of ensuring that women account for over 35% of recruits in and after FY2021. Regarding promotion targets to be achieved by the

Fig. IV-3-3-1 Women's Participation at the MOD and Targets and Current Values for the Action Plan

	Items	Target	Current value
Recruitment and promotion of female JSDF personnel	Proportion of newly employed female JSDF personnel among total newly employed JSDF personnel	17% or more (After FY 2021)	17.3% (FY2024)
	Proportion of female JSDF personnel among total JSDF personnel	12% or more (By FY 2030)	9.1% (FY2024)
	Proportion of women among JSDF personnel with a rank of field officer or higher	5% or more (By FY 2025)	4.5% (FY2024)
Recruitment and promotion of female talent -defense officials, instructors, and others	The proportion of female talent recruited from those who passed the recruitment examination for national public employees	35% or more (every year)	39.3% (April 1, 2024)
	Proportion of women at the unit chief level in the MOD (Level (I) Class 3 or 4 talent working at the MOD (MOD consists of the internal bureau of the MOD and the internal bureau of Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA))	35% (By FY 2025)	31.4% (July 1, 2024)
	The proportion of women as director of the regional agency division, equivalent to the assistant director in MOD or its equivalent (Level (I) Class 5 or 6 talent)	10% (By FY 2025)	8.5% (July 1, 2024)
	The proportion of women at the division director level in MOD or its equivalent	6% (By FY 2025)	4.7% (July 1, 2024)
	The proportion of women at the designated official level or equivalent	5% (By FY 2025)	3.6% (July 1, 2024)

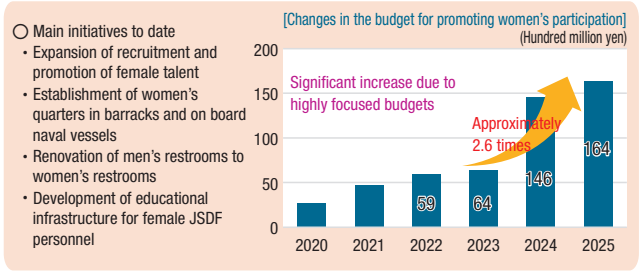
15 A concept that encapsulates the idea that peace is more sustainable when women take the lead and actively participate in all levels of conflict prevention, response and reconstruction, and peacebuilding, as well as disaster prevention, while recognizing the importance of protection and relief for women and girls, and those in need, as they are more vulnerable during conflicts and disasters.

Fig. IV-3-3-2 Changes in Incumbent Female JSDF Personnel



(Note) As of the end of March 2025, the total number of female JSDF personnel is 20,046 (approximately 9.1% of the total number of the JSDF personnel)

Fig. IV-3-3-3 Major Technological Cooperation with National Research and Development Agencies, etc.



end of FY2025 include increasing the proportion of women of the unit chief level at the MOD proper or its equivalent to 35%,division director at local organizations/division deputy director level at the MOD proper or its equivalent to 10%, the division director level at the MOD proper or its equivalent to 6%, and designated official or equivalent to 5%.

See Fig. IV-3-3-1 (Women's Participation at the MOD and Targets and Current Values for the Action Plan), Fig. IV-3-3-2 (Changes in Incumbent Female JSDF Personnel), Fig. IV-3-3-3 (Major Technological Cooperation with National Research and Development Agencies, etc.)

2 Significance of Promoting Active Engagement of Female JSDF Personnel and Personnel Management Policy

With JSDF duties becoming increasingly diverse and complex, JSDF personnel are required more than ever to have multifaceted capabilities, including higher levels of knowledge, decision-making ability, and skills. In addition, under a severe recruitment environment due to the declining birth rate and continuing trend of higher education, it is anticipated that the number of JSDF personnel with time and location restraints, including those involved in childcare, nursing care, and other responsibilities, will significantly increase.

In light of these changes, the JSDF is required to evolve

REFERENCE: Active participation of female JSDF personnel
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/gsdf/jieikanbosyu/about/woman-success.html

MOVIE: Female JSDF personnel are on the job! We're J★Women
URL: https://youtu.be/-bcA9G417vU

from a conventional organization with an emphasis on homogeneity among the members, into an organization that is capable of incorporating diverse human resources in a flexible manner.

At present, the largest human resource that the JSDF has not been able to fully utilize is women, who account for half of the population targeted for recruitment. Promoting the active engagement of female JSDF personnel has the following significance: (1) securing useful human resources; (2) utilizing diverse perspectives; and (3) reflecting values of the nation. For this reason, the MOD/JSDF has decided to open up a path for female personnel with motivation, ability, and aptitude to have opportunities to demonstrate their abilities in various fields, with the aim of doubling the ratio of female JSDF personnel.

In terms of employing and promoting female JSDF personnel, the MOD/JSDF sets out a personnel management policy to ensure equal opportunity between men and women and assign the right person to the right place based on the person's motivation and ability/aptitude.

3 Removal of the Assignment Restriction of Female JSDF Personnel

The MOD/JSDF has gradually reviewed assignment restrictions placed on female JSDF personnel, which have now been almost completely removed.

As a result, the assignment of female JSDF personnel to vocations, such as fighter pilots, paratroopers, and submarine crew members, is currently underway, and the opportunities for female JSDF personnel to play an active role are expanding.

Section 4 Creating an Environment of Zero Tolerance for Harassment of Any Kind

The Japanese people have high expectations of the MOD/JSDF, and it is indispensable for the Ministry to gain their support and trust all the time to fully exercise its ability to complete its duties. In order to meet their expectations to this end, the JSDF personnel are required to be an invariably disciplined existence more than ever.

The MOD/JSDF has taken various measures such as thorough instructions on service discipline in order to foster well-disciplined personnel. However, in recent years, disciplinary action has been taken on the grounds of harassment. In order to exert organizational strength and respond decisively to a wide range of situations, the MOD/JSDF must create a working environment that enables JSDF personnel, who are the core of Japan's defense capability, to perform their tasks confidently with high morale and peace of mind. Harassment, in particular, must not be tolerated, as it destroys mutual trust among the personnel of the MOD/JSDF, which are fundamentally based on unit actions, and shakes the very foundation of the organization.

With this understanding, the MOD/JSDF is committed to addressing harassment cases and harassment prevention measures with a sense of urgency, and creating an environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind.

1 Response to Harassment Victims

The MOD/JSDF provides JSDF personnel with a hotline for consultation. In FY2024, a total of 653 consultations were received.

Notably, many of the consultations are regarding power harassment, which is caused by inadequate cognizance of it among personnel and the communication gap between superiors and their subordinates. To resolve these issues, the MOD/JSDF has (1) provided group training and E-learning to raise awareness and enhance understanding of appropriate behavior among MOD/JSDF personnel, (2) conducted education to promote understanding and enhance leadership capabilities among personnel (particularly those in managerial positions), and (3) taken measures to improve and strengthen the consultation system.

In order to eradicate disciplinary violations, such as assault and battery, power harassment, and so on, the standards for disciplinary action have been tightened more since 2020. During the FY2023, 364 personnel were disciplined on the grounds of harassment. Of these, 17 personnel were subject to the most serious disciplinary action of dismissal[16] (5 power harassment cases and 12 sexual harassment cases).

Furthermore, as some personnel are reluctant to seek advice from the JSDF in-house consultation desk, in addition to the existing consultation desk staffed by lawyers, a new consultation desk staffed by psychological counselors, etc. from outside the JSDF has been provided that is open on weekends, holidays, and during after-hours.

However, despite the various harassment prevention

16 The types of disciplinary action that may be taken include dismissal, demotion, suspension, reduction in pay, and reprimand. The disciplinary actions are determined taking into consideration of a comprehensive evaluation of the causes, motives, circumstances of the disciplinary violation, the position and rank of the offender, and the potential impact on the unit as well as the broader impact.

measures that have been adopted so far, cases of harassment still have occurred and the response was inadequate. One such example is a sexual harassment case[17] involving a former GSDF personnel.

See Fig. IV-3-4-1 (The Number of the Personnel Subject to Have Taken Disciplinary Action for the Substantiated Harassment Case)
Fig. IV-3-4-2 (Changed in the Number of Consultations to the MOD Harassment Hotline)

Fig. IV-3-4-1 The Number of the Personnel Subject to Have Taken Disciplinary Action for the Substantiated Harassment Case

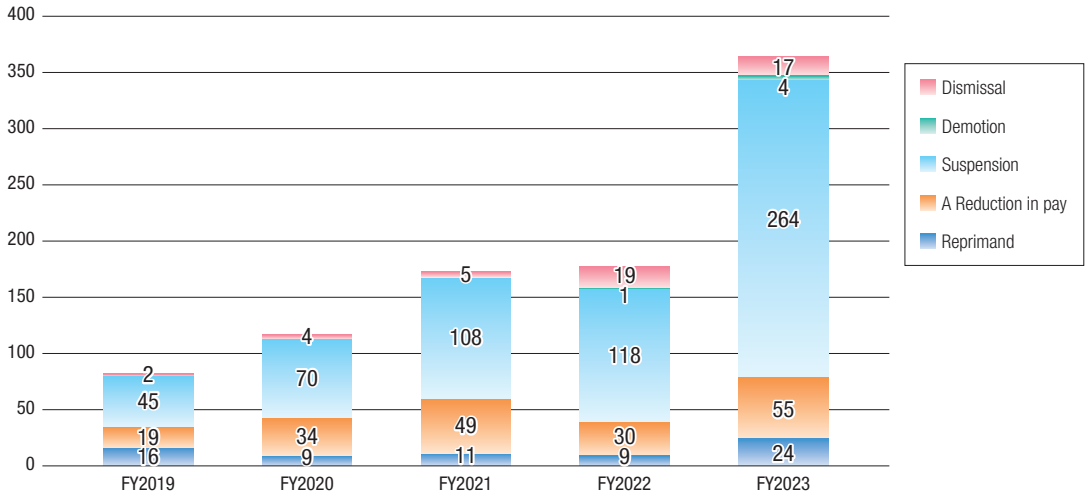


Fig. IV-3-4-2 Changed in the Number of Consultations to the MOD Harassment Hotline

(Unit: No. of Cases)

Category	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
Power Harassment	1,010	1,706	1,217	782	581
Sexual Harassment	60	82	136	59	51
Maternity Harassment	7	23	44	16	21
Consultation Desk for Each Institution	391	500	725	850	769
Total	1,468	2,311	2,122	1,707	1,422

2 Directive of the Defense Minister on Measures to Eradicate Harassment among other things

In 2022, the then Defense Minister Hamada issued a directive on measures to eradicate harassment[18] and ordered action to be taken, including implementing a special defense inspection of the entire MOD/JSDF and establishing an advisory panel to conduct a fundamental review of harassment prevention measures.

In 2023, following the recommendations from "The Ministry of Defense Committee of Experts on Harassment Prevention Measures" (advisory panel)[19], the Defense Minister issued a message to all personnel emphasizing that it is a duty on each and individual to create an environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind, and that it is urgent to

17 A GSDF personnel lodged a complaint to their unit of being subject to sexual harassment during training and on a daily basis, but the complaint was not reported to the commanding officer, and the facts of the case were not properly investigated. Following the complaint by the individual, in September 2022, a higher-level unit conducted an investigation that substantiated the occurrence of sexual harassment, including sexual violence, and disciplinary actions were taken against those involved.

18 The directive included the following four measures: (1) For all personnel to raise awareness of the consultation desks including consultants, seek help for assistance, and report harassment of any kind, (2) To make an urgent review of the current status of harassment-related consultations and conduct appropriate follow-up in all cases, (3) To implement a special defense inspection of the entire MOD/JSDF, and (4) To establish an advisory panel to conduct a fundamental review of harassment prevention measures.

19 The recommendations stated that the MOD/JSDF is in the process of fostering an organizational culture that does not tolerate harassment of any kind and those efforts in this regard are inadequate. They also highlighted that the responsibilities of the supervisors (commanders) are unclear regarding harassment measures and they lack awareness of their duties, and outlined strategies the MOD should undertake in the areas of (1) preventive measures, (2) response to incidents, and (3) post-incident measures.

review and create fundamental measures promptly.

In addition, at the direction of the Defense Minister, the "Inspector General's Office of Legal Compliance" implemented the special defense inspection on harassment prevention status, proceeding with its detailed investigation, and released the "Results of Special Defense Inspection"[20] in 2023.

That same year, following a harassment case[21] in the JMSDF, the then Defense Minister Kihara issued "The Defense Minister Instructions on Strict Measures for Harassment Response"[22] and ordered stern handling of all harassment cases. Furthermore, he issued a message to all personnel and commanders/managers urging each and every individual to take sense of ownership and tackle harassment prevention.

3 Initiatives for Harassment Prevention Measures

Based on the recommendation of the previously mentioned advisory panel and "Results of Special Defense Inspection," the following initiatives are taking: creating a scheme to reform the organizational culture that could be a contributing factor to harassment; regularly issuing messages from the Defense Minister and others; improving the qualities of managers (commanders) and consultants through practical education using hands-on role-playing rather than traditional lecture-style; designing the Ministry's uniform standards for disciplinary actions from aspects of transparency and fairness; expanding the harassment consultation system, and raising awareness of the consultation desk.

Efforts have also been made to enhance understanding of harassment prevention, such as holding lectures on harassment prevention by outside experts.

This is tremendously regrettable and recognized as exceedingly serious circumstance that despite these efforts, in 2024, disciplinary actions were taken on the grounds of harassment, including the Vice-Defense Minister for International Affairs and executive personnel in internal bureaus for repeated intimidating behavior toward junior colleagues on a daily basis and creating an extremely hostile work environment.

The MOD will continue to ensure that all JSDF personnel are thoroughly cognizant of harassment prevention, and continuously review and implement measures to keep up with the times by incorporating insights from external experts to create an environment of zero tolerance for harassment of any kind.

Section 5 Support for JSDF Personnel and Their Families

1 Support for Life Planning

In December 2024, the "Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel" was compiled in a meeting of the relevant cabinet ministers. In addition, recognizing the importance of fostering asset building, the government is intensifying efforts to elevate the nation's asset management, including enhancing NISA and iDeCo, and is implementing financial and economic education from an impartial perspective to promote efforts that support stable household asset formation with the aim of encouraging financial and economic education to boost financial literacy.

Against this backdrop, the MOD/JSDF strives to provide information on ongoing life planning from an early stage after individuals join the JSDF and motivate personnel to create a life plan, especially when it comes to the important element of asset formation. To this end, life planning seminars are held in accordance with their life stage with the goal of deepening understanding of investing, speculating, gambling, and debt to build financial literacy while regularly acquiring new information, as well as protecting the assets and living circumstances of personnel amid social issues such as gambling and other addictions.

20 The findings are that the consultation desks including counselors were not always being adequately utilized. More than 60% of the complainants alleging inadequate handling regarding harassment victims revealed that they had not even sought advice from counselors or consultation desks. They have confirmed that there is a concern about whether the harassment consultation system is fully fulfilling its primary role, such as appropriate responses and about situations that occur after consultations. Moreover, numerous complaints were voiced about dissatisfaction with the responses despite seeking advice.

21 In December 2022, a Maritime Self-Defense Force member reported to a superior that this individual had been subjected to sexual harassment while on duty. Despite the victim's intentions, superiors compelled this individual to meet with the perpetrator, another member of the unit, and accept an apology. The perpetrator and the superiors received suspensions in November 2023, with the former receiving a 10-month suspension, and the latter receiving up to a 3-month suspension.

22 The directive gave instructions to seriously respond to all harassment cases by promptly investigating cases noted in the special defense inspection, urgently reviewing individual cases, and swiftly detailing unreported cases. Additionally, messages from the Defense Minister emphasizing that it is duty on each and individual should take sense of ownership and tackle harassment; consult without hesitation if they experience harassment; immediately support victims if they witness or receive reports of harassment; take appropriate action without delay.

2 MOD Mental Health Initiatives

The fact that MOD personnel have lost their precious lives to suicide is truly tragic for the families of the deceased and a huge loss to the organization.

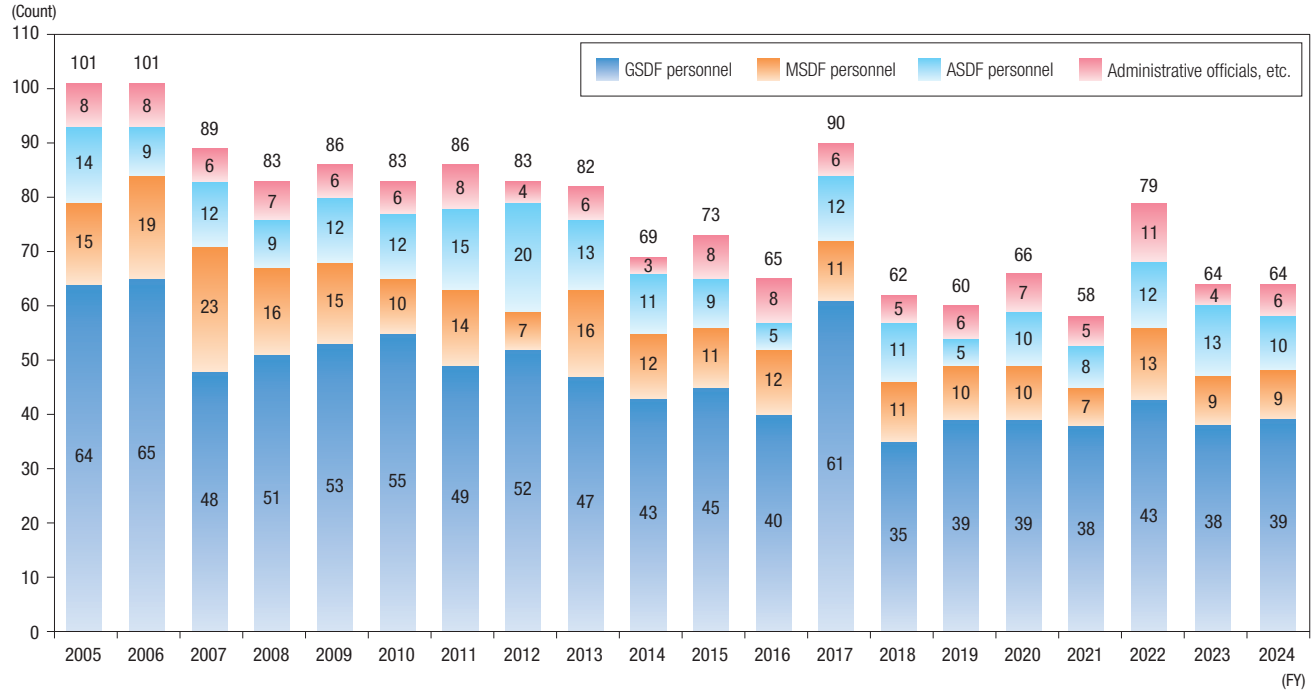
In 2022, the MOD developed the Basic Policy on Mental Health in the Ministry of Defense and adopted various measures with a view to preventing suicide among its personnel.

Specifically, the MOD has engaged in improving the work environments by raising awareness of mental health checks for all employees and by educating them to make use of counseling services, as well as by promoting measures related to work-life balance. The MOD is also strengthening its support system by securing qualified counselors, collaborating with supervisors, counselors, and medical institutions, and diversifying consultation channels.

See Fig. IV-3-5 (Changes in the Number of Suicide Counts among MOD Personnel)

REFERENCE: Promotion of harassment prevention measures and consultation desk
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/profile/harassment/index.html

Fig. IV-3-5 Changes in the Number of Suicide Counts among MOD Personnel



3 Initiatives to Combat Gambling and Other Addictions

Gambling and other addictions that are types of psychiatric disorders can lead to debt and crime, and have a serious impact on human relationships. Therefore, based on the Basic Act on Measures Against Gambling and Other Addictions, the government as a whole is promoting general and systematic initiatives in line with the "Basic Plan to Promote Measures Against Gambling and Other Addictions." The MOD is promoting initiatives to deepen the personnel's understanding of addictions, including gambling, and to ensure appropriate treatment in cases such as when personnel are suspected of having gambling and other addictions in the workplace.

4 Initiatives to Support Families

In addition to exchanges between units and personnel's families, as well as between the families, the MOD in cooperation with relevant external groups and organizations is also actively working to develop a family support system to be implemented in the event of large-scale natural disasters and other events, which will include receiving cooperation in confirming the safety of the family members of JSDF personnel and providing them with assistance in their livelihoods. In March 2025, the MOD/JSDF, the JSDF Family Association[23], and Taiyukai[24] concluded a new agreement on cooperating to support families of all JSDF personnel.

For units dispatched overseas or to vessels for operations expected to continue for an extended period of time, the MOD has been creating a communication environment that allows the personnel and their families to get in direct contact. Moreover, the MOD has been implementing a range of support measures for the families of the personnel, including supporting additional shipments of comfort items sent from families to JSDF personnel deployed overseas, holding briefing sessions and establishing consultation desks (family support centers) for families, and creating a website for the families of JSDF personnel.

5 Commemorating Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty

Since the establishment of the National Police Reserve in 1950, JSDF personnel have endeavored to complete their noble missions to protect the peace and independence of Japan with a strong sense of responsibility, regardless of danger. During this time period, however, more than 2,000 personnel have lost their lives in the line of duty.

In the MOD/JSDF, funeral ceremonies are carried out by the respective units to which JSDF personnel who perished in the line of duty belonged in order to express condolences. Moreover, in order to eternally recognize the achievements of the personnel who perished in the line of duty and to express the deepest respect and condolences, memorial ceremonies are carried out in various forms, such as the Memorial Service for members of JSDF personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty conducted with the participation of the Prime Minister. The achievements of 32 JSDF members (1 internal bureau, 16 GSDF, 13 MSDF, and 2 ASDF members) who lost their lives in the line of duty were recognized in the Memorial Service in FY2024[25].

Prime Minister Ishiba offers a flower at the 2024 Memorial Service for Members of the Self-Defense Forces Who Lost Their Lives on Duty (October 2024)

23 A public interest incorporated association comprised of family members of JSDF personnel that cooperates with and supports the JSDF
24 A public interest incorporated association primarily comprised of former JSDF personnel that aims to be a bridge between citizens and the JSDF
25 The Monument for JSDF Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty was constructed in 1962 in Ichigaya. In 1998, the Memorial Zone in its current form was completed by combining this monument with other monuments located in the same area. The MOD holds an annual memorial ceremony for JSDF personnel who perished in the line of duty, led by the Defense Minister and with the attendance of surviving family members and the Prime Minister. At the Monument for JSDF Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty in the Memorial Zone, there is an iron plate containing the names and other information of personnel who perished in the line of duty. When foreign dignitaries such as Defense Ministers visit the MOD, they make offerings of flowers, expressing their respect and condolences to personnel who perished in the line of duty. Memorial ceremonies are also held at individual JSDF camps and bases.

Chapter 4 Other Initiatives

Section 1 Transforming Medical Functions

The NDS stipulates that, from the perspective of sustainability and resiliency, the JSDF medical force, which has been placing importance on sustaining the health of JSDF personnel, will transform into an organization that saves the lives of JSDF personnel who carry out their missions in a contingency in spite of danger.

Under circumstances where the JSDF's missions are becoming more diverse and internationalized, it is important to accurately address the needs of various medical activities, such as providing medical support in disaster relief dispatches and international peace cooperation activities, as well as capacity building on military medicine.

The MOD/JSDF, therefore, is enhancing the medical functions: (i) Strengthening seamless medical care and evacuation posture from the frontlines to the destination hospital, (ii) Reinforcement of integrated medical operational posture, and (iii) Fundamental management reform of the National Defense Medical College as the three pillars to improve the combat trauma care capabilities. In addition, the MOD/JSDF is further enhancing and strengthening its medical capabilities so that they can appropriately respond to various emergency events and carry out its multiple missions in Japan and abroad.

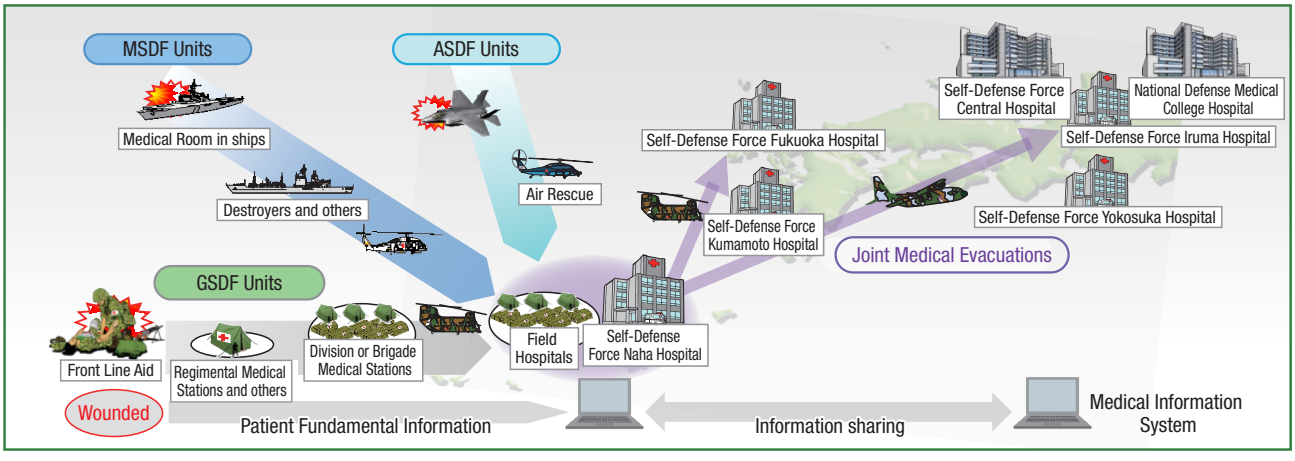
1 Fundamentally Strengthen the Combat Trauma Care Capabilities

1 Strengthening Seamless Medical Care and Evacuation Posture

In order to improve the life-saving rate of injured JSDF personnel on the front line, it is necessary to strengthen the respective functions of first aid at the front line, providing emergency measures near the site of injury, medical evacuation, and destination JSDF hospitals.

See Fig. IV-4-1 (Conceptual Image of a Seamless Posture for Medical Care and Evacuation)

Fig. IV-4-1 Conceptual Image of a Seamless Posture for Medical Care and Evacuation



(1) Enhancement of the First Aid at the Front Line and Medical Care During Evacuation

In response to injured JSDF personnel at the front line, frontline medics[1] first provide life-saving procedures,[2] then safely and quickly send the patients back to JSDF hospitals for specialized treatment and complete cure after performing damage control surgery (DCS)[3] at medical bases equipped with measures such as the field operation system.[4]

To improve the life-saving rate of personnel, a medical support system/posture is being developed that enables patients to be treated within 10 minutes of being wounded. Each branch of the JSDF has been providing education and training to JSDF personnel who are Licensed Assistant Nurses and Emergency Life-Saving Technicians so they can conduct life-saving procedures near the scene of injury on JSDF personnel injured in the line of duty, and promoting their designation and deployment to units as frontline medics.

In addition, to construct a rapid and reliable evacuation posture using all means of evacuation, each JSDF branch is enhancing education and training tailored to the characteristics of units and equipment for medical care during evacuation on board ships and aircraft, and promoting the development of training equipment for medical transport by air and teaching materials for improving first aid capabilities.

The JSDF will also promote development and integration of medical training infrastructure necessary for combat injury education and common to all JSDFs, aiming to improve common knowledge and skills.

FY2024 Joint logistics and medical training during a Japan-U.S. joint exercise (KS25; October 2024)

(2) Enhancing the Functions of JSDF Hospitals and Establishing Medical Bases

The role of JSDF hospitals is to admit and treat injured JSDF personnel and other persons transported from their area of activity in various emergency situations. In peacetime, these hospitals also provide medical care to JSDF personnel and their families, etc. These hospitals also play the role of educational institutions that train medical personnel to maintain and enhance their skills.

In the southwestern region of Japan, to enhance the function and resilience of JSDF hospitals, including Naha Hospital, which serve as evacuation points, enhancement of functionality such as increasing the number of beds, expanding the number of departments, and adding underground facilities is planned.

(3) Establishing a Blood Transfusion System for Combat Trauma Care

Most deaths in war are due to exsanguination from bomb wounds, gunshot wounds, and other similar causes. To prevent such deaths, it is extremely important to secure blood products for transfusion. For this reason, the MOD/JSDF established the "Expert Panel on Blood Transfusion during Combat Trauma Care of the MOD/JSDFs" in 2023 to tackle the construction of an operational posture that autonomously secures and stockpiles blood products[5] in the JSDF, based on NDS. Following the recommendations of the expert panel in February 2024, the MOD/JSDF moved forward with exploring the establishment of an implementation system for blood transfusions in combat trauma care. It is devising a system for blood transfusions in combat trauma care and preparing materials and equipment necessary to produce blood products.

2 Reinforcement of Integrated Medical Operational Posture

Since many medical functions are common to all JSDF branches, the unification of joint medical training and various medical education is being promoted to strengthen an integrated operational posture in the medical field, which is closely involved in supporting unit operations.

Furthermore, an information system will be established to standardize medical supplies and equipment to ensure interoperability among various JSDFs and ensure that medical

1 Frontline medics refer to those who have been certified as Licensed Assistant Nurses (see "Assistant Nurse" as defined in the Act on Public Health Nurses, Midwives, and Nurses) or Emergency Life-Saving Technicians (see "Emergency Life-Saving Technician" as defined in the Emergency Life-Saving Technicians Act), and who have completed the training curriculum approved by the council stipulated in the Directives Relating to Emergency Life-Saving Actions.
2 First aid treatment for those with symptoms such as airway obstruction and tension pneumothorax caused by injuries, and other treatments such as administration of analgesic for pain relief.
3 Mobile operating room sheltered in a large truck with one of the four functions necessary for operation (operation, operation preparation, sterilization, medical supply vehicles). Thoracotomy, laparotomy, craniotomy, and other operations to save lives can be conducted.
4 Emergency operations to stop hemorrhage by pressing/placing gauze and sutures, etc. on damaged internal organs, and to prevent contamination with intestinal tract contents. The purpose is to stabilize the patient's condition to the level where transfer is possible.
5 The initiative aims for a posture that enables various blood products necessary in combat trauma care to be secured where required, when needed and in the quantities needed, through independent judgment based on the progress of military operations and combat conditions, without relying on commercial availability.

information for each JSDF personnel can be accessed on time without distinction.

3 Strengthening the Function of the NDMC

As the only educational institution of the MOD/JSDF for the training of JSDF personnel who are physicians (medical officers), JSDF personnel who are public health and registered nurses (nursing officers), and technical and engineering officials, the NDMC plays the role of training and producing primary medical staff as well as maintaining and improving their skills.

The DBP stipulates that the NDMC will strengthen education and research, including combat trauma care capabilities improvement. Specifically, it calls for strengthening education for medical and nursing officers in areas such as trauma surgery and treatment, as well as promoting the necessary research in defense medicine to advance the quality of the JSDF's medical services in areas such as the treatment of trauma, burns, and physical injuries, infectious disease control, and mental health. In particular, research on artificial platelets could be beneficial in treating combat injuries if it can be successfully put to practical use. Additionally, in FY2024, a "Center for Trauma, Burn and Tactical Medicine" was newly established at the NDMC, and development of the necessary readiness is underway to train medical and nursing officers capable of providing medical treatment in combat trauma care.

In addition, a system will be established to provide highly advanced medical care at the NDMC Hospital to allow it to play the role of admitting severely injured JSDF personnel who cannot be treated at JSDF hospitals.

The operation of the NDMC Hospital will also be fundamentally reformed to transform it into a clinical site for medical officers, etc., to treat such war injury.

2 Strengthening the Medical Function to Respond to Various Situations and Diverse Missions

1 Securing and Training Medical Personnel

The MOD/JSDF is working to secure and nurture medical officers and maintain and improve their medical skills by enhancing clinical education after graduation from the NDMC and other institutions, promoting various initiatives for ensuring more opportunities for medical officers to engage in medical practice, and helping them acquire and improve specialized knowledge and skills in areas such as infectious diseases and emergency medicine.

Similar measures are taken for nursing officers to maintain and improve their knowledge/skills through practice at external hospitals, etc.

Moreover, medical personnel and medical staff, such as radiological technologists, clinical laboratory technicians, and emergency life-saving technicians, are educated and trained at JSDF hospitals, schools and other relevant institutions so that the JSDF can perform diverse missions and missions under special circumstances, including international peace cooperation activities and large-scale disasters.

2 Improving Preparedness Necessary for International Cooperation

A posture capable of carrying out medical activities overseas is required. To date, the MOD/JSDF has participated in the provision of medical care in overseas disaster areas through international disaster relief activities, and actively conducted joint training and capacity building in medical fields such as undersea medicine, aviation medicine, and disaster medicine for various countries, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.

In addition, medical care for patients suffering from Category I Infectious Diseases,[6] which are classified as the most dangerous among known infectious diseases, is deemed necessary.

Therefore, the MOD/JSDF has been reinforcing its capabilities by training personnel who can contribute to overseas activities, improving equipment for transporting infectious disease patients, and providing the necessary facilities and equipment to units, the NDMC Hospital, and the JSDF Central Hospital.

Moreover, the MOD/JSDF has been developing the postures necessary for various international cooperation initiatives, which include upgrading mobile medical systems that are effective for overseas medical activities and dispatching JSDF personnel to the medical departments of international organizations, the U.S. Department of Defense, etc.

MOVIE: NDMC introduction video — "The Power of Smiles"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSRHeRq5oKk

6 These include Ebola hemorrhagic fever, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, smallpox, South American hemorrhagic fever, plague, Marburg disease, and Lassa fever.

Section 2 Reinforcement of Policy-Making Function

The NDS stipulates that, for the JSDF to fully exert its capabilities and respond to the severe, complex, and fast-paced strategic environment, strategic and agile defense policy planning and making are required, including in domains such as space, cyberspace, and electromagnetic spectrum. To fundamentally strengthen these functions, the NDS calls for closely cooperating with relevant ministries and agencies, private research institutions, and private companies, particularly those in the defense industry, as well as reviewing and reinforcing the research system of the MOD/JSDF led by the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) and reinforcing its function as an intellectual base.

1 Efforts for Reinforcing Policy-Making Function

It was clearly stated in the NDS that the need to fundamentally reinforce strategic and agile defense policy planning functions, a consultation framework will be established to obtain policy advice from experts. Based on this policy, the second and third meetings of the "Advisory Panel on the Fundamental Strengthening of Defense Capabilities" were held in August and October 2024, bringing together experts and specialists from various fields. The advisory panel held frank discussions on topics including building an industry-academic-government R&D ecosystem in the security field, and Japan's defense industry and equipment.

In addition, the National Defense Strategy of Japan states that the MOD/JSDF will strengthen its posture to comprehensively advance, from a strategic perspective, the JSDF's future ways of warfare and the utilization and nurturing of cutting-edge technologies and application of those technologies to defense equipment necessary for future JSDF operations, while closely cooperating with relevant ministries and agencies, private research institutions, and private companies, particularly those with the defense industry as their core.

The MOD's research and educational institutions, including the National Institute for Defense Studies, are working to improve the quality of their research on a routine basis to produce results that contribute to Japan's policy-making and strengthen its function as an intellectual foundation. In addition, from the perspective of promoting public understanding of knowledge and information about Japan's national security policies, including the results of such research:

(1) review and strengthen the research system of the MOD/JSDF by building networking and strengthening institutional collaboration with research and educational institutions, universities, think-tanks, etc., in Japan and abroad;
(2) provide policy-making departments, etc., with high-quality research results backed by advanced expertise and research capabilities;
(3) disseminate highly trustworthy information based on the aforementioned research results, etc.; and
(4) contribute to the promotion of security education by dispatching instructors to educational institutions, etc., holding public symposiums, etc.,

in order to reinforce its intellectual base through NIDS and various schools, among other initiatives.

2 Efforts by the National Institute for Defense Studies

The National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) conducts policy-oriented research and studies primarily on security and military history and policy simulations to promote collaboration with policy-making departments by taking advantage of its unique position as a national academic research and educational institution focused on national security. In addition, as an educational institution equivalent to national defense universities of other countries, it also functions as a university-level national defense educational institution for the training of senior MOD/JSDF officials, and employees of other ministries and agencies.[7] NIDS manages and publishes a large volume of data on military history as a facility possessing historical documents and other materials in accordance with the Public Records and Archives Management Act,[8] and serves as the largest research center on military history in Japan.

REFERENCE: Advisory Panel on the Fundamental Strengthening of Defense Capabilities
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/meeting/drastic-reinforcement/index.html

7 Starting with programs that commenced in FY2024, NIDS has changed what had been the Regular Course to the National Security Strategist Studies Program, and the Special Course to the National Security Senior Strategist Studies Program, to explore and develop curricula that further improve strategic characteristics.
8 Act on Management of Official Documents, etc.

In FY2023, the Cyber Security Division was established at NIDS in response to research needs in the increasingly important field of cybersecurity based on the Defense Buildup Program, which calls for a review of the research system to support the augmentation of the functions of strategic and agile defense policy planning and formulation, and reinforcement of its functions as an intellectual foundation.

NIDS, an institution that plays a role in defense exchange and security dialogue, also emphasizes international exchange and conducts research exchanges with defense universities, security research institutes, etc., in other countries with the main objective of improving the quality of its research and education and contributing to national security by strengthening relations of trust with said countries. Specifically, activities include mutual dispatch of researchers for lectures, holding study groups and participating in international conferences, receiving visits from foreign government and military officials, and inviting foreign researchers and experts. Through these exchanges, the NIDS is improving the quality of its research and studies and strengthening its intellectual network.

In FY2024, the International Symposium on Security was held under the theme of "National Security Space Policies in the Changing Environment," and the International Forum on War History Studies was held under the theme of "The Role of Military Cooperation in Times of Crisis." In addition, the International Conference on Policy Simulation "Connections Japan 2024/25" was held under the theme of "Toward the Development of Policy Simulation/Wargaming as a Methodology." This international conference was held as an opportunity to introduce the latest knowledge and discussions held in Japan and abroad on various security issues, and it will continue focus on timely themes to help address policy-related issues and reinforce Japan's intellectual base.

International Conference on Policy Simulation "Connections Japan 2024/25" held by the National Institute for Defense Studies

In addition, NIDS publishes major research results on its website and proactively disseminates information by issuing various publications, including the "NIDS China Security Report," "NIDS Perspectives," and "Security & Strategy," which have been published annually to date. It also publishes videos of sponsored events and explanatory videos on key points of publications. Researchers at NIDS have also published many books, articles, and essays on their research findings, some of which have received awards for the outstanding research conducted.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 1-1-5 (Responses in the Cyber Domain)

3 Efforts by Other Institutions

The National Defense Academy of Japan (NDA) is responsible for training and educating individuals who are expected to become JSDF officers, providing more advanced training and education for JSDF personnel, etc., and conducting the research needed to perform these functions.

In its role, the NDA conducts a large volume of fundamental research related to general academic and defense policy-related research, and upholds and improves a high standard of research. In addition, the results of the NDA's research that is mainly centered on the themes handled by the Center for Global Security[9] are widely disseminated outside the academy through presentations at seminars and colloquia held by the NDA as well as through online publications, such as the Global Security Seminar Series and the Global Security Study Series.

JSDF Command and Staff Colleges and other institutions periodically hold various security-related seminars and symposiums that are attended by individuals such as researchers from industry, government, and academia, overseas researchers, and foreign military personnel. These

REFERENCE: Publications issued by NIDS
URL: https://www.nids.mod.go.jp/publication/

9 The Center for Global Security is a department established within the Institute for Advanced Studies and is responsible for planning, drafting, and implementing research and joint research projects related to global security (research conducted jointly with ATLA, etc.), as well as disseminating the results of such global security-related research externally.

contribute to research and studies regarding Japan's national security in the future through discussions and exchange of opinions from a variety of perspectives.

The colleges also strive to obtain knowledge and information necessary for research and studies to maintain and improve the quality of their education and research by hosting visiting researchers as well as participating in exchanges, etc., with educational and research institutions, etc., in Japan and overseas. The colleges proactively disseminate information[10] by publishing major research results and initiatives on their websites, issuing various publications, and through other means.

10 The JGSDF Training Evaluation Research and Development Command publishes "Ground Defense," the JMSDF Command and Staff College publishes the "Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College Review," and the Air Command and Staff College publishes "Air & Space Power Studies," etc.

Part V

Bases and Initiatives Necessary to Maintain and Reinforce Defense Capabilities

Chapter 1 Reinforcing Defense Production and Technology Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capacity itself

Chapter 2 Initiatives to Live in Harmony with Local Communities and the Environment

Chapter 1 Reinforcing Defense Production and Technology Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capacity itself

Rapid advances in science and technology in recent years have brought about fundamental changes in the nature of national security. Countries are accelerating research and development to ensure their technological superiority, especially through the acquisition of cutting-edge technologies that could become so-called "game changers" which dramatically alter the future character of warfare.

New technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum technology, and the one for utilizing new forms of energy are being applied to equipment,[1] expanding the character of warfare not only in the conventional domains such as ground, maritime, and air, but also into space, cyber, and electromagnetic domains, including the cognitive dimension. In addition, the rapid advancements of information-related technologies and information infrastructure, such as AI and SNS (Social Networking Services), has dramatically increased the risk of hybrid warfare, in which military and non-military means are combined, and the expansion of information warfare through the spread of disinformation or by other means.

In Japan, there is now an urgent need to quickly acquire superior equipment that will support new ways of warfare, which can only be achieved through long-term, constant efforts to accumulate technological knowledge in Japan, develop highly skilled human resources, and maintain manufacturing equipment and facilities that meet our country's particular needs. Therefore, the MOD has generally regarded Japan's defense production and technology bases are essential infrastructure for securing superior equipment and makes efforts to maintain and reinforce these bases. However, in recent years, Japan's defense production and technology bases have been exposed to challenging conditions, such as increased costs due to technological advances and the emergence of supply chain risks due to the complex and unstable international situation. These conditions, combined with particular characteristics of defense equipment, such as limited demand and unique specifications, led to low profitability and a negative outlook for business continuity and growth, mainly in the defense industry. Companies deciding to withdraw from the defense industry have appeared intermittently, and even if they are not withdrawing, companies have been reluctant to make new investments, causing concerns that this could affect the operational availability of defense equipment and affect operation of the JSDF.

Currently, the JSDF can fully demonstrate its capabilities and accomplish its mission of defending Japan only by using equipment that incorporates advanced technologies. In the National Security Strategy formulated in December 2022 and other documents, the Government of Japan clearly stated its policy of tackling the current severe situation surrounding defense production and technology bases, which are essential infrastructure for securing superior defense equipment in Japan, making these bases virtually an integral part of defense capability itself, and making efforts to reinforce these bases fundamentally.

Section 1 Reinforcing Defense Production Base

Japan's defense production and technology bases have several unique characteristics. As a premise, Japan, which does not have arsenals (state-run factories for the production of defense equipment), heavily relies on private companies to play an important role in producing defense equipment. Therefore, amid the demand for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, the role of the defense industry is becoming increasingly important in securing equipment for the JSDF to carry out its missions. Especially when manufacturing defense equipment,[2] it is necessary to meet the high level of performance requirements and security measures. From the perspective of economic rationality, indicating a certain degree of predictability is required for companies to step into investments in this sector. In addition, opportunities for companies to recover investments are limited since their customers are basically limited to the MOD/JSDF.

Under such circumstances, Japan's defense industry is facing various challenges, with cases of companies deciding to withdraw from defense businesses or downsize their operations emerging intermittently. Consequently, this not only interferes with the stable procurement of defense

1 Equipment, ships, aircraft, food and other supplies used by the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (including their parts and components, limited to those used exclusively by the JSDF).
2 Manufacturing, research and development, repair, and provision of other related services.

equipment essential for JSDF operations, but also causes the loss of a proper competitive environment and innovation in the long term, resulting in Japan losing its technological superiority in security.

In addition, the risk of information theft due to cyber attacks, as well as the risk of disruption to the supply of raw materials due to the imposition of export restrictions by other countries have become apparent in recent years.

In light of this environment surrounding Japan's defense production and technology bases, the MOD is taking various measures to maintain and reinforce the bases.

1 Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases and its Basic Policy

Japan's defense industry is responsible for each stage of the life cycle of defense equipment (research, development, production, sustainment and maintenance, supply, decommissioning, etc.). In this context, defense equipment and the defense industry are inseparable. The Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases[3] was enforced in 2023 in order to take necessary measures to maintain and enhance the capabilities of the defense industry to produce advanced equipment and ensure high operational rates.

Under this Act, the Defense Minister is supposed to establish a basic policy,[4] which was announced in October 2023. This basic policy prescribes the matters necessary to ensure adequate execution of the measures stipulated in the Act. Also, it indicates the new direction on how to maintain and reinforce the defense production and technology bases in the future, replacing the "Strategy on Defense Production and Technological Bases" that was formulated in 2014.

See Reference 69 (Basic Policy on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases)

1 Main Direction for Maintaining and Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases

(1) Significance of Maintaining and Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases

The significance of maintaining and enhancing defense production and technology bases within Japan has been pointed out in the past from the perspectives of ensuring Japan's independence in the security environment, enhancing its deterrence, and contributing economically and technologically to domestic industries. This is due to the fact that the defense production and technology bases within Japan play an important role in acquiring advanced defense equipment at an early stage and in maintaining and securing sufficient war sustainability of the JSDF, as well as the defense industry is composed of a wide range of suppliers, ranging from companies which have direct contracts with the MOD (prime contractors) to subcontractors like small and medium-sized enterprises.

In addition, in recent years, countries have been increasingly hoarding technology from the economic security perspective, and supply chains have been disrupted due to the spread of COVID-19. Under these circumstances, the need to maintain and reinforce defense production and technology bases in Japan has become even greater from the perspective of ensuring stable manufacturing of defense equipment directly concerning the defense of Japan, as well as securing technological superiority.

(2) Approach to Procurement of Defense Equipment

On the premise of acquiring equipment which meets performance required for the defense of Japan, it is necessary to decide how to procure equipment according to the following perspectives. (1) Ensure that continued acquisition, sustainment and maintenance of the defense equipment is sustainable in terms of cost; (2) Nurture areas in which Japan has a comparative advantage and complement, as necessary, areas in which Japan is falling behind or lacking; (3) Maintain and reinforce Japan's defense production and technology bases within Japan. Specifically, when acquiring new defense equipment, domestically produced equipment will be pursued, focusing on the following areas:

a. Defense equipment that can meet various conditions, such as operational concepts, performance, acquisition cost, life cycle cost, schedule, etc., with domestic technologies
b. Defense equipment that is essential in maintaining war sustainability in the event of a contingency as well as in ensuring for the ability to improve operations and maintenance in peacetime (e.g., ammunition and ships)
c. Items that should not be dependent on foreign countries from the perspective of confidentiality (e.g., communications, cryptography)
d. Defense equipment that is indispensable for realizing operational concepts that consider Japan's geographical and policy peculiarities
e. The latest technologies from foreign countries that are hard to obtain
f. Potential target of external threats through economic means

3 Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases
4 Basic Policy on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases

(3) Approach to International Cooperation

As countries these days compete fiercely in research and development in the military field and make remarkable technological progress, it is difficult for each country to maintain necessary defense production and technology bases without cooperating with other countries. Promoting international cooperation in defense equipment and technology is essential, keeping in mind the basic principle that bases related to defense equipment, which should not be dependent on other countries, should be maintained and enhanced domestically. Therefore, it is necessary to promote international joint research and development in addition to active international cooperation and licensed production, contributing to incorporating the excellent technologies of various countries into Japan's defense equipment.

The transfer of defense equipment and technology 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 by force. Accordingly, the government and private sector will make joint efforts to promote the smooth transfer of defense equipment and technology of high-security significance and international joint development in various fields.

(4) Ideal State of the Defense Industry

It is desirable for Japan's defense industry to maintain the capability to manufacture the necessary equipment and support high operational rates, as well as to be internationally competitive, just like Western countries and other countries. To this end, it is important that defense businesses become one of the core businesses within each company.

Based on this recognition, the MOD is considering the development of a defense industrial strategy that sets out the desirable medium- to long-term direction of the defense industry in order to lead the industry toward becoming stronger and more sustainable.

(5) Roles of the Government and Defense Equipment Manufacturers in Ensuring Stable Manufacturing of Defense Equipment

It is important for the Government to create an environment that enables defense equipment manufacturers[5] to be continuously involved in defense businesses. These defense equipment manufacturers are expected to engage proactively in initiatives to maintain and reinforce the defense production and technology bases, with a strong awareness of their role as a key player in national defense.

2 Measures Based on the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases

(1) Specific Initiatives (reinforcing supply chain resilience, improving manufacturing process efficiency, enhancing cybersecurity, supporting business succession, etc.)

Various risks are assumed to impede the stable manufacturing of defense equipment. For example, (1) the risk of difficulty in importing raw materials because of export restrictions imposed by a foreign government, (2) the risk of delay in delivery or failure to meet the performance requirements because of sluggish productivity and technological standards caused by aging facilities that have not been renewed, (3) the risk of major concerns for any parts infected with malware or spyware in the manufacturing process (parts embedded with malicious software), (4) the risk of leakage of information on performance due to cyber attacks, and (5) the risk of withdrawing from defense projects because it has become challenging to continue the business. The following specific initiatives (initiatives to ensure the stable manufacturing of defense equipment essential for the JSDF to carry out missions, based on the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases) need to be taken by defense equipment manufacturers to respond to such risks effectively and ensure the supply chain consisting of prime contractors and suppliers functions more effectively and efficiently, thereby contributing to stable manufacturing of designated defense equipment.[6]

a. Reinforcing supply chain resilience
- Domestic production and stockpiling of raw materials
- Research and development of alternate materials and products, etc.

b. Improving manufacturing process efficiency
- Introduction of state-of-the-art equipment and technologies
- Automation of the inspection processes using AI, etc.

c. Enhancing cybersecurity
- Enhancement of information systems
- Employee training, etc.

d. Support for business succession, etc.
- Maintenance of manufacturing facilities
- Employee training (acquisition of technology and know-how), etc.

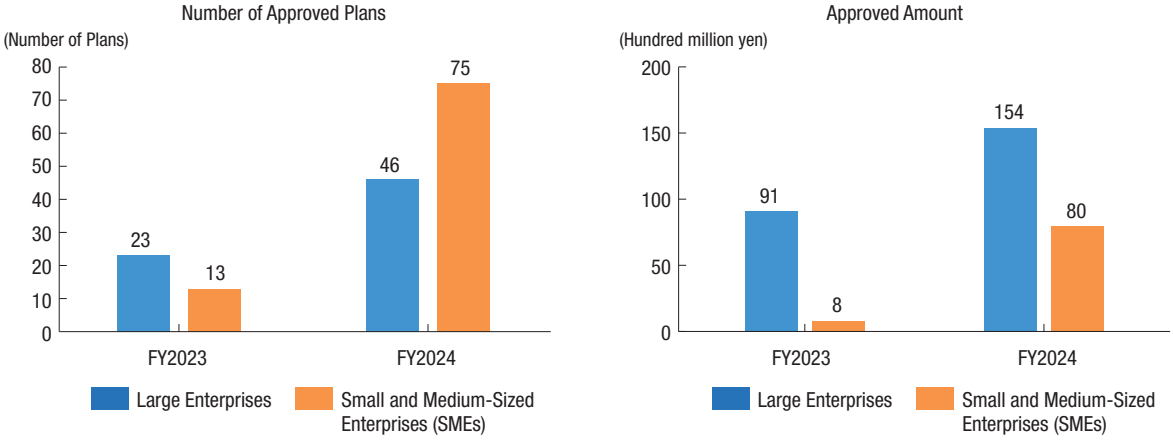
Following the Basic Policy, the Defense Minister shall approve plans for specific initiatives submitted by defense equipment manufacturers (Stable Manufacturing Plans). The MOD then enters into a contract directly with the defense equipment

5 Business operators engaged in the manufacture of defense equipment
6 Defense equipment essential for the JSDF to carry out its missions as designated by the Defense Minister, appropriate procurement of which by the MOD would be hindered if its manufacture, etc., by the specific defense equipment manufacturer were to be suspended.

manufacturer for the specific initiatives after approval of the plans and pay compensation without delay following the contract's provisions. In fiscal 2024, 121 projects with a total value of approximately 23.4 billion yen were approved.

See Fig. V-1-1-1(Record of Approvals for the Stable Manufacturing Plans)

Fig. V-1-1-1 Record of Approvals for the Stable Manufacturing Plans



(2) Facilitation of Equipment Transfer and the Designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation

When transferring defense equipment and technology, the defense equipment manufacturer may be required to make appropriate adjustments to specifications and performance from the national security perspective. In particular, it is necessary to appropriately address concerns of losing Japan's technological superiority over other countries in the defense sector by securing information on advanced technologies used in Japan's defense equipment.

The necessary grants are provided when the Defense Minister requires a defense equipment manufacturer to adjust specifications and performance.

In February 2024, the Defense Minister designated the Designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation to manage the allocation of grants and the fund necessary for such grants. The designation also aims to ensure that equipment transfers conducted by defense equipment manufacturers are carried out smoothly and under appropriate management, in line with the policy objectives of the MOD.

The MOD established the fund in March 2024, and has provided a total of 120 billion yen to said Corporation to date.

See Section 3-2 (Efforts to Promote the Transfer of Defense Equipment)

(3) Protecting the Confidential of Defense Equipment

In manufacturing defense equipment, the MOD provides contractors with classified information on defense equipment, such as advanced technologies, for steady procurement of higher-quality defense equipment. On the other hand, in recent years, the threats of leakage of classified information in defense equipment including cyber attacks and corporate acquisition by countries of security concern, have become higher.

With this in mind, the classified information provided by the government to contractors has been re-designated as "Confidential of Defense Equipment," explicitly indicating to contractors and their employees that handling such classified information requires strict management. In addition, the same penalties currently imposed on JSDF personnel are applied to persons who intentionally leak these confidential, which will prevent leakage more effectively.

(4) Government Ownership of Designated Defense Equipment Manufacturing Facilities by the Defense Minister, etc.

If it is determined that stable procurement of designated defense equipment by the MOD is not possible through the various efforts described in (1) and (2) above, the MOD may acquire the designated equipment manufacturing facilities or equipment that manufacture such designated defense equipment. The acquired defense equipment manufacturing facilities will be managed by contractors commissioned by the MOD for the manufacture of designated defense equipment. Therefore, as the implementing bodies consist of private companies, efficient operation is expected, no different from their regular business activities, even under this system.

REFERENCE: Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/hourei_dpb.html

Commentary

The Significance of the Fund to Facilitate the Transfer of Defense Equipment

The Fund is administered by the designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation. This Corporation is responsible for awarding grants to defense equipment manufacturers engaged in the transfer of defense equipment and technology. Grants are provided when manufacturers are required by the Defense Minister to make adjustments to specifications and performance from a national security perspective—such as ensuring the confidentiality of technologies used in JSDF equipment.

This fund mechanism enables the immediate allocation of grants once the possibility of the transfer of defense equipment arises. It eliminates the need to submit a budget request following the emergence of an unanticipated case. Several companies refrained from participating in the international competitive bidding process due to the short timeframe—approximately one month—from the public announcement to the bid submission deadline. This period was insufficient for them to recover the costs required to adjust to the specified technical requirements and performance standards.

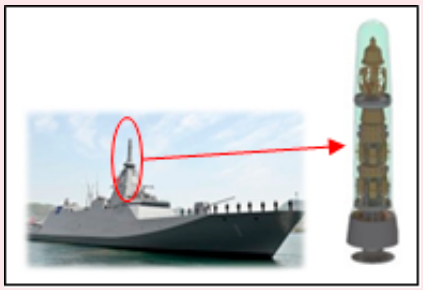
In light of these experiences, in March 2024, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) established this fund designed to provide flexible grants, with the aim of avoiding missing opportunities in the transfer of defense equipment. Even before the contract is concluded, grants can be awarded. They may also be provided not only for design and manufacturing costs required for adjusting specifications and performance, but also for research expenses incurred when examining the details of such adjustments in coordination with the governments or relevant entities of countries to which defense equipment may be transferred.

Furthermore, maintaining a sufficient balance in the fund at the time Adjustment Plans are approved, ensures that grants for adjusting specifications and performance can be reliably provided. This financial assurance encourages manufacturers to actively engage in the transfer of defense equipment and technology. Moreover, it signals Japan's proactive commitment to such transfers, thereby fostering mutual trust with partner countries and facilitating negotiations toward the transfer of defense equipment.

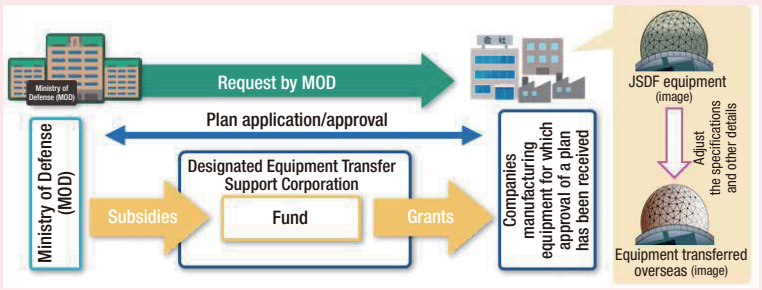
In FY2024, an Adjustment Plan concerning the transfer of the Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) to India was approved in July.

With the recent revision of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, an increasing number of countries have expressed interest in purchasing Japanese defense equipment. From the perspective of fostering a desirable security environment for Japan, we will continue to accumulate approved cases and engage in dialogue with the governments and relevant entities of foreign countries to facilitate the transfer of defense equipment and technology.

Consultation desk: soubi-iten@ext.atla.mod.go.jp



UNICORNs for India (image)



2 Main Efforts in Addition to the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases

1 Making the Defense Business More Attractive

The defense business requires a considerable investment of management resources to meet the high level of performance requirements and information security measures. On the other hand, profitability tended to be less than under the procurement system standards. In calculating prices in the cost accounting system, the MOD has established a system for the fair evaluation of business efforts and the appropriate calculation of profits, while continuously reviewing contractual systems to encourage greater efficiency in the procurement system.

2 Revitalization of the Defense Industry

(1) Defense Industry Promotional Exhibition

Since 2016, the MOD has held exhibitions to create and promote opportunities for new entrants in the defense industry by identifying promising domestic small and medium-sized enterprises that have not yet entered the defense industry and matching them with defense-related businesses and the

MOD/JSDF, to maintain and reinforce the defense production and technology bases. In FY2024, exhibitions were held three times, lasting two days each, in Nagoya in October and in Tokyo in December and March.

Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister Wakamiya attending the Defense Industry Promotional Exhibition (March 2025)

(2) Joint Promotion Committee for Utilizing Startups in the Defense Industry

The MOD/JSDF will work with startups and others to encourage the early deployment of defense equipment by actively incorporating the results of research on cutting-edge technology into defense equipment reseach and development, while utilizing existing civilian technologies and off-the-shelf products. As part of these efforts, the MOD and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) have collaborated to create opportunities to match the needs of the MOD/JSDF with startups by utilizing METI's startup support framework and network. The Joint Promotion Committee for Utilizing Startups in the Defense Industry was established as a framework for the relevant divisions of the MOD and the METI to meet and hold discussions on a regular basis. In addition, in September 2024, the MOD and the METI published a document titled "Toward the Establishment of a Dual-Use Startup Ecosystem," which summarizes their efforts to date in promoting collaboration with startups, with the aim of encouraging startups to enter the defense industry.

(3) Industry Day

Since 2022, an exhibition (Industry Day) has been held to create matching opportunities with the U.S. Forces and the U.S. defense industry in order to encourage Japanese companies to participate in the equipment supply chains common to both Japan and the United States as well as in the sustainment and maintenance programs of the U.S. Forces in the Indo-Pacific region. In 2024, the exhibition was held in Tokyo in September. Then Defense Minister Kihara attended this exhibition, where he emphasized the importance of matching opportunities between Japan's defense industry and the U.S. Forces and U.S. defense industry.

See Section 4-6 (Advancing Initiatives Aimed at Effectiveness of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Procurement)

Then Defense Minister Kihara participating in Industry Day (September 2024)

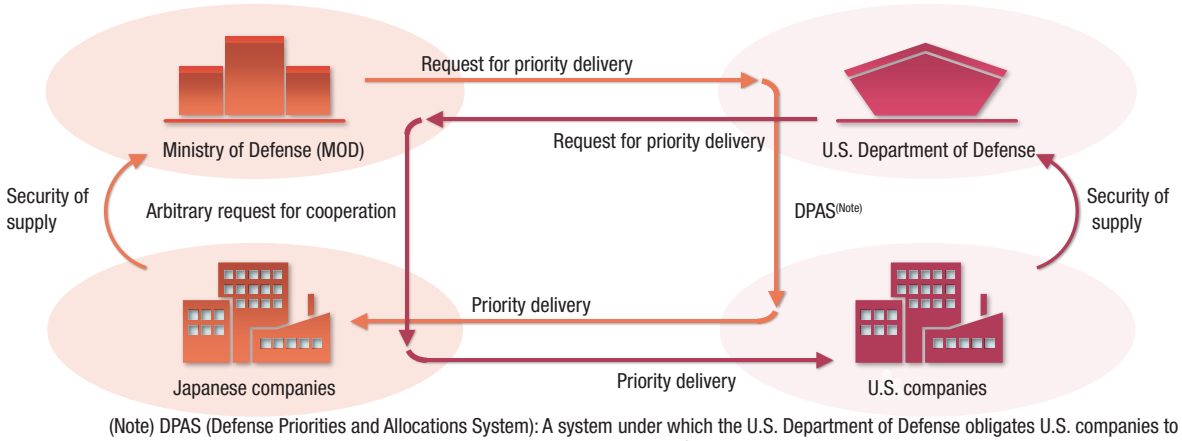
3 Building a Resilient Supply Chain

In 2023, the Security of Supply Arrangement (SoSA) was signed. This Arrangement serves as a framework for the stable and reciprocal supply of defense equipment (including not only final products but also their parts and services) between Japan and the United States.

It will contribute to building a resilient and diverse supply chain for defense equipment.

See Fig. V-1-1-2 (Security of Supply Arrangement (SoSA))

Fig. V-1-1-2 Security of Supply Arrangement (SoSA)



(Note) DPAS (Defense Priorities and Allocations System): A system under which the U.S. Department of Defense obligates U.S. companies to prioritize national defense-related contracts and orders under the U.S. Defense Production Act of 1950.

4 Strengthening Defense Industrial Security

As countries expand their efforts to jointly research, develop, and produce equipment, cyberattacks and other information-theft activities by foreign countries are becoming increasingly prevalent, which results in raising the need to establish international-standard information security systems in the defense industry.

In May 2023, the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency joined the Multinational Industrial Security Working Group (MISWG), streamlining working-level coordination with information security authorities in other countries. It also publishes the **Defense Industrial Security** Manual to clearly communicate information security measures in the defense industry to domestic and international parties, and is advancing discussions with other countries to confirm the substantive equivalence of their information security systems. In order to strengthen information security systems in the defense industry and to facilitate and streamline administrative procedures, the Agency established the **Defense Industrial Security Certification Program**. Under this program, a single unified security contract is concluded at the facility level based on the certification of its security system, instead of attaching a security clause with each of procurement contracts. Full-scale operation of the Program is scheduled to commence in 2025. Through these measures, it will become easier to communicate globally that the information security systems of defense-related companies are on par with those of other countries.

In addition, the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency has applied the Standards on Cybersecurity Measures for Defense Industry, equivalent to information security standard (NIST SP800-171) that the U.S. DoD

KEY WORD **Defense Industrial Security**

Contractors (defense industry) that have entered into contracts for the research and development, procurement, or supply of equipment, or for the provision of services related to equipment used by the MOD/JSDF, are required to take necessary security measures to protect Classified Information when handling such information.

REFERENCE: Formulation of the Standards on Cybersecurity Measures for Defense Industry
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/cybersecurity.html

REFERENCE: Defense Industrial Security Manual
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/industrialsecurity/index.html

KEY WORD **Defense Industrial Security Certification Program**

A program that assesses whether contractors who are interested in participating in defense projects have the organizational structure required to fulfill contracts handling of classified information before conclusion of contract.

requires its contractors handling information to be protected, and defense-related companies have been improving their information systems since April 2023. The Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency has been holding nationwide information sessions on the Standards on Cybersecurity Measures for Defense Industry, targeting defense-related companies that possess technologies and products that can be utilized for defense equipment. Going forward, the Agency will continue to work with defense-related companies to strengthen the information security system for the defense industry as a whole.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-4-2 (2) b. (Security Enhancement)

5 Strengthening Sensitive Technology Management

When transferring sensitive defense equipment, technological sensitivity is evaluated based on the technology's importance and superiority, and efforts are being made to prevent leakage of highly sensitive technologies, such as promoting reverse engineering measures.

As international competition over cutting-edge technologies has been intensifying in recent years, efforts have been made to collaborate and cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies to prevent technological leaks concerning the Patent Non-Disclosure System, one of the economic security measures, inward direct investment, etc.

In addition, to strengthen the management of sensitive technologies, the MOD will analyze cutting-edge technologies from the perspective of defense technology experts, strive to identify and understand key technologies, and work with our ally and others to promote collaboration in technology analysis.

6 Communication and Other Initiatives

The Defense Minister and presidents of companies in the defense industry (major prime contractors) have gathered to exchange their views, and the third round table discussion was held in July 2024. In addition, the MOD has continued to strengthen public-private cooperation and coordination through sharing problems and challenges that both sides have identified by holding seven meetings so far to exchange views between the Commissioner of ATLA and the heads of the defense divisions of various companies.

Section 2 Reinforcing Defense Technology Base

1 Necessity of Reinforcing Defense Technology Base

In order to acquire defense equipment required for the new ways of warfare, the use of our domestic technologies is extremely important. The development of scientific technologies and innovations based on Japan's advanced technological capabilities is at the source of its economic and social development and constitutes a key element of its comprehensive national power integral to security. In addition, the active utilization of Japan's advanced technological capabilities developed by both its public and private sectors over the years in the area of national security without being held back by existing approaches is an essential activity for strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense.

As competition among major countries intensifies in terms of conducting research on cutting-edge technologies and leveraging those results for applications in national security, each country has focused on reinforcing its defense technology base for the purpose of national security by investing heavily in R&D aimed at the early operationalization of technologies that could become so-called "game changers" which dramatically alter the future character of warfare.

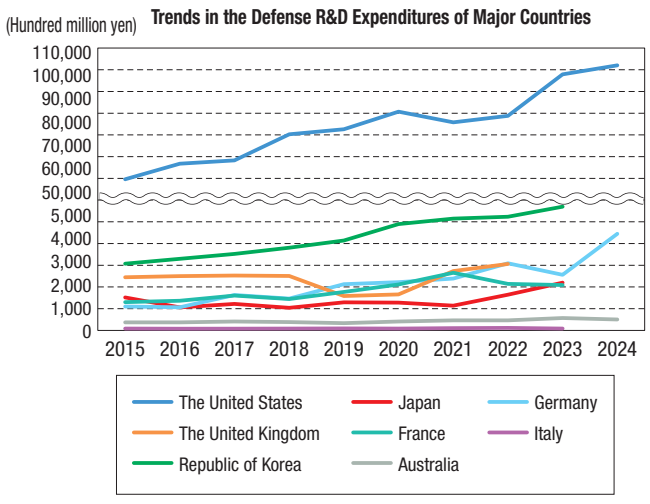
Although Japan's research and development expenditures for the MOD have trailed those of the United States and other countries, they have increased significantly in recent years due to their importance. On the other hand, while the distinction between technologies developed for civilian use and for security purposes has become increasingly blurred in practice, it is important to work strategically to ensure technological superiority as a nation by actively leveraging the results of research and development in science and technology in Japan's public and private sectors for the research and development of equipment. Therefore, it is necessary to further promote research and development domestically and develop and strengthen the defense technology base for the technology areas on which Japan should focus.

In the cases of defense equipment and technology cooperation, such as equipment procurement and international joint development, it is important to maintain the leading role by owning important cutting-edge and other technologies. Considering ways to keep costs down taking into account the possibility of procurement and transfer of defense equipment after development is important. This requires not only research and development by the MOD, but also the promotion of research and development by both the public and private sectors together.

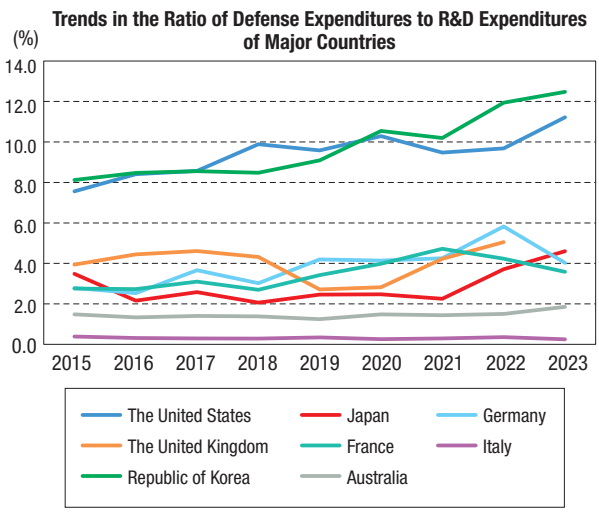
See Fig. V-1-2-1 (Current Status of Research and Development Expenditures), Part I, Chapter 4, Section 1-5 (Trends Concerning Defense Production and Technology Bases)

Fig. V-1-2-1 Current Status of Research and Development Expenditures

As of March 31, 2025



Source: "OECD: Main Science and Technology Indicators"



Source: "OECD: Main Science and Technology Indicators"
"SIPRI Military Expenditure Database ©SIPRI 2024"

(Notes) 1 Defense R&D expenditures of each country are calculated from R&D expenditures and defense-related budget ratios of each country listed under "OECD: Main Science and Technology Indicators". However, the data for China is not included.
2 The figures are according to OECD statistics, and definitions may differ from country to country; therefore, attention is needed when comparing countries using just this data.
3 The data until 2024 is listed for the U.S., Australia, and Germany, which was available as of March 31, 2025.

2 Direction for Reinforcing Defense Technology Base Shown in Defense Technology Guideline 2023

The National Security Strategy of Japan, National Defense Strategy, and Defense Buildup Program all state the necessity of reinforcing the defense technology base and call for the active utilization of Japan's advanced technology research results by both its public and private sectors for the research and development of equipment and to strengthen the framework for the research and development of new equipment. In June 2023, the MOD formulated the Defense Technology Guideline 2023 to embody the policy of reinforcing the defense technology base and serve as a guideline for the MOD to promote various initiatives in an integrated and powerful manner. The MOD publishes this Guideline to improve the predictability of our partners, foster a common understanding of reinforcing the defense technology base, and establish a foundation to promote technological cooperation actively. A summary of the Guideline is given below.

See Reference 70 (Defense Technology Guideline 2023 (Executive Summary))

1 Current Status and Challenges of Defense Technology Base

Rapid advances in science and technology have added to Japan's economic and social development. These changes are also significantly impacting the national security environment and changing the face of warfare. As a result, we may fail to protect Japan's peace and independence and maintain national security by simply continuing to improve the capabilities of our equipment systems. To respond to this tense security environment, it is necessary to spin on Japan's Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) capabilities, maximize their use for security and defense purposes, and spin off the outcomes of the MOD's R&D back to society. To achieve the defense of our nation at all times, R&D at the MOD now necessitates taking new approaches and implementing methods different from those used in the past.

2 Vision for the Future Through Reinforcement of Defense Technology Base

The MOD/JSDF need sufficient defense capabilities in order to defend Japan. The purpose of reinforcing the defense technology base is to provide the necessary technological support. Therefore, the future vision in Defense Technology Guideline 2023 is always to defend our nation through technology.

3 Approaches to Realize This Vision

(1) 1st Pillar: Accelerating delivery of functions and equipment necessary for the defense of Japan

The MOD will develop the functions and equipment necessary to defend Japan, which are directly linked to the future ways of warfare, and deliver them in 5 years or within approximately the next 10 years.

(2) 2nd Pillar: Ensuring technological superiority and creating advanced capabilities

Over the 10 years and beyond, the MOD will expand the community involved in defense-related R&D through public-private collaboration, bringing together Japan's scientific, technological, and innovative strengths to continue to create innovative features and capabilities. This will not only fundamentally strengthen our defense capabilities, but also achieve defense innovations that will transform society, ensuring Japan's technological superiority for the future and realizing advanced capabilities that put Japan ahead of other countries.

4 Means to Realize This Vision

To achieve the 1st and 2nd pillars, it is necessary to "create" the functions and equipment that the MOD/JSDF require, "nurture" technologies strategically, and "understand" various aspects of science and technology. These efforts will be carried out with relevant ministries and agencies, research institutes, industries, and academia to build an ecosystem and framework that will allow us to continue to grow together, collaborating in a sustainable, autonomous, and comfortable manner while creating synergies and ensuring technology preservation.

5 Important Technology Areas for the Defense of Japan

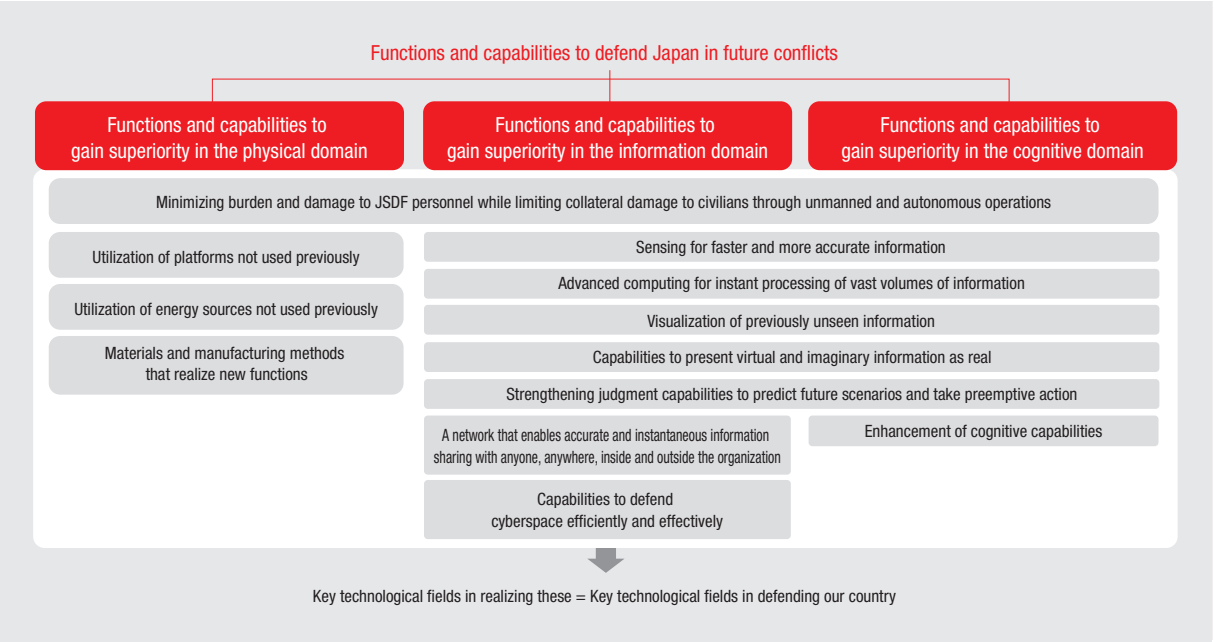
The MOD is considering the functions and capabilities necessary for defending our nation at all times. It is breaking them down to specify the important technology areas to achieve these functions and capabilities.

See Fig. V-1-2-2 (Functions and Capabilities Important for Defending Japan)

REFERENCE: Defense Technology Guideline 2023—To defend our nation at all times with technologies

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/guideline2023/

Fig. V-1-2-2 Functions and Capabilities Important for Defending Japan



3 Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft

For the defense of Japan and to ensure air superiority well into the future, it is vital that Japan continues to employ superior, state-of-the-art fighters. Therefore, with regard to the next-generation fighter aircraft that would succeed the F-2 fighters scheduled to be decommissioned starting around 2035, it is imperative to realize Japan-led development which ensures freedom of modification for timely and appropriate upgrades in the future and domestic defense production and technology bases for high readiness, etc., to maintain the capability to effectively counter numerically superior opponents. To develop next-generation fighter aircraft, the MOD concluded a FY2020 project contract with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. as a prime company to be in charge of the holistic integration of the fighter aircraft, and the development began.

Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy then conducted a joint analysis on the extent of commonality of the aircraft, and the three nations agreed to develop a common platform. In 2022, the leaders of the three nations officially announced this program as the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP).[1] The program enables the three nations to bring together technological advantages and share costs and risks for the joint development of an advanced fighter aircraft which will ensure future air superiority. This cooperation will not only encourage further cooperation among the industries of each country but also maintain and reinforce Japan's defense industrial and technology bases by increasing the number of mass-produced next-generation fighter aircraft, nurturing the next generation of engineers with international experience, and introducing advanced development and manufacturing methods such as digital engineering.

In December 2023, the then Defense Minister Kihara met with the then U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Shapps and Italian Defence Minister Crosetto in Tokyo to sign the Convention on the Establishment of the GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO),[2] establishing an efficient trilateral cooperation framework. The treaty came into effect in December 2024, and the GIGO was officially established.

Furthermore, this cooperation on the next-generation fighter aircraft between the three countries, which share fundamental values and are allies of the United States, will serve as the foundation for cooperation in broader areas with the United Kingdom and Italy for generations to come and contribute significantly to peace and stability in both the Indo-Pacific region and Europe. In December 2022, the United States announced to support Japan's security and defense cooperation with like-minded allies and partners,

1 Joint Statement on the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) (December 9, 2022)
2 Convention on the Establishment of the "Global Combat Air Programme – GCAP International Government Organisation"

including with the United Kingdom and Italy on the trilateral joint development of the next generation fighter aircraft.

As for collaboration between Japan and the United States, in December 2023, the Japan MOD and the U.S. Department of Defense signed a Project Arrangement for cooperative research on Overwhelming Response through Collaborative Autonomy, which is expected to be applied to UAVs that will work in collaboration with the next-generation fighter aircraft.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-3 (Strengthening of Unmanned Defense Capabilities)

Image of a next-generation fighter aircraft

Commentary

Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft: Establishment of an International Organization

In 2022, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy decided to jointly develop the next-generation fighter aircraft, and the leaders of the three nations announced it as the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP). In order to realize a collaborative framework for an efficient execution of this program, in December 2023 the three nations signed the Convention on the Establishment of the "Global Combat Air Programme – GCAP International Government Organisation" which establishes the GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO), an international organization at the center of GCAP management and administration. The three nations subsequently deposited their instruments of ratification and the convention entered into force on December 10, 2024. Furthermore, on the same day, Mr. OKA Masami was elected as the first Chief Executive by the three nations and GIGO was officially established.

To carry out GCAP, personnel from the three nations, possessing diverse areas of expertise, will gather at the headquarters located in the United Kingdom. Numerous technical officials will be dispatched as technology experts. Also the personnel for establishing an IT environment and sophisticated secure environment are required to ensure smooth and reliable progress of the development. Furthermore, the expertise of personnel from Japan's Self-Defense Forces and British and Italian military personnel who will ultimately operate the fighter aircraft is indispensable. Moreover, administrative officials responsible for contracts, accounting, and personnel affairs will be dispatched to ensure the organization's smooth operation. The workplace will feature a broad assignment of roles, including ages from seniors to junior personnel of both genders creating a highly diverse environment. It is expected that the organization will eventually grow to a scale of several hundred people, and the framework will be put in place promptly.

Coordination with entities outside of GIGO will be a frequent occurrence. To ensure that program's progress is effectively managed, coordination will take place daily through face-to-face meetings with the companies engaged in the development work. Daily meetings with the governments of all three nations are essential to ensure that the program progresses tracks in the right direction. Given the distance from Japan and Italy, we will utilize all available methods, including video conferencing, for coordination.

GIGO is an international organization for enhancing the shared interests of the three nations of Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy. Consequently, the team will collaborate beyond their national perspectives to foster the development of GCAP and create fighter aircraft that meet the requirements of all three nations.

In January 2025, Defense Minister NAKATANI Gen visited GIGO and exchanged the views with Chief Executive OKA Masami

REFERENCE: Development of Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/defense/nextfighter/index.html

4 Active Utilization of Civilian Technology

1 Collaboration with Domestic and International Related Organizations

ATLA and domestic research institutes such as national research and development agencies proactively engage in research collaborations and technological information exchanges in order to ensure that advanced civilian technologies are incorporated and that research and development is conducted efficiently.

Domestically, in order to create superior equipment through the utilization of cutting-edge technologies and conduct research and development efficiently and effectively, the MOD has been collaborating closely with the Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI)[3] and other relevant ministries and agencies on a regular basis based on the Integrated Innovation Strategy 2024 (Cabinet Decision on June 4, 2024). The ministry also actively participates in the Council for Integrated Innovation Strategy Promotion[4] established to promote the strategy in order to further enhance collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies, national research and development agencies, industry, universities, and other parties.

In addition, it is an effective initiative within the Government to promote communications between the relevant ministries and agencies that promote civilian-based initiatives, and the MOD. The NSS also states that Japan will strengthen the cross-government framework for utilizing funding and information related to research and development, and it is important for the entire Government to work together based on this strategy.

Specifically, the Government will intensively offer strong support for cutting-edge technology with multiple applications, such as AI and quantum technology, through programs, such as the Key and Advanced Technology R&D through Cross Community Collaboration Program (K-Program). The research and development results obtained will smoothly reinforce security-related areas. Furthermore, a cross-governmental framework was established to expedite the development of technologies with the potential to contribute to strengthening comprehensive defense architecture by matching the research and development needs of the MOD with the technology seeds possessed by the relevant ministries and agencies.

Outside Japan, the MOD will continue to actively promote technological and engineer exchanges with allies and like-minded countries, as well as consider diverse possibilities through continued exchange of opinions at various opportunities.

See Fig. V-1-2-3 (Research Collaboration with National Research and Development Agencies and the Like), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3 (Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country), Section 5 (Initiatives for Economic Security)

Fig. V-1-2-3 Research Collaboration with National Research and Development Agencies and the Like

Partner	Collaboration Fields
Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)	Aerospace field
National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT)	Electronics, information and communications field
National Institute of Maritime, Port and Aviation Technology	Naval ship area
Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC)	Marine field
Yamaguchi Prefectural Industrial Technology Institute	Unmanned underwater vehicle field

2 Identification, Development and Incorporation of Innovative Cutting-Edge Civilian Technologies

The active utilization of advanced civilian technologies is essential for securing the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese nationals into the future. In addition, investing in defense areas is beneficial for the development of Japan's science, technology, and innovation, similar to how investment in innovative science and technology by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of the United States facilitated advances in science and technology as a whole, including civilian technology such as the development of the Internet and the Global Positioning System (GPS). From this perspective, the MOD intends to promote relevant measures.

Specifically, the MOD has implemented the Innovative Science & Technology Initiative for Security (MOD funding), a competitive research funding program to publicly seek basic research in target areas, which is expected to contribute to future research and development in defense areas. From among research proposals widely seeking from universities, research institutes, and startup companies, a total of 190 research projects have been awarded as of FY2024. In FY2025, in addition to existing outsourcing costs, a new subsidy will be established to further promote the discovery

3 One of the important policy meetings aimed at the planning and general coordination of comprehensive and basic science and technology innovation policies under the leadership of the Prime Minister and Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, at a level higher than individual ministries

4 Meeting of all Ministers of State under the leadership of the Chief Cabinet Secretary for the checking, sorting, cross-sectoral and substantial coordination, and promotion of items that are included in the Integrated Innovation Strategy 2024 (Cabinet Decision on June 4, 2024) and which require coordination between the control towers related to innovation.

and development of innovative and emerging technologies.

In the basic research areas, free thinking of researchers leads to innovative and creative results. For this reason, it is necessary to assign maximum value to freedom of research when sponsoring research, so that, for example, researchers will be able to publish all of their research results to have a wide range of academic discussions. Therefore, under this program, the MOD does not intervene in research, restrict the publication of research results, designate the confidentiality of research results, or provide confidential information to researchers. We will continue to strive to raise awareness of the fact that this program ensures academic freedom and sound scholastic development. Also, since cooperation with start-up companies and research institutes in Japan is essential for identifying and developing cutting-edge civilian technologies, we will encourage the broad participation of leading researchers, including those from academic circles, while obtaining the understanding and cooperation from the relevant parties.

In addition, in order to connect innovative and emerging advanced technologies, such as the results of government investment in science and technology, including the advanced technologies that are rapidly developing in the civil sector and the Innovative Science & Technology for Security Program, to equipment output, ATLA has been conducting "Advanced Technology Bridging Research" since 2020 to enhance the maturity of these technologies. In FY2025, such research will continue with the aim of generating research results that will lead to equipment.

In addition, in order to accelerate the research and development of equipment, the MOD launched its "Efforts to Facilitate the Early Practical Use of Game-Changers" starting in FY2022 as an initiative to commission private companies to conduct research and improve their advanced technologies to the point where they can be used in the research and development of equipment.

See Reference 71 (FY2024 Awarded Research Projects for the "Innovative Science & Technology Initiative for Security" Program)

3 Establishment of a New Research Institute

In October 2024, the Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute (Shibuya City, Tokyo) was established under ATLA to fundamentally reinforce capabilities that create defense innovations and groundbreaking equipment. The Institute conducts breakthrough research to create functions and technologies that will reinforce defense capabilities and lead to social change from a variety of rapidly evolving science and technology by actively introducing new approaches and methods.

Opening ceremony of the Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute (October 2024)

4 New Measures for Early Deployment

For programs that are particularly urgent and significant from a policy perspective in areas that could directly affect the JSDF's current and future ways of warfare, while extensively soliciting outstanding proposals from companies, and incorporating innovative commercial technologies, the MOD is working to achieve the early deployment of equipment through demonstration experiments.

REFERENCE: Innovative Science & Technology Initiative for Security
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/funding.html

REFERENCE: Initiatives for Early Deployment of Cutting-Edge Technologies
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/budget/rapid_acquisition/index.html

Commentary

Establishment of the Defense Innovation Science and Technology Institute (DISTI)

Rapidly advancing science and technology are fundamentally changing the nature of society. Under these circumstances, in order to link commercial cutting-edge science and technology to the enhancement of defense capabilities and therefore to the enhancement of national power, breaking away from existing research and development frameworks and thinking, establishing mechanisms for generating innovation, and realizing the ecosystem for research and development for national security have become urgent tasks.

The establishment of DISTI is the first step toward addressing these issues. DISTI employs program managers from outside the ministry and will play a wide range of roles, including challenging research based on open-minded and novel ideas, research aimed at producing outcomes through the early adoption of commercial cutting-edge technologies, further promotion of investment in a wide range of basic research that will serve as the seeds of future innovation, and acting as a think tank on cutting-edge science and technology.

DISTI has its office in a private facility in order to accomplish open innovation through these efforts. It is aiming to expand the research and development community for national security and create outcomes which realize defense innovation that changes not only the national defense of Japan but also the nature of society.

Co-creation space at DISTI for open innovation

Section 3 Promoting Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation and Transfer of Defense Equipment

Based on the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Implementation Guidelines[1] formulated in 2014, Japan promotes defense equipment and technology cooperation with other countries in order to contribute to maintaining and reinforcing the defense production and technology bases, as well as to the promotion of our national security, peace contribution, and international cooperation.

The transfer of defense equipment and technology as outlined in the National Security Strategy describes that such transfer is a key instrument to ensure peace and stability, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force, to create a desirable security environment for Japan, and to provide assistance to countries that are subject to aggression in violation of international law, use of force, or threat of force.

From this perspective, in order to consider revisions of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, its Implementation Guidelines, and other systems, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Komeito Party have held discussions in the ruling parties' Working Team[2] (WT). In December 2023, the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines were revised based on the recommendations of the ruling parties' WT. Furthermore, a Cabinet resolution was passed in March 2024 after inter-party discussions between the ruling parties. The Implementation Guidelines were partially revised to establish a stringent mechanism. With the cabinet resolution and the guidelines revision, it is now possible to transfer finished products regarding the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), a joint development project among Japan, the United Kingdom and Italy, from Japan to countries other than partner countries.

In addition, to smoothly promote such transfers, Japan will carry forward with the transfer of defense equipment and technology through joint public and private efforts by establishing a fund and providing corporate support as needed, etc.

1 Systems Regarding Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

1 Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

(1) Clarification of Cases Where Transfers Are Prohibited (the First Principle)

The cases where overseas transfers of defense equipment are prohibited are clarified as follows: (1) in the case of violating the obligations under treaties and other international agreements that Japan has concluded; (2) in the case of violating the obligations based on the Resolution of the United Nations Security Council; or (3) in the case of transferring to countries in conflict.

(2) Limitation to Cases Where Transfers May Be Permitted As Well As Strict Examination and Information Disclosure (the Second Principle)

The cases where transfers may be permitted are limited to (1) cases that contribute to the active promotion of peace contribution and international cooperation, (2) cases that contribute to the security of Japan, or other cases. It has been decided to strictly examine the appropriateness of the destination and end user, and the extent of security concerns, while ensuring transparency. In addition, it has been decided that important cases would be deliberated at the National Security Council and along with this, information concerning the cases that were deliberated would be disclosed.

(3) Ensuring Appropriate Control regarding Extra-Purpose Use or Transfer to Third-Party Countries (the Third Principle)

Overseas transfers of defense equipment and technology will be permitted only in cases where appropriate control is ensured, and the Government will in principle oblige the government of the recipient country to gain its prior consent regarding extra-purpose use and transfer to third parties. However, in cases where it is judged appropriate for the active promotion of peace contribution and international cooperation, cases involving participation in the international systems for sharing parts, and cases where parts are delivered to a licenser, appropriate control may be ensured with the confirmation of the control system at the destination.

See Reference 72 (Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology), Reference 73 (Implementation Guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology)

1 The term "defense equipment" is deemed appropriate for the title of "Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology," since possible articles of overseas transfers play a role in contributing to peace and international cooperation, as was seen in the example of the provision of bulldozers and other items belonging to the JSDF to disaster-stricken countries. Similarly, due to the fact that technology is also provided in addition to goods, the term "transfer" was adopted rather than "export."

2 Ruling Party National Security Strategy Study Working Team

2 Partial Revision of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

The National Security Strategy states that the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Implementation Guidelines will be revised to promote smooth transfer of defense equipment and technology of high security significance and international joint development in a broad array of fields. In doing so, the necessity, requirements, and transparency of the related procedures for transfer of defense equipment and technology will be under adequate consideration, while maintaining the three principles themselves.

Based on this, the ruling parties' WT was held 23 times in 2023, discussed the revision of cases where overseas transfers may be permitted, as well as how to ensure appropriate management after the transfer, including strict examination when determining whether a transfer is allowed and prior consent for transfers to third countries, while also taking into account examples from other countries. In response, the ruling parties' WT consolidated the recommendations for the government. In December the same year, based on the recommendations, the government partially revised the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Implementation Guidelines. This is the first revision since the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology was formulated in 2014.

In addition, this revision of the Implementation Guidelines made it possible to transfer defense equipment and technology in a broad array of fields. The first project after the revision is the transfer of patriot missiles, which Japan is manufacturing under license, from Japan to the U.S. After deliberation at the National Security Council, it was confirmed that the project falls under the category of a case that can be approved for overseas transfers. The Ministry of Defense (MOD) intends to create a desirable safety and security environment for Japan based on the revised system. In order to achieve this environment, the MOD will further promote the transfer of defense equipment and technology through collaboration with the relevant ministries and agencies and by joint public and private efforts.

This revision makes it possible to transfer defense equipment in a broad array of fields and at the same time, requires the more strict examination for the transfer. The government will maintain its basic philosophy as a peace-loving nation that conforms to the Charter of the United Nations and the course it has taken as a peace-loving nation, and promote transfer of defense equipment and technology strictly and carefully in the same manner.

A summary of the December 2023 revisions to the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and the Implementation Guidelines is as follows.

(1) Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology After the Revision

The three principles before the revision will be maintained, and the significance of transfer of defense equipment and technology and the recognition of the security environment was added and updated in the preamble in accordance with the National Security Strategy. It is also stated that Implementation Guidelines will be amended in a timely manner in response to changes in the security environment and security needs.

(2) International Joint Development and Production

This revision makes it possible to transfer parts and technology from Japan directly to countries other than its international joint development and production partner countries.

(3) Transfer of Defense Equipment Related to Licensed Products

Defense equipment (including finished products) for licensed products, including those not of U.S. origin, can now be supplied to the license provider country. However, when providing defense equipment that corresponds to licensed products considered as weapons[3] under the JSDF Law from the licensed provider country to countries other than the license provider country, the case of the provision to countries where combat is currently deemed to be taking place as part of an armed conflict unless there are special circumstances in consideration of the need in terms of Japan's security.

(4) Provision of Repairs and Other Services to Countries Cooperating with Japan in Security Area

This revision makes it possible to provide repairs and other services on a regular bases to countries cooperating with Japan in the security area other than the U.S.

(5) Transfer of Parts

This revision makes it possible to transfer parts to countries cooperating with Japan in the security area, following the clarification of the definition of parts.[4]

3 Firearms, explosives, swords, and other machines, instruments, and devices intended to directly kill or injure people or destroy property as a means of armed struggle (includes things such as escort ships, fighter planes, and tanks that are equipped with firearms and operate to directly kill or injure people or destroying property as a means of armed struggle, and excludes parts.).

4 Refers to items incorporated as part of a finished product. However, this excludes items that can function as equipment by themselves.

(6) So-Called Five Categories (Rescue, Transport, Warning, Surveillance, and Minesweeping)

It was clarified that products to be transferred can be equipped with arms under the Self-Defense forces Law necessary for the performance of their essential duties or for self-protection such as machine guns mounted on minesweeper and transport ships.

(7) Assistance to the Country That Is Subject to Aggression with Equipment (Excluding Arms)

This revision enables to transfer equipment and technology that does not fall under the category of arms under the Self-Defense Forces Law to a country that is subject to aggression in violation of international law, regardless of presence or absence of cooperation with Japan in security area.[5]

(8) Strict Examination

The perspective of strict examination was expanded in light of the diversification of types of transfers, such as direct transfers of arms under the Self-Defense Forces Law and transfers from the license provider country to a third country.

(9) Procedures for Deliberations

Direct transfers of arms under the Self-Defense Forces Law and transfers of such arms from the license provider country to third parties are basically deliberated and announced by the National Security Council.[6]

3 Direct Transfer of GCAP Finished Products to Third Countries

In the proposal consolidated by the ruling parties' WT, it was considered that the direct transfer from Japan to third countries other than the partner countries pertaining to international joint development and production requires ongoing deliberations. Under these circumstances, in particular the finished GCAP products, to realize aircraft that has the capabilities required to protect our country, it is considered necessary to hold a mechanism that allows direct transfer from Japan to third countries other than the partner countries. In this context, the government has coordinated with the ruling party and provided explanations to the Diet.

Based on this, in March 2024, the Cabinet decided that the transfer of finished products from Japan to third countries can be permitted. In the future, when Japan transfers the finished GCAP products regarding the GCAP directly to third countries, a Cabinet decision will be made on each case, which is so-called a "double Cabinet decision."

Furthermore, the Implementation Guidelines were partially revised to include "three restrictions": (1) At present, direct transfer from Japan to countries other than partner countries is restricted to finished products regarding GCAP; (2) transfers will be restricted to countries that have concluded an international agreement obligating the use of defense equipment transferred from Japan in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; and (3) it excludes the case of the transfer to a country where combat is currently deemed to be taking place as part of an armed conflict.

These strict decision-making process shows clearly that Japan will maintain its basic philosophy as a peace-loving nation that conforms to the Charter of the United Nations.

The Ministry of Defense, in light of the current revision, will firmly proceed with discussions with the United Kingdom and Italy, to realize a fighter aircraft suitable for Japan's security environment to ensure the peace and stability of our country in the future.

2 Efforts to Promote the Transfer of Defense Equipment

In the context of transferring defense equipment, to prevent the loss of Japan's technological superiority in the defense sector over various countries, it is necessary for the defense equipment manufacturers to implement appropriate changes and adjustments to specifications and performance from a security perspective. This is required to preserve information about advanced technologies used in Japan's equipment.

Based on an awareness of these issues, a fund was established for the Designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation, designated by the Defense Minister in February 2024, under the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases to promote initiatives to make equipment transfers appropriate from a security perspective. The Designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation will allocate the grants to the defense equipment manufacturers who are required by the MOD to make adjustments to specifications and performance of the equipment transferred, in accordance with the content of defense cooperation with partner countries.

See Section 1-1 [Commentary] (The Significance of the Fund to Facilitate the Transfer of Defense Equipment), Section 1-1-2 (2) (Facilitation of Equipment Transfer and the Designated Equipment Transfer Support Corporation)

5 Before revision, it was stipulated as "The overseas transfer of defense equipment, which is part of the equipment transferred by the Defense Minister according to the provisions of Article 116-3 of the Self-Defense Forces Law to Ukraine, which has been invaded in violation of international law."

6 The National Security Council discusses all first-time transfers of arms under the Self-Defense Forces Law (direct transfer or transfer to a third country), and similar transfers of arms for the second and subsequent times are also discussed by the National Security Council if they require particularly careful consideration.

3 Deepening Relationships with the United States Regarding Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation

1 Joint Research and Development, etc.

Since 1992, Japan has implemented 27 cooperative research projects and two cooperative development projects with the United States. At present, four cooperative research projects ((1) High-Temperature Case Technologies, (2) Modular Hybrid Electric Vehicle System, (3) Overwhelming Response through Collaborative Autonomy, and (4) High-Power Microwave (HPM) systems) and mutual dispatch of scientist and engineer personnel are in implementation.

In addition, at the Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting in 2022, the two countries agreed to start studying the possibility of a Japan-U.S. joint research project on counter-hypersonic technologies at the level of elemental technology and components based on the progress of their joint analysis. Then, following the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting in 2023 in which the Ministers concurred to begin discussion on potential joint development of a future interceptor, as a result of discussions between the MOD and the U.S. Department of Defense, the two countries decided to initiate a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) Cooperative Development program in 2023 and at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting, the two leaders welcomed the decision. Furthermore, in July 2024, the Japan MOD and the U.S. Department of Defense signed the Project Arrangement concerning Cooperative Research on High-Power Microwave (HPM) systems. This project aims to evaluate the effects of HPM systems by conducting cooperative tests in the U.S. test range and sharing the test data, with the aim of realizing HPM systems for Air and Maritime defense. In addition, in September 2024, the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency (ATLA), Japan MOD and the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), U.S. DoD concluded the Memorandum for Defense Innovation Cooperation. Based on this memorandum, ATLA will promote the integration of cutting-edge commercial technologies into defense systems more rapidly and efficiently, and reinforcement of defense production and technology bases.

In addition to this, the National Security Council has confirmed that the transfer of Patriot missiles to the United States in 2023 falls under the category of projects for which overseas transfers may be authorized. This transfer is an unprecedented initiative by Japan in response to a request from the United States, to replenish the U.S. military's inventory of Patriot missiles as quickly as possible and support the readiness of the U.S. military, since demand for Patriot missiles at a level exceeding expectations has been experienced by the U.S. military and by global supply chains. This will take security and defense cooperation with the United States to a new level and contribute to the security of our country and the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

See Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-2-3 (Japan-U.S. BMD Technical Cooperation, etc.), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-3 (Strengthening of Unmanned Defense Capabilities), Part III, Chapter 2, Section 4-2 (Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation), Section 2-3 (Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft), Reference 30 (Japan-U.S. Joint Research and Development Projects)

2 Production, Sustainment and Maintenance of Common Equipment Between Japan and the United States

(1) Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS)

In April 2024, the United States-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement "Global Partners for the Future" stated that a Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS) co-led by the U.S. Department of Defense and Japan's Ministry of Defense would be convened in coordination with relevant ministries to leverage our respective industrial bases to meet the demand for critical capabilities and maintain readiness over the long term. Based on this, in the 1st DICAS held in June the same year, Masaki Fukasawa, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Agency (ATLA) Commissioner (then) and Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD (A&S)) Dr. William LaPlante (then) agreed to establish working groups for further discussions on identifying opportunities for missile co-production, co-sustainment of forward-deployed U.S. Navy ships and U.S. Air Force aircraft, and supply chain resiliency for priority defense requirements, in partnership with U.S. and Japanese industry. In the Japan-U.S. "2+2" meeting held in July the same year, it was confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would pursue mutually beneficial co-production opportunities to expand the production capacity of Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) and PAC-3 MSE. In the 2nd DICAS held in October the same year and the 3rd DICAS held in December the same year, Japan and the U.S. confirmed the progress in each of the four working groups (the Missile Co-production Working Group, the Aircraft Repair Working Group, the Supply Chain Resilience Working Group, and the Ship Repair Working Group).

(2) Participation of Japanese Industry in the Production of the F-35A Fighter Aircraft and the Establishment of Regional Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul and Upgrade (MRO&U) Capability

In 2011, Japan decided to have Japanese companies participate in production of the F-35A fighter aircraft, aside

from several completed aircraft, which would be imported.[7] In light of this decision, Japan has been working to enable the involvement of Japanese industries in the manufacturing process in preparation for the acquisition of F-35A fighter aircraft from FY2013 onwards. So far, the Japanese companies have participated in Final Assembly and Check Out (FACO) for the airframe and engines, as well as the manufacture of related parts.

In light of the severe financial conditions, the MOD decided in principle that it would resort to importing completed aircraft for procurement in FY2019 and after, but this would be reviewed if less expensive means were available. Subsequently, however, as a result of cost reduction efforts, by the manufacturers and others, it was confirmed that FACO by domestic companies would make the price lower than importing completed aircraft. For this reason, for procurements from FY2019 to FY2027, the MOD has decided to procure F-35A fighters for which domestic companies performed FACO.[8]

In addition, as F-35 fighter aircraft are operated worldwide, the U.S. Government decided to establish maintenance depot (regional MRO&U Capability) mainly for airframes and engines in the North America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific regions.

The regional MRO&U in the Asia-Pacific region for Japan's F-35 fighter airframes selected by the U.S. Government in 2014 began operations at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' Komaki South Plant located in Aichi Prefecture from 2020. Moreover, with regard to the regional MRO&U Capability for engines, operations began at the IHI Mizuho Aero-Engine Works in Tokyo in 2023.

The participation in the production of F-35 fighters by Japanese industries continuously, the establishment of maintenance depots for airframes, engines and others within Japan, and the contribution to maintenance in the Asia-Pacific region not only maintain, cultivate, and advance Japan's defense production and technology bases but are also significant from the perspectives of securing the operational support system for F-35A fighter aircraft in Japan, strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and deepening defense equipment and technology cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

(3) Initiatives Toward the Establishment of the Common Maintenance Base for Ospreys of Japan and the U.S.

In 2015, Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd.[9] was selected as the maintenance company for the Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) of the U.S. Marine Corps Ospreys deployed at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. From 2017, the PMI has been performed at GSDF Camp Kisarazu, with the maintenance of eight aircraft completed as of the end of March 2025 and three aircraft currently under maintenance.

The MOD intends to establish a common maintenance base for both Japan's and the United States' Ospreys by allowing the maintenance company to use the hangar at GSDF Camp Kisarazu for aircraft maintenance of the U.S. Marine Corps Ospreys and to carry out future aircraft maintenance

Commentary

About the Cooperative Development of a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) by Japan and the United States

It has been pointed out that hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs) fly at hypersonic speeds of over Mach 5 on a low trajectory and are highly maneuverable, making them more difficult to intercept. In order to address the challenge of intercepting HGVs in their glide phase by combining the technologies of both countries, Japan and the United States announced in August 2023 that they would commence cooperative development of a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI), and subsequently officially commenced the joint development with the signing of the Project Agreement in May 2024. In September of the same year, Japan and the United States decided to adopt the GPI development concept proposed by American company Northrop Grumman Corporation, and subsequently the Ministry of Defense (MOD) concluded a contract with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. for the design and manufacture of the parts of the GPI developed in Japan based on that concept.

The MOD is currently advancing the development of the components for which Japan is mainly responsible, including the second-stage rocket motor, fin actuator and fins, as well as the propulsion system, fin actuator and fins for the front part of the missile, called the kill vehicle, with the aim of completing the development in the 2030s. Steady progress in the cooperative development of the GPI will contribute to reinforcement of integrated air and missile defense capabilities, enhancement of the technological capabilities of the domestic defense industry, further deepening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and enhancement of deterrence and response capabilities.

7 In December 2018, the number of F-35A fighter aircraft to be procured was changed from 42 to 147, of which 42 can be replaced by fighters that are capable of short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL).

8 In December 2019, December 2020, December 2021, and December 2022, it was decided to opt for manufacturing arrangements involving domestic companies for F-35A fighter aircraft procurements in FY2019 and FY2020, FY2021, FY2022, and FY2023 through FY2027, respectively, as such arrangements were confirmed to be more cost effective.

9 The company was renamed SUBARU Corporation on April 1, 2017.

of the GSDF Ospreys (V-22) at the same camp in view of the (1) smooth introduction of the V-22 (GSDF Ospreys);[10] (2) smooth and effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements; and (3) enhanced efficiency in maintenance. The establishment of a common maintenance base at GSDF Camp Kisarazu would be extremely significant in that it will contribute to mitigating the burden on Okinawa as well as to the "strengthening of the infrastructure for the repair and maintenance of common equipment" stated in the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (the Guidelines).

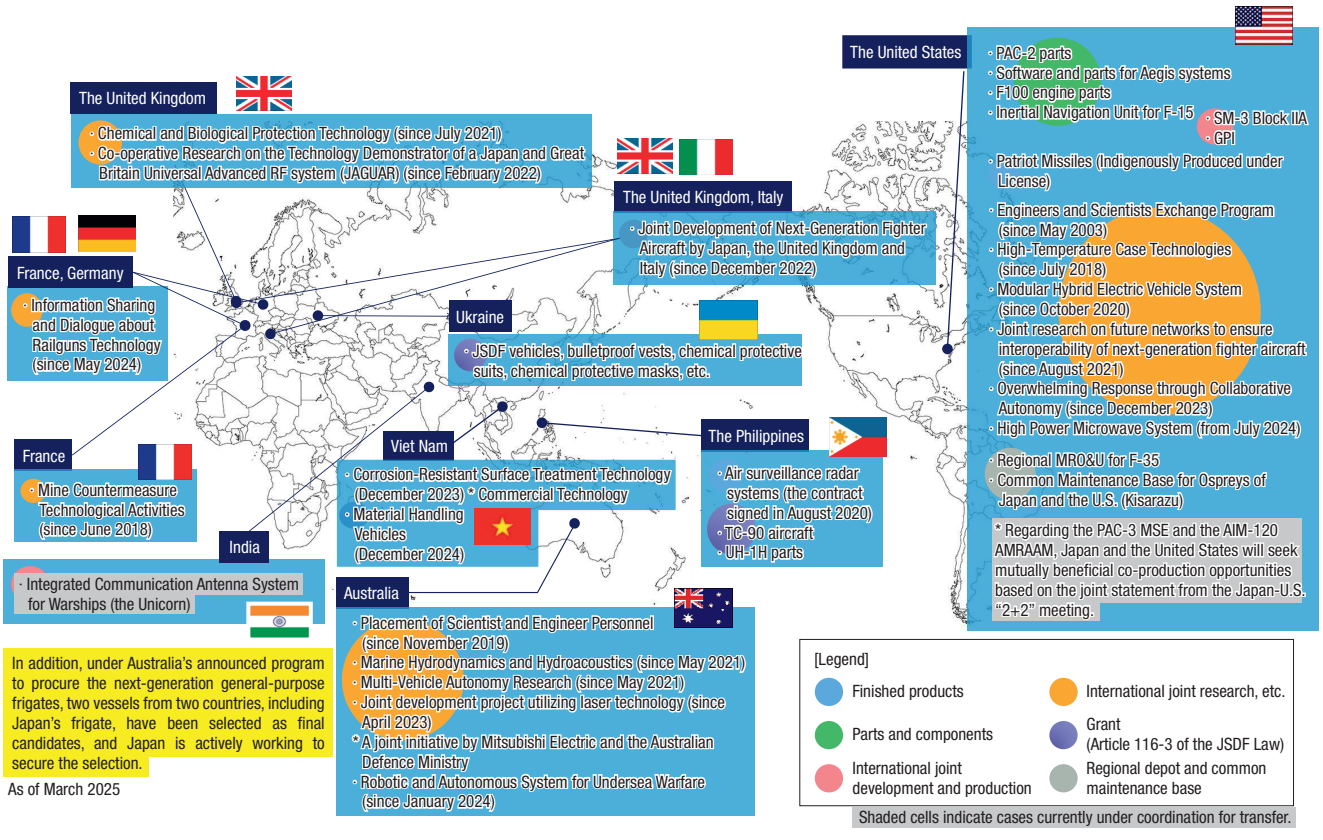
4 Building New Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation

1 Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation with Other Countries, etc.

Considering that cooperation in defense equipment is an initiative that spans more than half a century from its conception to retirement, Japan is strengthening initiatives for defense equipment and technology cooperation, including overseas transfer of defense equipment and international joint development, and it is striving to enhance its partners' military capabilities and strengthen mid- and long-term relationships with those countries.[11] In particular, Japan has decided to effectively promote these initiatives by combining them with other efforts, such as high-level practitioner exchanges, multilateral training and exercises, and capacity building, and other non-MOD measures, such as Official Security Assistance (OSA). In this regard, Japan will consider transferring equipment that has reached a considerable number of years in service and has limited expandability to like-minded countries through early decommissioning or early removal from service.

See Fig. V-1-3-1 (Main Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation with Other Countries (image)), Part III, Chapter 1, Section 3-4 (International Cooperation to Enhance the Deterrence Capabilities of Japan and Its Like-minded Countries and Others), Reference 40 (Situations Concerning the Conclusion of Agreements)

Fig. V-1-3-1 Main Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation with Other Countries (image)



10 The GSDF will introduce 17 tilt-rotor aircraft (Osprey (V-22)) that can complement and strengthen the capabilities of transport helicopters (CH-47JA) in terms of cruising speed and range. As a temporary measure until the completion of maintenance facilities in Saga Airport, the aircraft will be temporarily deployed at Camp Kisarazu.

11 As of April 2025, Japan has signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with the following countries: the United States; the United Kingdom; Australia; India; the Philippines; France; Germany; Malaysia; Ital; Indonesia; Viet Nam; Thailand; Sweden; Singapore; the United Arab Emirates (UAE); and Mongolia.

(1) Australia

With Australia, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology[12] went into effect in 2014, and the Japan-Australia Joint Steering Committee for Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation was first held in 2017. Since then, regular consultations have been held to advance defense equipment and technology cooperation. Subsequently, there has been the signing of a variety of arrangements, mutual dispatches of scientist and engineer personnel, and a variety of joint research.

In 2023, the Arrangement concerning Research, Development, Test and Evaluation was signed, creating the framework to launch joint projects quickly. In January 2024, this Arrangement was applied for the first time, and the Japan-Australia Joint Research project on Robotic and Autonomous System for Undersea Warfare was launched.

At the meeting of the Australia-Japan Defense Ministers held in 2023, Japan Defense Minister Kihara (then), together with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Marles, welcomed the announcement by the Australian Department of Defence regarding the signing of a contract with Mitsubishi Electric Australia for a joint development project using laser technology. This project represents the first joint development project between Japan and Australia. It is also the first time that the technology of a Japanese defense-related company has attracted the attention of a foreign government, leading to the implementation of international joint development in the defense field. This is a new step for Japan, which has been promoting the transfer of defense equipment through partnerships of public and private sectors.

The Government of Australia announced in February 2024 that it would select its next-generation general purpose frigates from among candidate naval vessels from four countries, including the "Mogami" class frigate, and it also announced a procurement plan which included construction inside Australia. Japan provided the necessary information in response to requests from the Government of Australia, and in November the same year, the Government of Australia selected the naval vessels of two countries, including 2024 version (4,800 ton version), an upgraded type, of Japan's FFM "MOGAMI" class frigate, as the final candidates. In the same month, in response to this, Japan held discussions in the National Security Council (NSC) and as a result decided that, if Japan is selected, joint development and production of Australia's next-generation general purpose frigates could be carried out with Australia and the finished products and others could be transferred to Australia. Moreover, in December the same year, in order for the public and private sectors to work together to promote joint development and production of Australia's next-generation general purpose frigate, the MOD established the Government-Industry Joint Committee attended by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and other relevant companies and the relevant ministries and agencies including the Cabinet Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

"Mogami" class frigate (candidate naval vessel)

Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister Yasuhiro Takami (then) participated in Indian Ocean Defence & Security 2024, an international exhibition and conference held in Australia in July 2024, and had meetings with Australian Minister for Defence Industry Pat Conroy and others. In February 2025, Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister Kenji Wakamiya visited Australia, had a meeting with Australian Minister for Defence Industry Pat Conroy, Australian Minister for Resources Madeleine King, and others, and held an exchange of views regarding all aspects of Japan-Australia defense industrial cooperation.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-1 (Australia)

(2) India

Japan considers defense equipment and technology cooperation with India as an important field of cooperation based on the Special Strategic Global Partnership between Japan and India. At the Japan-India summit meeting in 2015, both countries signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology,[13] which entered into force in 2016. They have held regular meetings since then.

In November 2024, based on the Japan-India Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, the Memorandum of Implementation (MOI) concerning the transfer of the Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) installed on the "Mogami" class frigate from Japan to India was signed between Japan and India.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-2 (India)

12 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Australia concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology
13 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of India concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology

(3) United Kingdom

With the United Kingdom, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology[14] was signed and went into effect in 2013, Japan and the United Kingdom have held regular meetings since then, and in addition from 2022 the two countries have been engaged in joint development of fighter aircraft in GCAP.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-3 (1) (The United Kingdom), Section 2-3 (Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft)

(4) France

With France, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[15] went into effect in 2016. In May 2024, the MOD, the French Ministry of Armed Forces, the German Federal Ministry of Defence and the French-German Research Institute of Saint-Louis signed the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Cooperation on Railgun Technologies. This TOR has the objective of exploring the potential for collaboration on the research, development, testing, and evaluation of railgun technologies, and the participants are steadily working toward the early realization of railguns.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-3 (2) (France)

(5) Germany

The Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[16] was signed between Japan and Germany and went into effect in 2017, and various cooperative activities are progressing, including the aforementioned cooperation concerning Railgun Technologies.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-3 (3) (Germany)

(6) Italy

With Italy, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology[17] went into effect in 2019 and in addition the two countries have been engaged in the joint development of fighter aircraft in GCAP since 2022.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-3 (4) (Italy), Section 2-3 (Development of the Next-Generation Fighter Aircraft)

(7) Sweden

The Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology[18] was signed between Japan and Sweden and went into effect in 2022.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-6 (1) (Sweden)

(8) Ukraine

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022 and based on the request of the Ukrainian Government to provide equipment, etc., the MOD partially revised the Implementation Guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology at the meeting of the National Security Council in 2022, in order to provide non-lethal supplies within the scope of the Three Principles in accordance with the Self-Defense Forces Law. To date, it has provided the Ukrainian Government with bulletproof vests, helmets, winter battle dress uniforms, tents, cameras, hygiene products and medical supplies, emergency rations, binoculars, lighting devices, personal equipment, chemical protective masks, chemical protective suits, small drones, civilian vehicles (vans), and JSDF vehicles (1/2t trucks, high-mobility vehicles, and material handling vehicles) via JSDF aircraft and other means. Furthermore, in the Japan-Ukraine Defense Ministerial Meeting held in October 2024, Defense Minister Gen Nakatani informed Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov that Japan has decided to provide additional JSDF vehicles to Ukraine. In April 2025, as the first additional provision, Japan provided six JSDF vehicles to Ukraine.

JSDF vehicles provided to Ukraine

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-7 (1) (Ukraine), Reference 73 (Implementation Guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology)

(9) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Countries

Japan and ASEAN countries have exchanged views regarding defense equipment and technology cooperation in non-traditional security sectors, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), and maritime security, through the Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Meetings and other occasions. Participating countries have expressed their expectation for Japan's cooperation in effectively dealing with these issues. In the "Vientiane Vision" announced by Japan in 2016, it was stated that Japan's defense equipment

14 Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Concerning the Transfer of Arms and Military Technologies Necessary to Implement Joint Research, Development and Production of Defence Equipment and Other Related Items
15 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of France concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
16 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
17 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Italian Republic concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology
18 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology

and technology cooperation with ASEAN countries would be promoted with a focus on the following three points: (1) equipment and technology transfer, (2) human resources development, and (3) holding seminars on defense industries.

In terms of the specific initiatives implemented, during the second Japan-Indonesia "2+2" in Tokyo in 2021, the two countries signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[19] and went into effect immediately.

With Singapore, at the Shangri-La Dialogue held in Singapore in 2023, the two countries signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[20] and it went into effect immediately.

With Thailand, during the visit of then Prime Minister Kishida to Thailand in 2022, the two countries signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology,[21] which went into effect immediately.

With the Philippines, after the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[22] went into effect in 2016, the loan and granting of five TC-90 training aircraft of the MSDF was realized. Moreover, the granting of parts and maintenance equipment of GSDF UH-1H utility helicopters and the transfer of four air surveillance radar systems as the first case of an overseas transfer of finished equipment were decided, the first radar system was delivered to the Philippine Air Force in 2023 and the second radar system was in March 2024. Furthermore, along with this transfer project, educational support on operation and maintenance for personnel of the Philippine Air Force is provided by the JSDF and Japanese company.

In September 2024, ATLA exhibited a booth for the first time at Asian Defense and Security Exhibition (ADAS) 2024 held in the Philippines and communicated the appeal of Japan's equipment to the Government and companies of the Philippines, and others. In addition, then Senior Adviser to the Defense Minister Takami participated in the event, and through a meeting with Undersecretary for Acquisition and Resource Management Salvador Melchor B. Mison, Jr., he confirmed that the two countries would collaborate for the reinforcement of their defense equipment and technology cooperation.

With Viet Nam, following the signing of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for Regular Consultations Concerning Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation in 2016 and the signing of the Memorandum between Japan and Viet Nam Defense Authorities on the Orientation of Promotion of Defense Industry Cooperation in 2019, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[23] was signed by both countries and went into effect in 2021. In addition to the transfer of anti-corrosion pre-treatment processing technology in 2023, the transfer of two decommissioned material handling vehicles was realized, in December 2024, as the first defense equipment transfer since the signing of the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, and a commemorative ceremony was hosted by the Ministry of National Defence of Viet Nam. Furthermore, in conjunction with this transfer, educational support on operation and repairs was provided by the GSDF and Japanese companies to personnel of the Vietnamese military.

With Malaysia, the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology[24] was signed and went into effect in 2018.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-8 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN))

(10) Middle Eastern Countries

The Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[25] was signed between Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2023, which is the first time for Japan to sign this type of agreement with a country in the Middle East region. The Agreement entered into force in January 2024.

Israel and Japan signed a Memorandum on Protection of Information for the Exchange of Classified Information on Defense Equipment and Technology[26] in 2019 to ensure the appropriate protection of such classified information provided between Japanese and Israeli defense authorities.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-12 (6) (United Arab Emirates (UAE)), Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-12 (7) (Israel)

(11) Mongolia

With Mongolia, the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Mongolia concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology[27] was signed in December 2024 and went into effect in January 2025.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-2-9 (Mongolia)

19 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
20 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Singapore concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
21 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
22 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
23 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
24 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Malaysia concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology
25 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United Arab Emirates concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
26 Memorandum on Protection of Information for the Exchange of Classified Information on Defense Equipment and Technology between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Ministry of Defense of the State of Israel
27 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Mongolia concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

(12) AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States)

In September 2024, in the AUKUS Joint Leaders Statement and the AUKUS Defence Ministers' Joint Statement, the "maritime autonomous systems" in AUKUS Pillar 2 were cited as an initial area for exploring opportunities for cooperation with Japan.

As a part of exploring opportunities for this cooperation, ATLA experts and others were dispatched from Japan to Autonomous Warrior 24, a multilateral experiment and exercise concerning maritime autonomous systems and other systems held in October the same year and hosted by Australia.

Cooperation with the three countries - Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States concerning AUKUS Pillar 2 supports collaboration among allies and like-minded countries advanced technologies, and contributes greatly and reinforces the shared capabilities of Japan and the three countries, greatly contributing to enhancing deterrence and response capabilities in the region. Accordingly, Japan has decided to continue advancing consultations in order to realize this cooperation.

See Part I, Chapter 3, Section 6-1-2 (2) (AUKUS initiatives)

2 Provision of Defense Equipment to Developing Countries

Surrounded by an increasingly severe security environment, it has become even more important for Japan that the nations which have a cooperative and friendly relationship with Japan in terms of security and defense have appropriate capabilities. It is also critical to develop a foundation that will serve as the basis for the international community to cooperate toward improving the security environment.

Among these friendly nations, some have difficulties in acquiring an adequate level of defense equipment on their own because of the scale of their economy and fiscal situation. Some of these states have been requesting to use JSDF equipment that is no longer in use.

Under these circumstances, to respond to the needs of such friendly nations, the MOD established a special provision under Article 9, paragraph (1) of the Public Finance Act[28] in the JSDF Law, which came into force in 2017. The provision enables the MOD to grant or transfer JSDF equipment that is no longer in use to the governments of developing states at a lower price than the current price.

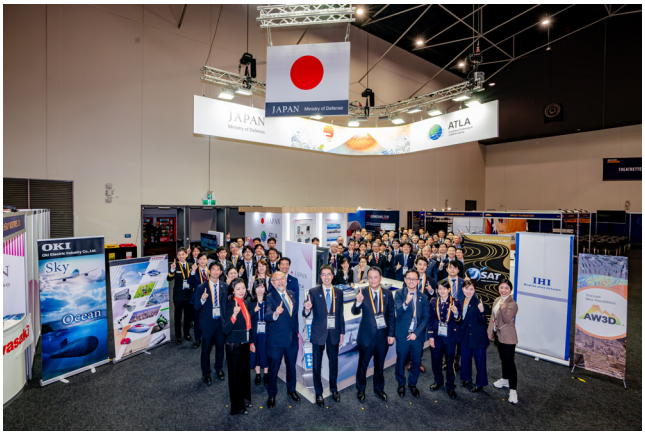
Even in the case of granting or transferring equipment at a lower price than the current price as per this provision, whether or not to transfer such equipment, and to which government such equipment is to be transferred, will be determined case-by-case in light of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and other regulations. In addition, the Government of Japan and partner countries must conclude an international agreement to prevent extra-purpose use and transfer to third-parties without the prior consent of Japan.

5 Other Initiatives for Defense Equipment and Technical Cooperation

1 Participation in International Defense Equipment Exhibitions

ATLA has participated in international defense equipment exhibitions to introduce Japan's defense equipment policies and advanced technology. These initiatives help foreign government officials better understand Japan's equipment policies and technology, and contribute to building bases for the promotion of defense equipment and technology cooperation.

At EUROSATORY 2024, an international equipment exhibition held in France in June 2024, Indian Ocean



The scene at a booth in Indian Ocean Defence & Security 2024

ATLA Booth at DSEI Japan 2025

28 Article 9, paragraph (1) of the Public Finance Act (Act No. 34 of 1947) states that governmental assets, unless otherwise provided for, may not be exchanged and used as other means of payment, or transferred or leased without reasonable consideration.

Defence & Security 2024, an international exhibition and conference held in Australia in July the same year, Asian Defense and Security Exhibition 2024, an international exhibition held in the Philippines in September the same year, MAST AUSTRALIA 2024, an international exhibition and conference held in Australia in November the same year, and Viet Nam Defence Expo 2024, an international exhibition held in Viet Nam in December the same year, ATLA exhibited a booth and the public and private sectors collaborated to showcase the appeal of Japan's equipment and its advanced technological capabilities.

Meanwhile, in Japan, the MOD/JSDF exhibited JSDF booths featuring the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF in addition to an ATLA booth in DSEI Japan 2025 held in May 2025. The booths exhibited models of equipment under development utilizing advanced technologies such as a railgun as well as actual objects and models of JSDF vehicles and other equipment. Furthermore, for the first time, the MOD/JSDF displayed an actual "Mogami" class frigate at a nearby port.

A high level of interest in Japan's outstanding technologies and advanced equipment was received from the foreign government officials, military personnel, and defense industry people who visited these ATLA/JSDF booths.

An actual "Mogami" class frigate on display

2 Public-Private Collaboration for Appropriate Overseas Transfer of Equipment

With regard to the overseas transfer of defense equipment, the DBP states that the Government will take the lead in promoting the appropriate overseas transfer of defense equipment and technology under further cooperation between the public and private sectors.

In cooperation with trading companies and manufacturing companies, ATLA has conducted Feasibility Studies to grasp the potential needs of target countries and carried out activities to solicit proposals since FY2020.

The ATLA has held the Defense Industry Forum, in which defense authorities and companies from both countries meet to exchange views on the overseas transfer of defense equipment between Japan and the partner country, with Indonesia (held in 2017), India, Viet Nam, Australia, Italy, the Philippines, and others.

As part of the ATLA's efforts to enhance knowledge within the public and private sectors regarding overseas transfers to other countries, it holds webinars on the overseas transfer of defense equipment in Japan to create opportunities for learning about cases from the private business sector involving other countries and the current status of defense equipment and technology cooperation.

Additionally, the ATLA developed a portal site in 2022 designed to provide a platform for sharing information on the overseas transfer of defense equipment between the public and private sectors, which has long been requested by the defense industry. The portal site provides information on countries' procurement systems and Japan's defense equipment transfer system for defense-related companies that are working on overseas transfers.

3 Preventing Leakage of Key Technologies for Defense Equipment

In promoting defense equipment and technology cooperation internationally, the MOD will work to strengthen defense industrial security and the management of sensitive technologies and intellectual property in order to prevent the leakage of key technologies for defense equipment.

See Section 1-1-2 (3) (Protecting the Confidential of Defense Equipment), Section 1-2-4 (Strengthening Defense Industrial Security), Section 1-2-5 (Strengthening Sensitive Technology Management)

REFERENCE: Guides and other materials disseminated overseas by ATLA to promote defense equipment and technology cooperation

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/soubiseisakugijutu.html

Section 4 Equipment Optimization Efforts

1 Initiatives for Construction of Optimized Equipment Structure

In order to acquire sufficient capabilities for cross-domain operations in view of the aging population with a declining birth rate and the severe fiscal situation, it is essential to further promote initiatives to optimize equipment structure.

The DBP stipulates the suspension of use of equipment whose importance has decreased and the review of projects with low cost-effectiveness. In FY2025, initiatives such as the decommissioning of three search and rescue aircraft U-125As were advanced.

2 Initiatives to Make the Most of Limited Human Resources (Labor-Saving and Automation)

1 Initiatives for Automation

The DBP calls for reviewing existing equipment systems and personnel assignments in order to promote unmanned and labor-saving defense equipment. Therefore, in the underwater domain and other domains, research on stealthy, combat-supporting, multi-purpose unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) that selectively carry functions such as warning and surveillance and launching of anti-ship missiles to support manned naval vessels began in FY2024. In addition, the development of unmanned amphibious vehicles that can act autonomously in amphibious operations and perform missions, including transportation of supplies from the sea to the vicinity of troops, will begin in FY2024. And research and development on combat support Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) that will be collaborating with manned aircraft such as the next-generation fighter aircraft are also to be promoted.

2 Initiatives for Labor-Saving

The DBP stipulates increasing the number of labor-saving frigates (FFM[1]) at an early date, as well as the continuation of research on technologies related to USVs in order to further reduce personnel and achieve unmanned waterborne vessels.

3 Project Management Throughout Equipment Life Cycle

1 Acquisition of Defense Equipment Through Focused Project Management

As defense equipment is becoming more sophisticated and complex, its entire life cycle (concept study, research and development, mass production, deployment, operation and maintenance) cost has a tendency to increase in recent years. It has become extremely important to streamline acquisition throughout the life cycle of equipment and to establish a systematic management to realize the streamlining in order to efficiently acquire equipment of assured quality at appropriate cost in a required timeline as planned. Therefore, ATLA undertakes project management throughout the life cycle of equipment upon selecting important equipment, and promotes efforts to realize the optimized equipment acquisition.

Specifically, the MOD has selected 42 items for major programs designated for project management and 15 items for semi-major programs for project management[2] as of April 1, 2025. For major programs designated for project management, the MOD designates a Project Manager (PM) dedicated to each specific major program, following which project management for that program is conducted by an Integrated Project Team (IPT), which is composed of officials from relevant divisions within the MOD.

For each of the 57 major and semi-major programs designated for project management as of April 1, 2025, the MOD has formulated an Acquisition Strategy and an Acquisition Plan (Designated Item Plans), which specify the basic matters necessary to systematically implement project management until the present, such as the purpose of the acquisition program, acquisition policy, and life cycle cost.

Furthermore, in principle, ATLA annually reviews the implementation status of the Designated Item Plans and

1 New destroyers that combine improved multi-mission capabilities with compact hulls
2 A semi-major program is an acquisition project of specific equipment with limited application of project management without the designation of a PM or IPT but which focuses on the risks in functions, performance, costs, schedules, and other risk factors in a manner equivalent to the case of equipment of major programs designated for project management.

endeavors to promote appropriate project management that reflects the latest status by conducting analysis and evaluation, on the basis of which the Designated Item Plans are reviewed as necessary. In FY2024, analysis and evaluation of the acquisition program were implemented for the 45 major and semi-major programs which had been designated for project management.

See Fig. V-1-4-1 (Equipment of Major Programs and Semi-Major Programs Designated for Project Management)

Fig. V-1-4-1 Equipment of Major Programs and Semi-Major Programs Designated for Project Management

	Procurement program of the project management focused equipment		Equipment for Semi-Project Management, etc.
Ground Self Defense Force	Type-03 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (modified) Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile for the defense of remote islands Upgraded Type-12 surface-to-ship guided missiles (ground-launched) Hypersonic missiles Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile for the defense of remote islands (upgraded capability) Upgraded Type-03 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (modified) Target observation rounds	New surface-to-ship and surface-to-surface precision guided missiles Unmanned amphibious vehicle Type-16 mobile combat vehicle Armored Modular Vehicle – Armored Personnel Carrier Unmanned amphibious vehicle GSDF UH-2 V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft CH-47JA	Type-19 155mm Wheeled Howitzer Self-Propelled Type-10 tank Common tactical wheeled vehicle
Maritime Self Defense Force	SM-3 Block IIA Upgraded Type-12 SSM (ship variants) Tomahawk Submarine Launched Missiles GPI New destroyer (Mogami-class) FY2017 submarine	Aegis System Equipped Vessel Controlled test UUV New FFM Combat support multipurpose USV SH-60L P-1 Electronic warfare aircraft	Type-23 ship-to-air guided missiles Type-23 air-to-ship guided missiles New ship-to-air missile (upgraded capability) Minesweepers Patrol Vessels New replenishment ship Radar system for high-speed, highly maneuverable targets
Air Self Defense Force	Upgraded Type-12 SSM (air-launched variants) Next-generation medium-range air-to-air guided missiles Unmanned aerial vehicle RQ-4B (Global Hawk) SDA satellite system C-2 F-35A KC-46A	E-2D F-35B Stand-off electronic warfare aircraft F-15 capabilities improvement CH-47J Future Fighter Aircraft Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) operated in conjunction with the next-generation fighter aircraft	Next-generation warning and control radar devices ASM-3 (Advanced) Space Situational Awareness System RC-2
Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency	Guided missile system for combating HGVs	Future Railgun	New anti-ship missiles for the defense of remote islands

Items are as of April 1, 2025.
The upgraded Type-12 Surface-to-Ship Missile is centrally managed across its ground-launched (GSDF), ship-launched (MSDF), and air-launched (ASDF) variants.
The CH-47 helicopters are jointly managed, encompassing both the CH-47JA operated by the GSDF and the CH-47J operated by the JASDF.

2 Initiatives to Promote and Strengthen Project Management

(1) Past Initiatives

a. Cost and Schedule Management Using WBS (Work Breakdown Structure)

For certain kinds of equipment, etc., produced in Japan, the MOD promotes the introduction of a management method to visualize the progress of work and cost generated by component (WBS[3]). Since 2020, efforts have been made for the public and private sectors to jointly manage costs and schedules through the use of an incentivized risk-sharing management contract system, which allows for the early detection of cost increases and schedule delays and for action to be taken promptly.

b. Method for More Accurate Cost Estimate

Life cycle cost has been estimated based on actual cost data of similar equipment developed or introduced in the past. However, as a larger amount of cost data is needed for a more accurate estimate, the MOD promotes the establishment of a cost database by collecting cost data and accumulating them into a database.

c. Accumulation and Development of Expertise

For further improving the management skills of PMs and enhancing human resources among those who engage in project management, the MOD provides opportunities to study project management methods from overseas and the private sector on a regular basis.

(2) Future Initiatives

In order to further promote effective and efficient equipment acquisition, the MOD needs to enhance the effectiveness and

3 WBS is a hierarchical structure used to implement project management that systematically divides the project into manageable units, for which the schedule and cost of each deliverable (component, service, etc.) are allocated.

flexibility of project management throughout equipment life cycles. Therefore, the DBP stipulates that further efforts for effective and efficient acquisition of equipment will include cost reduction through planned and stable acquisition of equipment by expanding the application of long-term contracts, improving the predictability of companies and promoting efficient production, procurement in consideration of the supply-demand situation of equipment including that of other countries, and narrowing down the JSDF's own unique specifications that cause costs to rise.

4 Improving the Contract System and Other Related Matters

1 Long-Term Contracts, etc.

The production of defense equipment requires a significant amount of time. Therefore, if a certain amount is to be procured in bulk, a contract for more than five years is needed in many cases. With regard to defense equipment and services, economies of scale[4] tend not to work mainly due to the following reasons: (1) the MOD is the only customer; and (2) companies that provide such defense equipment, etc., are limited. In addition, it is difficult for companies to systematically move forward with their businesses with a high degree of predictability, a trait that is peculiar to the defense industry.

For these reasons, although the period of expenditure for acts that incur national debt is limited to five years in principle under the Public Finance Act, this period has been extended to a maximum of ten years for specific equipment through the enactment of the Long-term Contract Act.[5] The introduction of this change regarding long-term contracts will make stable procurement possible, leading to the realization of the systematic improvement of defense capability. At the same time, for companies, given that the procurement amount will be assured, the systematic use of personnel and equipment, as well as cost reductions due to bulk orders, will be made possible.

In addition, by implementing longer-term, multiple-year contracts utilizing the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Act,[6] the planned acquisition and execution of budgets is achieved through the equalization of national expenditure.

In addition, regarding the procurement of certain equipment for which little competitiveness can be expected due to its characteristics, and for companies that work on cost reduction by utilizing the MOD's programs, the MOD ensures transparency and fairness and promotes the appropriate use of limited tendering contracts after clarifying and categorizing the targets, with a view to implementing prompt and efficient procurement and enhancing predictability for companies.

2 Measures to Lower Procurement Costs and Incentivize Companies to Reduce Cost

With regard to the procurement of defense equipment, the cost is tending to increase because a large variety of equipment has no market price. Based on those characteristics, it is necessary to achieve both the reduction of procurement cost and improvement of companies' incentives to reduce cost simultaneously.

To achieve this, the ATLA has been employing the incentivized risk-sharing management contract system to the next-generation fighter aircraft project, the stand-off electronic warfare aircraft project, and other projects. In addition, a system to provide incentives for cost reductions has also been implemented in order to evaluate the companies' own cost reduction efforts. The expansion of its scope of application and other approaches to encouraging such efforts are constantly being considered.

REFERENCE: Project management
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/atla/soubiseisaku_project.html

4 "Economies of scale" refer to the cost advantage that arises from an increased output of a product. For example, the cost per unit can be reduced with the bulk purchase of materials.
5 "Special Measures Law Concerning the Term of Expenditure Based on the Obligatory Assurance of National Subsidization for Specific Defense Procurement" (enacted in April 2015. Made permanent by an amendment in March 2024.)
6 Act on Promotion of Private Finance Initiative

5 Initiatives Aimed at Increasing the Efficiency of Procurement and Other Related Initiatives

1 Effective and Efficient Maintenance and Replenishment

With regard to periodic maintenance of defense equipment, the MOD has been working to improve efficiency by extending the maintenance interval, after making sufficient efforts to ensure safety. Moreover, the MOD is working to expand comprehensive contracts such as Performance Based Logistics (PBL)[7] with a view to improving the number of operationally available equipment and keeping long-term costs under control.

2 Achieving Further Efficiency in the Acquisition of Defense Equipment

In equipment procurement, by properly combining the introduction of new, high performance equipment, along with life extension and improvement of existing equipment, the MOD/JSDF will efficiently secure necessary and sufficient quality and quantity of defense capability. In this regard, the MOD/JSDF will strengthen its project management throughout its equipment life-cycle, including during its research and development activities, and reduce the life-cycle costs to improve cost effectiveness. In addition, by incorporating advanced civilian technologies, the MOD/JSDF will steadily realize acceleration of defense equipment deployment for areas that could directly affect the JSDF's current and future ways of warfare and are particularly urgent and significant from a policy perspective.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 2-5 (Optimization Efforts), Section 2-4-4 (New Measures for Early Deployment)

3 Efforts to Increase Fairness and Transparency

The MOD implements measures for making contracts more appropriate and strengthening checking functions to promote the enhancement of fairness and transparency in relation to the acquisition of equipment and materials.

Based on its efforts to achieve more appropriate public procurement across the whole government, the MOD continues to utilize a comprehensive evaluation bidding system[8] and make bidding procedures more efficient. In addition to these, based on the lessons learned from past incidents involving the procurement of equipment and other items, such as overcharging and falsification of the results of equipment testing, measures such as strengthening system investigation, raising the penalty rate, and ensuring the effectiveness of supervision and inspection have been steadily implemented. Also, in response to the issues identified in the interim report of the special defense inspection on submarine repair contracts published in December 2024, the MOD carried out revisions including further enhancing the effectiveness of cost investigations and system investigations, expanding the scope of the obligation to present authentic materials concerning the contracts, and others. Through these efforts, the MOD is working to prevent the recurrence of misconduct, enhance fairness and transparency in procurement, and ensure proper contracts.

In addition, ATLA carries out multilayered checks on the contracts it administers through both internal and external checking systems and checks and balances within the organization. Specifically, ATLA will further enhance internal inspections by the Inspection and Audit Department as well as defense inspections conducted by the Inspector General's Office of Legal Compliance and deliberations by the Defense Procurement Council, which is composed of external experts. Moreover, ATLA has also improved its education department and strives to enhance compliance awareness by providing thorough education pertaining to compliance for ATLA personnel.

6 Advancing Initiatives Aimed at Effectiveness of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Procurement

1 Streamlining Initiatives

FMS (Foreign Military Sales) is a form of U.S. security assistance authorized by the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), etc., that enables U.S. allies and partners to purchase defense equipment and services from the U.S. government. The characteristics of FMS include: (1) prices are estimates; (2) payments are made in advance in principle and balanced out after fulfillment; and (3) delivery dates are estimates. FMS is critical to reinforcing the defense capabilities of Japan.

Meanwhile, there are FMS-related various issues, such

7 Comprehensive contracts to improve the number of operational availability and to achieve long-term cost containment.
8 Unlike the automatic bid system, which focuses only on price, this is a system in which the successful bidder is determined on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation of both the price and other elements. This method is adopted when it is appropriate to evaluate technological elements, etc.

as late delivery and late case closure. As the FMS procurement amount is hovering at a high level in recent years, the governments of Japan and the U.S. have been actively working together to make improvements in these issues.

Specifically, ATLA and Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) have held the Security Cooperation Consultative Meeting (SCCM) to discuss the issues over FMS procurement nine times since 2016.

At the 9th SCCM held in March 2025, Japan and the United States agreed to continue strengthening case management between them in terms of late delivery and late case closures in view of the increase of FMS procurement going forward, and to advance efforts aimed at reducing the value of late deliveries and late case closures while improving the transparency in pricing.

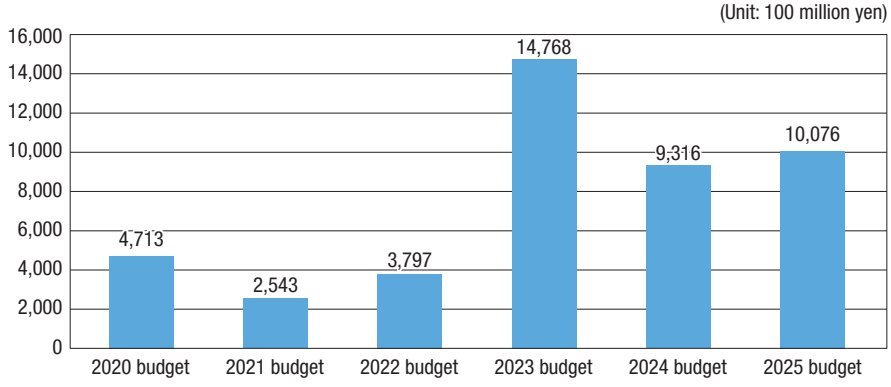
In addition, in 2023, ATLA and the U.S. Department of Defense concluded a framework to confirm reciprocal and free-of-charge quality assurance services for equipment, etc. This framework exempts quality assurance fee for FMS procurement, which reduces FMS procurement costs and strengthens collaborative relations within Japan-the U.S. Alliance in procurement, thereby advancing the effectiveness of FMS procurement.

2 Other Initiatives

With regard to imported procured equipment, including equipment procured through foreign military sales (FMS), Japan intends to pursue the sustainment and maintenance of imported equipment by Japanese companies and further promote international joint research and development of high-capability equipment with the United States and other countries. As part of these efforts, an exhibition (Industry Day) is held to create matching opportunities with the U.S. Forces and the U.S. defense industry in order to encourage Japanese companies to participate in the equipment supply chains common to both Japan and the United States as well as in the sustainment and maintenance programs of the U.S. Forces in the Indo-Pacific region. In 2024, it was held in September.

See Fig. V-1-4-2 (Advancing Initiatives Aimed at Effectiveness of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Procurement), Section 1-2-2 (3) (Industry Day)

Fig. V-1-4-2 Advancing Initiatives Aimed at Effectiveness of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Procurement



Major equipment acquired through FMS

[Ground Self-Defense Force]
V-22 Osprey

[Maritime Self-Defense Force]
SM-6
SM-3 Block IB
SM-3 Block IIA
Tomahawk

[Air Self-Defense Force]
F-15 fighter jet (capabilities improvement)
F-35A fighter jet
F-35B fighter jet
AIM-120 (air-to-air missile)
KC-46A aerial refueling/transport aircraft
E-2D airborne early warning aircraft
Global Hawk

○**[Reference] Examples of FMS procurement** * The amount of FMS

F-35B fighter jet
[Lockheed Martin]
FY2025 budget: 138.7 billion yen

F-35A fighter jet
[Lockheed Martin]
FY2025 budget: 66.5 billion yen

KC-46A aerial refueling/transport aircraft
[Boeing]
FY2025 budget: 223.1 billion yen

SM-3 Block IIA
[Raytheon]
FY2025 budget: 74.4 billion yen

Section 5 Initiatives for Economic Security

1 Basic Concept

The National Security Strategy states that economic security is to ensure Japan's national interests, such as peace, security, and economic prosperity, by carrying out economic measures. In the face of various threats imposed through economic means, Japan needs to comprehensively, effectively, and intensively execute necessary economic measures to enhance Japan's autonomy and to secure the superiority and indispensability concerning our technologies and others.

2 Developments Within the Japanese Government

To date, Japan has promoted initiatives that contribute to strengthening economic security within its existing legal framework.

In May 2022, the Economic Security Promotion Act[1] was established to comprehensively and effectively promote economic measures related to ensuring national security. The act developed frameworks for strengthening the resiliency of supply chains, ensuring the safety and reliability of critical infrastructure, public-private collaboration on important cutting-edge technologies, and non-disclosure of selected patent applications.

In May 2024, systems for the non-disclosure of patent applications and core infrastructure became operational, and all systems stipulated by the law were put into operation. Various measures related to economic security are constantly being reviewed and revised in order to ensure their effectiveness. For example, in December 2022, 11 resources including semiconductors and batteries were designated as specific important resources to strengthen the resiliency of supply chains, and efforts are underway to secure their stable supply. In February 2024, new initiatives were also implemented, such as the designation of advanced electronic components (capacitors, high-frequency filters) as important resources (bringing the total to 12) and adding uranium as a target mineral to the list of designated important minerals.

The Key and Advanced Technology R&D through Cross Community Collaboration Program (K Program) is led by the relevant government ministries and agencies. The K Program implements research and development projects on advanced technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum technology, and others, to meet the country's needs. The results of the research are intended for not only civilian use but also for public use, including for national security. The key technologies to be supported by the K Program have been defined in the R&D vision, and their research and development is under way accordingly. In addition, councils for designated funds, which are forums for information sharing and exchanges of views aimed at the steady implementation of the results of the research and development and achievement of the R&D vision, are also being established in sequence. In addition, regarding the security clearance system in the economic security field, the Act on the Protection and Utilization of Critical Economic Security Information was enforced in May 2025.

Moreover, in recent years, various discussions have been held among allies and like-minded countries. At the G7 Apulia Summit held in June 2024, it was affirmed that the G7 countries would continue to work in coordination on addressing issues related to responding to economic coercion, supply chain resilience, protecting critical and emerging technologies, and other issues.

See Section 2-4-1 (Collaboration with Domestic and International Related Organizations)

3 Initiatives of the MOD

As inter-state competition intensifies in domains that cross the border between security and the economy, it is extremely important to enhance Japan's autonomy and safeguard Japan's superiority and indispensability through economic security measures, such as preserving and fostering advanced technologies as well as maintaining and reinforcing Japan's defense production and technology bases as a virtually integral part of defense capability itself in accordance with the NDS.

The MOD, as the government agency in charge of security, actively participates in government-wide initiatives by sharing its knowledge and needs related to maintaining and reinforcing Japan's defense production and technology bases, which have been amassed over the years. Specifically, the MOD dispatches personnel to the Office of the Director-General for Policy Planning on Economic Security in the Cabinet Office, and it participates in the councils for designated funds of the K Program in order to proactively offer its knowledge and needs related to security to government-wide initiatives. The MOD also contributes to the resolution of economic security issues by fundamentally strengthening its internal systems, including the expansion of its staff.

1 Act for the Promotion of Ensuring National Security through Integrated Implementation of Economic Measures

Chapter 2 Initiatives to Live in Harmony with Local Communities and the Environment

Implementing various activities of the MOD/JSDF will not be feasible without the understanding and cooperation of the Japanese people and local governments. Therefore it is necessary to further deepen mutual trust between local communities, Japanese people, and the JSDF.

Section 1 Measures to Harmonize with Local Communities and the Environment

The National Defense Strategy of Japan provides that in order to enable the JSDF and the U.S. Forces in Japan to seamlessly and effectively conduct activities on a daily basis, the MOD will strive to gain the understanding and cooperation of local governments and local residents in the areas around the JSDF and the U.S. Forces facilities.

To this end, the NDS provides that the MOD/JSDF will actively engage in public relations activities on a regular basis regarding the policies and activities of the MOD/JSDF, and also the roles of the U.S. Forces in Japan, and coordinate to accommodate the requests and situations of local communities, while fulfilling accountability. Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF will continue to promote measures to improve the living environment of areas around defense facilities, including those against noise, to further encourage cooperation for the defense of Japan.

Furthermore, in some regions, the existence of JSDF units themselves is a major contribution to the communities' maintenance and vitalization, and in other regions the JSDF's emergency patient transportation supports community healthcare, so in conducting unit abolition and reorganization and establishing as well as administering camps and bases, the MOD/JSDF will give due consideration to regional characteristics as well so as to gain the understanding of local governments and local residents.

1 Supporting Civilian Life

The MOD/JSDF conducts activities to support the lives of citizens in a range of fields, in response to requests from local governments and relevant organizations. Such activities not only further deepen the trust in the JSDF but also provide pride and confidence for JSDF personnel.

The GSDF handles the disposal of unexploded ordnance and other dangerous explosives found throughout Japan. In FY2024, there were 1,273 such cases (approximately 37.2 tons). In particular, cases handled in Okinawa Prefecture accounted for approximately 34% of the total number of cases. The MSDF clears and disposes of underwater mines and other dangerous explosives; in FY2024, there were 1,249 pieces (approximately 2.2 tons) handled.

Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF supports regional medical treatment efforts by providing general medical care at some JSDF hospitals[1] and the National Defense Medical College as well as conducting urgent transport for emergency patients from isolated islands, and in addition it provides support for transport and other services in athletic events, such as the National Sports Festival. In addition, while in the commemorative events and other events at local camps and bases it tries to have interactions with local residents by opening its camps and bases to the public to the extent that they do not interfere with the activities of the units.

Furthermore, when engaging in transactions with local companies, the MOD/JSDF promotes various measures in line with national and other policies[2] that contribute to the local economy by ensuring opportunities for local small and medium-sized enterprises to receive orders while taking efficiency into account. Such measures include

REFERENCE: Cooperation between the MOD and local communities
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/chouwa/sesaku/index.html

1 As of March 31, 2025, the JSDF hospitals that provide general medical care include JSDF Central Hospital, JSDF Sapporo Hospital, JSDF Sendai Hospital, JSDF Iruma Hospital, JSDF Yokosuka Hospital, JSDF Fuji Hospital, JSDF Hanshin Hospital, and JSDF Fukuoka Hospital.
2 "Basic Policy Regarding Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises on Contracts with the Government, etc., in FY2024" (Cabinet decision on April 19, 2024)

the promotion of separated/divided ordering,[3] ensuring competition among companies within the same qualification and grade divisions,[4] and the introduction of the open counter method[5] and other methods.

See Reference 74 (Activities in Civic Life)

JSDF personnel carrying out disposal of unexploded ordnance (250kg bombs) (Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture) (September 2024)

2 Cooperation from Local Governments and Other Relevant Organizations for the JSDF

(1) Cooperation on Recruitment of Uniformed JSDF Personnel and Re-Employment Support

Amid the harsh recruitment and employment environment, the cooperation from local governments and relevant organizations is vital to secure highly qualified personnel and to support the re-employment of uniformed JSDF personnel who retire at relatively young ages.

(2) Support for and Cooperation with JSDF Activities

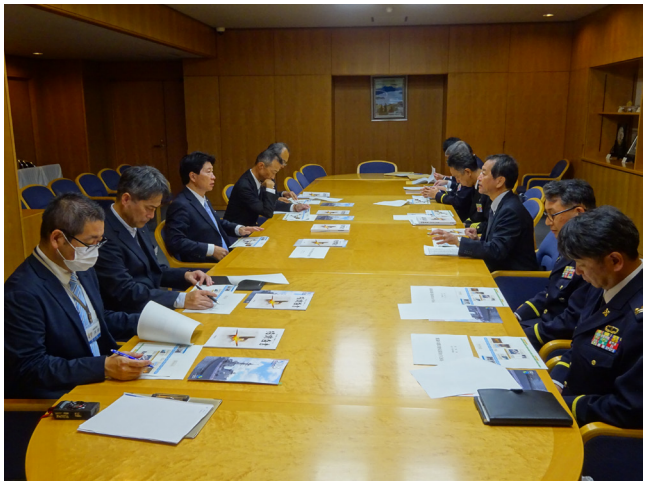
The JSDF camps and bases maintain close relations with local communities, and therefore, understanding, support and cooperation from the people of the local communities are indispensable for the JSDF to conduct its activities, including education and training, and disaster relief operation. Units dispatched overseas for international peace cooperation operations and other duties receive support and cooperation from the relevant local organizations for the procedures involved.

The MOD/JSDF is cooperating with relevant entities such as local governments, police, and fire services in peacetime in order to ensure immediate and sure activities by the JSDF in various contingencies.

3 Measures for Obtaining the Understanding and Cooperation of Local Governments and Local Residents

Regional Defense Bureaus established in eight locations nationwide make efforts to build cooperative relationships with their respective local communities, through collaboration with JSDF units and Provincial Cooperation Offices. In FY2024, the bureaus provided local communities with explanations on a variety of training and exercises, including Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises, the temporary deployment of the U.S. Marine Corps UAV MQ-9 to Kadena Air Base (Okinawa Prefecture), commencement of the transfer of U.S. Marine Corps personnel stationed in Okinawa to Guam, etc. In addition, in order to promote understanding of Japan's defense policy in general, seminars on defense-related issues were held for local residents and explanations regarding the Defense White Paper were provided to local governments and other organizations.

See Fig. V-2-1-1 (Initiatives Implemented by Regional Defense Bureaus and Other Organizations)



Explanation of the Defense White Paper given to the Governor of Okayama Prefecture by the Regional Defense Bureau (November 2024)

3 For example, this is a method in which grouping of products, etc., takes place when the order is put up for general competitive bidding before a successful bidder is determined for each group.

4 This means that out of the bidding participation eligibility categorized into grade A-D, there is competition between grade C or D only, which comprise mostly small and medium enterprises.

5 A method in which the ordering party publicly announces the procurement details, etc., without specifying the counterparty and solicits quotations from a wide range of interested parties.

Fig. V-2-1-1 Initiatives Implemented by Regional Defense Bureaus and Other Organizations

1 Measures concerning coordination with local governments for smoothly implementing projects

Coordination with local governments regarding the reorganization, etc., of JSDF units and training, etc., of the U.S. Forces

2 Measures concerning responses to incidents and accidents wherein the JSDF, etc., are involved

Required cooperation in collaboration with the JSDF, etc., such as information provision to local governments

3 Measures for the purpose of taking effective actions for various contingencies

Required support for those such as JSDF units and local governments under large-scale disasters or other events and participation in training

4 Measures with the aim of obtaining understanding of the defense policy in general

Holding of sessions to explain the content of Defense of Japan and seminars on defense issues, targeting local governments and residents

4 Measures to Promote Harmony between Defense Facilities and Surrounding Areas

1 Features of Defense Facilities[6] and Projects Related to Harmony with the Surrounding Areas

(1) Measures around Defense Facilities

Defense facilities are diverse in their use, and often require large volumes of land. In addition, as of January 1, 2025, approximately 29% of the land area and 30 of the 76 facilities of facilities and areas (for exclusive use) of the USFJ are jointly used by the JSDF in accordance with the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, with the purpose of enhancing the diversity and efficiency of Japan-U.S. bilateral training and exercises. Meanwhile, problems related to restricted establishment and operations of defense facilities have emerged due to the urbanization of areas around many of the defense facilities. Another problem is that frequent aircraft operations such as takeoffs and landings cause noise and other issues, impacting the living environment of local residential communities.

Defense facilities are indispensable as the foundation that supports the defense capabilities of Japan and the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements. Therefore, in order for the facilities to exert their full function, it is necessary to maintain the conditions for their constant and stable utilization by ensuring harmony between the defense facilities and the surrounding areas and by obtaining the understanding and cooperation of local residents.

Kiyuna Route No. 23, a road developed through the project for subsidizing facilities for stabilizing the everyday lives of residents (Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture)

For that purpose, to date the MOD has taken measures to mitigate aircraft noise and other impacts caused by activities of the JSDF or the USFJ, or by the existence/operations of airfields and other defense facilities in the surrounding areas based on the Living Environment Improvement Act,[7] etc. For example, subsidies are provided for the development of facilities for

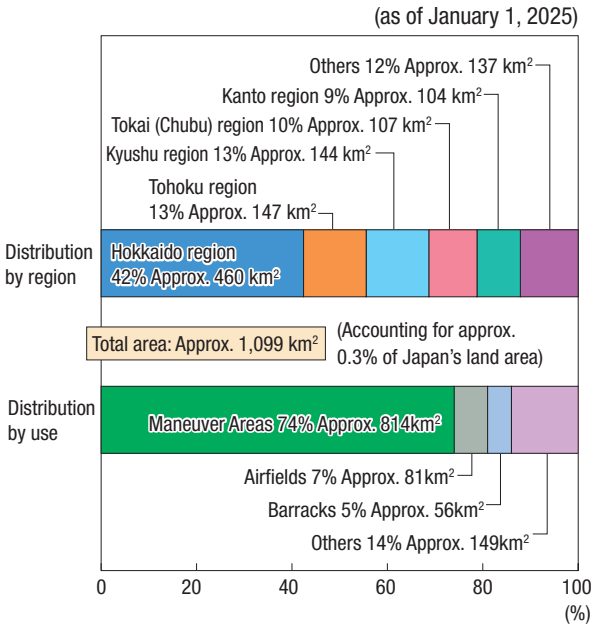
6 Defense facilities are divided into JSDF facilities and USFJ facilities and areas. They are used as training areas, air bases, ports, etc.
7 Act on Improvement of Living Environment around Defense Facilities

stabilizing the everyday lives of residents,[8] such as public facilities and facilities for use in agriculture and fisheries, while Specified Defense Facilities[9] Environment Improvement Adjustment Grants are given to municipalities around defense facilities that have particularly significant impact on the living environment. Specified Defense Facilities Environment Improvement Adjustment Grants are utilized not only for the development of facilities but also for so-called "soft projects" such as aid for medical expenses.

In 2023, in order to respond with precision to the operational modes of specified defense facilities and their impact on surrounding areas, the criteria for the calculation of Specified Defense Facilities Environment Improvement Adjustment Grants was reviewed and Training Grants for training of the JSDF, the U.S. Forces, etc., at defense facilities other than specified defense facilities was established in view of the diversification of training, etc.

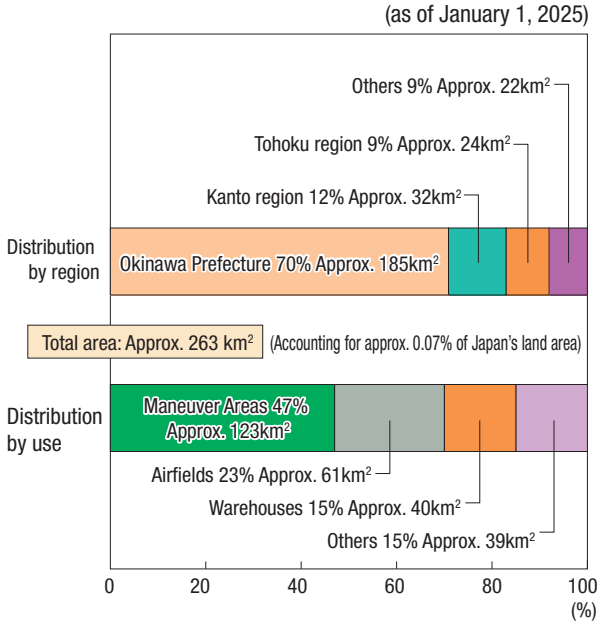
Subsequently, the subsidy framework has been revised to take into account the actual circumstances of the operation of the JSDF and its impact on the local area, by further

Fig. V-2-1-2 Status of JSDF Facilities (Land Plots)



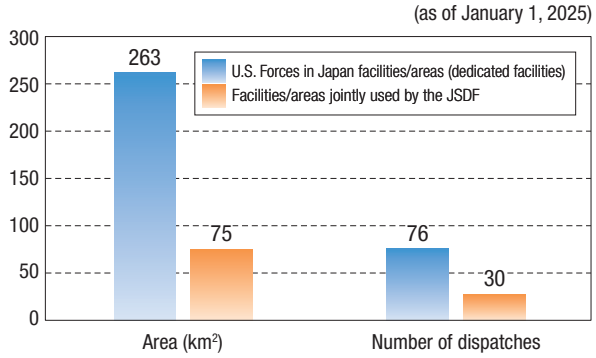
(Note) Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Fig. V-2-1-3 Status of Facilities and Areas of U.S. Forces in Japan (Exclusively Used Facilities)



(Note) Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Fig. V-2-1-4 Joint Use Status of U.S. Forces in Japan Facilities/Areas (Dedicated Facilities) with the JSDF



(Note) Area figures are rounded.

Fig. V-2-1-5 Costs for Measures in Areas Around Defense Facilities in FY2025 (Contracts Base)

(Unit: 100 million yen)

Project	Mainland	Okinawa
Disturbance prevention projects	102	13
Noise prevention projects	715	156
Measures related to relocations	55	1
Subsidized projects for stabilizing people's lives	223	197
Road improvement projects	71	18
Specified Defense Facilities Environment Improvement Adjustment Grants	225	39
Other projects	20	7

8 Facilities that contribute to the stability of business management, such as parks, roads, gyms, community centers, garbage and human waste treatment facilities, and other living environment facilities, as well as facilities for use in agriculture and fisheries.

9 Defense facilities such as air bases where jets take off and land, training areas where shelling is carried out, ports, and other facilities whose establishment or operation has a significant impact on the living environment and development of the surrounding area.

extending the subsidized projects for the development of facilities for stabilizing the everyday lives of residents. The MOD continues to study more suitable, effective and efficient measures in response to requests by the local communities in order to harmonize defense facilities and surrounding areas.

See Fig. V-2-1-2 (Status of JSDF Facilities (Land Plots)), Fig. V-2-1-3 (Status of Facilities and Areas of U.S. Forces in Japan (Exclusively Used Facilities)), Fig. V-2-1-4 (Joint Use Status of U.S. Forces in Japan Facilities/Areas (Dedicated Facilities) with the JSDF), Fig. V-2-1-5 (Costs for Measures in Areas Around Defense Facilities in FY2025 (Contracts Base)), Reference 75 (List of U.S. Forces Japan Facilities/Areas (including joint use facilities))

(2) Grants, etc., to Promote the USFJ Realignment

Over the course of a period of time before and after USFJ realignment is implemented, Realignment Grants[10] are provided to help cover the expenses of projects that contribute to improving the quality of life of local residents and stimulate local industries.[11] These grants are provided in accordance with the progress of the realignment after the Defense Minister has designated the specified defense facilities and neighboring municipalities affected by the realignment.

As of April 2025, 11 municipalities affected by seven defense facilities are eligible to receive the Realignment Grants. In order to promote the USFJ realignment, additional measures are taken with budgetary provision.

See Reference 76 (Outline of Measures to Promote Harmony Between Defense Facilities and Surrounding Areas)

(3) Other Measures

a. Compensation for Fisheries

On the occasion of training, etc. carried out by the JSDF or the USFJ using the sea or other water surfaces, the MOD defines the water area which is confined for fisheries based on laws or a contract, and compensates for losses incurred from the restriction.

b. Base Grants, etc.

The MOD provides cooperation by doing such things as providing information regarding the grants for municipalities where national defense facilities are located ("Base Grants"), and the adjustment grants for municipalities where defense facilities are located ("Adjustment Grants"), both of which are defense facilities-related grants systems under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

The Base Grants was established in view of the fact that the facilities used by the U.S. Forces and the JSDF such as airports have a significant impact on the finances of municipalities. The grants is granted to municipalities as a substitute for fixed property tax.

The Adjustment Grants are provided to municipalities in view of the fact that the properties of the U.S. Forces are exempt from fixed property tax and U.S. military personnel and others are exempt from municipal tax, etc.

2 Efforts to Develop Understanding and Cooperation Concerning the Stationing of the USFJ

Amid the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, maintaining the presence of the USFJ and its readiness is vitally important for ensuring the security of Japan. In order to station the USFJ seamlessly, it is essential to obtain the understanding and cooperation of local governments and residents in the vicinity of U.S. Forces facilities, so it is necessary to undertake various efforts in this regard.

(1) Coordination with Local Governments, etc., for Unit Operations of the USFJ

The MOD is working to promote understanding among local communities regarding the maintenance of USFJ facilities and unit operations by providing prior explanation to the relevant local governments and residents in the event of any USFJ realignment, training, unit deployment, new equipment deployment, etc.

The USFJ is also working to promote understanding among local communities. For example, in November 2024, the 18th Air Wing Commander (Kadena) explained new aircraft noise mitigation measures in Kadena Air Base to the mayors of each city and town in Okinawa Prefecture comprising the members of the Sanrenkyo: the Trilateral Liaison Council concerning U.S. Kadena Air Base (Okinawa City, Kadena Town, and Chatan Town).

(2) Ensuring the Safety of Local Residents and Other People

Ensuring the safety of local residents is of prime importance in USFJ activities. The Government has been fully communicating its approach to the U.S. side, including at summit and ministerial levels, with the two countries cooperating to ensure the safety of the local residents as a top priority.

In the event of a crash or missing parts, etc., of a U.S. military aircraft, the MOD requests the United States to

REFERENCE: Subsidies and Grants
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/chouwa/sesaku/hojokin_jigyo.html

10 The amount allocated is approximately 5.4 billion yen in the FY2025 budget.
11 The specific scope of the projects is stipulated in Article 2 of the Enforcement Order of the Act on Special Measures concerning Smooth Implementation of Realignment of United States Forces in Japan as 14 projects, including projects related to the promotion of education, sports, and culture.

promptly provide information and adopt rigorous measures for safety management and recurrence prevention. The MOD then promptly explains the obtained information to the relevant local governments, etc., and adopts measures to ensure prompt and appropriate compensation for the damage incurred.

In addition, Japan and the United States have established guidelines[12] for aircraft accidents and will take prompt and appropriate action in response to the situation in the scenario of a crash of a U.S. military aircraft outside of the facilities and areas of the U.S. Forces within Japan.

Moreover, with regard to accidents/incidents caused by the consumption of alcohol by U.S. military personnel, etc., the MOD has requested the U.S. side on multiple occasion to tighten discipline, prevent recurrence, and conduct personnel education.

The USFJ, for its part, is taking countermeasures such as revising the guidelines for off-duty activities (liberty policy), including imposing curfews, and imposing restrictions on the consumption of alcohol in public places on soldiers in all of the services, among others. It is important for the U.S. side to steadily implement these kinds of measures to prevent recurrence of accidents/incidents.

(3) Crash of the U.S. Osprey

In November 2023, a U.S. Air Force CV-22 (Osprey) crashed off the coast of Yakushima (Kagoshima Prefecture), resulting in the death of 8 crew members.

Subsequently, when it returned to its flight operations after the accident in March 2024 and the accident investigation report was published in August the same year, the MOD made efforts to alleviate the anxieties and concerns of the people of the local communities. The MOD gave thorough explanations and appropriately provided information, such as by directly visiting more than 30 municipalities and explaining to them the cause of the accident and that it is possible to prevent and address similar accidents by taking various safety measures corresponding to the cause of the accident.

See Part III, Chapter 2, Section 5-2-7 (2) (Training Relocation for MV-22 (Osprey) etc.), Reference 34 (Chronology of Osprey Deployment by the U.S. Forces)

(4) Promoting Exchange between the USFJ and Local Residents

The MOD holds a Japan-U.S. exchange program to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and the United States with the understanding and cooperation of the local governments and U.S. Forces. Under the program, residents living near USFJ facilities and areas together with USFJ personnel enjoy sports, music and cultural exchanges.

The USFJ also has initiatives to deepen mutual understanding with people of the local communities, which include opening up of its bases (Friendship day) and information provision through websites and SNS (Social Networking Service).

Exchange between the USFJ and local residents (Okinawa Arena Joint Concert) (Okinawa City, Okinawa Prefecture) (September 2024)

5 Participation in National Events

The JSDF holds ceremonies including guards of honor, lining up and gun salutes to the Emperor, state guests and others at national events. In particular, a guard of honor to state guests of foreign countries held at their welcome reception is essential for diplomatic procedure.

Prime Minister Ishiba and Prime Minister Petteri Orpo of the Republic of Finland receiving the guard of Honor ceremony (Prime Minister's Official Residence) (December 2024) [Cabinet Public Affairs Office]

12 Guidelines regarding Off-Base U.S. Military Aircraft Accidents in Japan.

6 Cooperation for the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition

The JSDF has been dispatching MSDF icebreakers for the scientific research in Antarctica conducted by the Japanese government since 1965, when the research was resumed, and it has been providing transportation for personnel and supplies and other cooperation using the second-generation icebreaker JS Shirase since 2009.

For the 66th Antarctic Research Expedition from November 2024 to April 2025, the JSDF provided personnel transportation for the return journeys of 131 people, transported approximately 1,070 tons of supplies, and provided support for sea and land observations and base construction.

Note that 2025 marks the 60th anniversary of MSDF's cooperation for Antarctic research.

See Reference 77 (Achievements of Antarctic Research Expedition)

Icebreaker JS Shirase

7 Civil Engineering Consignments from Third Parties

The JSDF receives consignments of civil engineering projects, etc., conducted by the state and local governments when the projects conform to the purpose of its training. The GSDF, since its establishment, has received 8,273 consignments of civil engineering projects from third parties, and it is contributing to local disaster prevention countermeasures, etc. and strengthening cooperation with local communities through these activities.

See Reference 78 (External Construction Project Achievements)

8 Other Initiatives

1 Response to Laser Irradiation and Kite Flying towards JSDF and U.S. Forces Aircraft

There have been cases of JSDF and U.S. Forces aircraft being interfered by laser irradiation and kite flying during flight operations. These extremely dangerous and malicious acts could impair a pilot's ability to operate the aircraft, which could result in a catastrophe, such as a plane crash. Therefore, the MOD works closely with relevant local governments to disseminate information regarding the risks involved in these interference acts by putting up posters and requesting to report to the police.

Note that the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Civil Aeronautics Act was revised in 2016, making these interference acts subject to fines and other penalties.

2 Response to Flight Activities over Defense Facilities and Surrounding Airspace, including Small Unmanned Aerial Systems

In recent years, terrorist incidents and attempted terrorist incidents using drones, including commercial drones, have occurred in many countries, some of which have targeted military facilities. In Japan, due to the possibility of terrorist attacks using drones against JSDF facilities and U.S. Forces facilities/areas in Japan, "the Drone Act" came into effect in

REFERENCE: Act on Prohibition of Flight of UASs

(i) List of target defense-related facilities of JSDF:

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/presiding/law/drone/list.html

(ii) List of target defense-related facilities of USFJ:

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/presiding/law/drone/list_zaibeigun.html

2019, to prohibit small drones from flying over and around JSDF facilities and U.S. Forces facilities/areas designated by the Defense Minister. Based on the Drone Act, as of April 1, 2025, 306 JSDF facilities, where major command headquarters and other facilities are located, and 63 U.S. Forces facilities/areas have been designated as target facilities.

3 Response to the Act on the Review and Regulation of the Use of Real Estate[13] and Other Acts

In line with the previous iteration of the National Security Strategy formulated in 2013, which called for Japan to review issues related to the use of land in areas such as the areas surrounding defense facilities from the standpoint of the national security of Japan, the MOD has conducted research since FY2013 on the status of land ownership in areas adjacent to defense facilities.

Under the Act on the Review and Regulation of the Use of Real Estate Surrounding Important Facilities and on Remote Territorial Islands fully enforced in 2022, the Cabinet Office designates areas surrounding facilities that are important for national security ("important facilities"[14]) and areas within remote territorial islands as "monitored areas"[15] or "special monitored areas,"[16] and conducts a review of the status of use of land and buildings in these areas. If the Cabinet Office finds that the real estate in those areas is used for any acts that impede the functions of important facilities and remote territorial islands (adverse acts) or that there is a clear risk that it will be used for them, it recommends or orders the real estate user to prevent the adverse acts.

Regarding defense facilities (the facilities of the JSDF and the USFJ), 395 locations have been designated in the public notice so far, and the Cabinet Office published the status of acquisition of real estate within areas of FY2023[17] in December 2024.

This Act has major significance from the perspective of ensuring that defense facilities are able to function properly. The MOD will cooperate with the Cabinet Office to adopt the appropriate measures in this regard.

4 Initiatives to Increase Consumption of Marine Products

As a consequence of the release of ALPS-treated water[18] from Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station into the ocean in 2023, China and others enacted measures such as strengthening regulations on imports of marine products from Japan. In light of this, in order to support the Japanese fishery industry, the government presented the Protection of the Fishery Industry package. The MOD/JSDF is actively supporting the expansion of domestic seafood consumption.

13 Act on the Review and Regulation of the Use of Real Estate Surrounding Important Facilities and on Remote Territorial Islands
14 Defense facilities (JSDF and USFJ facilities in Japan), facilities of the Japan Coast Guard, and facilities supporting public.
15 Areas within a range of approximately 1,000 m from the important facilities or areas within the remote territorial islands, if it is particularly necessary to prevent the land and buildings in those areas from being used for adverse acts.
16 In the monitored areas, functions of important facilities or the remote territorial islands are of particular importance or are vulnerable, and cannot be easily substituted by other important facilities or the remote territorial islands.
17 The total amount of real estate acquired within the area in FY2023 is 16,862 parcels, of which 371 parcels (2.2% of the total) were acquired by foreigners or foreign corporations.
18 Contaminated water containing radioactive substances, generated at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, which has been purified until the regulatory standards are met.

Section 2 Responding to Climate Change and Other Environmental Issues

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the average global temperature in 2024 exceeded the pre-industrial 1850-1900 baseline by 1.55°C. A period from 2015-2024 was the warmest decade on record, with the loss of glacier ice, rising sea levels, accelerated ocean warming, and extreme weather events causing major damage to societies and economies around the world.

Regarding the response to climate change and other environmental issues, countries around the world have been making efforts on this front following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN and the Paris Agreement, an international framework on climate change, in 2015.

Japan has also formulated the Fifth Basic Environment Plan, which was approved by the Cabinet in 2018, and has been working to realize a sustainable society while expressing its intention to further accelerate initiatives in Japan and abroad. In addition, the Climate Change Adaptation Plan was approved by the Cabinet in 2021, the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures was approved by the Cabinet in February 2025, and specific climate change measures are underway.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that climate change will also cause heavy rains, droughts, tropical cyclones, and other problems that will destroy houses and infrastructure, cause loss of properties and livelihoods, and affect food and water security, and therefore increase the likelihood of conflict. Climate change will also affect military equipment, infrastructure, and operations themselves.

Based on the concept of "climate resilience," the U.S. Department of Defense has been proactively addressing the issues posed by climate change.[1] "Climate resilience" refers to the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing climatic conditions, while at the same time responding to, and rapidly recovering from, climate disruptions.

In July 2024, NATO released the Secretary General's annual Climate Change and Security Impact Assessment. In addition to the impact of climate change on each operational domain, the report noted that military conflict is a significant factor in climate change and environmental destruction and addressed the climate impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In response to this acceleration of domestic and overseas efforts, the MOD/JSDF also needs to respond to various climate change and environmental issues and contribute to their resolution while implementing measures with a greater focus on the coexistence of JSDF/USFJ facilities/areas with the surrounding areas.

In addition, the issue of climate change will have an even greater impact on future MOD/JSDF operations, various plans, facilities, and equipment, as well as on the security environment surrounding Japan, including responses to future energy shifts, all of which must be addressed in an appropriate manner.

1 Efforts Related to the MOD/JSDF Facilities

To date, the MOD/JSDF has complied with the laws and regulations related to the environment and strived to be thorough in protecting the environment and to reduce the burden on the environment. It has promoted initiatives related to the environment under the "Policy of the Ministry of Defense on Consideration for the Environment" which presented the mindsets of the personnel, environmental measures, and so on. In FY2021, the MOD established the Environmental Policy Division in its Internal Bureau to take charge of the overall environmental policy of the MOD/JSDF, and in FY2022, the MOD/JSDF established environmental affairs offices in Regional Defense Bureaus across Japan as part of its efforts to develop the necessary infrastructure to address environmental issues in a centralized and effective manner. The MOD will continue to work to promote further measures.

1 The Ministry of Defense's Response Strategy on Climate Change

The growing trend toward viewing climate change as a security issue is spreading among defense organizations globally, including the UN Security Council. In 2021, the MOD established the MOD Climate Change Taskforce to evaluate and analyze the impact of climate change on Japan's national security and to extensively study the measures required to address this issue. In 2022, the MOD formulated the Ministry of Defense's Response Strategy on Climate Change. The same strategy has set forth 10 specific measures that the MOD should promote going forward to appropriately adapt and respond to the direct and indirect effects of climate change in the future. The MOD/JSDF will promote measures aimed at addressing climate change while maintaining and reinforcing Japan's defense capabilities in line with the document.

Based on the same strategy, in June 2024 the MOD

1 On the other hand, the second Trump administration has announced that it is withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, so attention will be paid to the future trends in the United States concerning climate change .

formulated a roadmap focused on the long term until 2050 and it is promoting a range of initiatives in a strategic and systematic manner.

Furthermore, in accordance with the same strategy, government aircraft, ASDF fighter aircraft, and other aircraft have started using Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).[2]

2 Procuring Renewable Energy Electricity

As the largest consumer of electricity among government institutions, the MOD/JSDF, which has approximately 250,000 JSDF personnel and operates various equipment and facilities nationwide, has been actively promoting the procurement of electricity generated by renewable energy sources (hereinafter "renewable energy electricity") for the MOD/JSDF facilities since FY2020 in order to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other goals.

3 Balancing the Promotion of Renewable Energy Electricity and Security

The introduction of renewable sources of energy, including wind power, is being promoted in response to the issue of climate change, and wind power generation facilities are expected to increase moving forward. Depending on the location and specifications of these wind power generation facilities, they may potentially impact the activities of the JSDF and U.S. Forces in Japan, for example, by interfering with the operations of the warning and control radars making it difficult to detect aircraft and missiles, etc. Because of this potential impact, the MOD/JSDF coordinates with project operators and other related parties meticulously from the early stages of project planning. Furthermore, the Act for Adjustment Between Defense and Wind Power[3] was established in May 2024 as a law for institutionalizing our current efforts and it was enforced in March 2025.

4 Response to PFOS[4]

The MOD/JSDF had completed the replacement and disposal of all aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS in their possession at the end of September 2024, based on the Action Plan for PFOS Disposal they had formulated.

In addition, while making public the analysis results of water in the dedicated tanks of JSDF facilities nationwide where aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS was/may have been used in the past since 2022, the MOD/JSDF advanced disposal of water in the tanks in which PFOS, etc. had been detected, and completed all of the disposal in February 2025.

REFERENCE: Initiatives Concerning Environmental Measures
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/chouwa/kankyo_taisaku/index.html

REFERENCE: The Ministry of Defense's Response Strategy on Climate Change
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/policy/agenda/meeting/kikouhendou/pdf/taishosenryaku_202208.pdf

REFERENCE: Impact of wind power generation facilities on the operations of the JSDF/USFJ and Requests to related business operators
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/chouwa/windpower/index.html

2 In November 2022, the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) utilized Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) for the first time during government aircraft operations.
3 Act on Measures in Securing Smooth and Safe Activities Using Radio Wave by the Self-Defense Forces, etc. While Avoiding Radio Wave Transmission Interference Caused by Installation or Modification of Wind Power Generation Facility
4 This refers to PFOS and PFOA. These are organic fluorine compounds with water-repellent, oil-repellent, and heat-resistant properties that have hitherto been used in foam fire-extinguishing agent, semiconductors, and metal plating.

2 Initiatives Related to USFJ Facilities/Areas

USFJ is committed to the appropriate environmental management to protect the environment in the surrounding areas and ensure the safety of U.S. military personnel and residents in the surrounding areas according to the Supplementary Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship[5] and the Japan Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS) established by USFJ.

1 Efforts to Save Utilities

In USFJ facilities/areas, efforts are made to save utilities, which include changes to energy-efficient heating/ventilation/air-conditioning equipment; installation of motion sensors for lights-out during absence; installation of solar panels; reduction of the period to use cooling/heating equipment and review of the preset temperature; and control of lighting and lights-out night lighting.

2 Response to PFOS

The USFJ disposed of aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS and PFOA at all of the USFJ facilities/areas by October 2024 and will either change to Fluorine-Free Foam, which does not contain any PFAS[6] compounds as a raw material, or convert to water suppression systems by October 1, 2025.

When PFOS leaks from USFJ facilities/areas into the surrounding environment, the MOD has access to the USFJ facility/area and takes samples in collaboration with relevant local governments, based on the Supplementary Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship. The MOD will continue to cooperate closely with relevant ministries and agencies, related local governments, and the U.S. side in order to take necessary measures.

5 Agreement Between Japan and the United States of America on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship Relating to the United States Armed Forces in Japan, Supplementary to the Agreement Under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan. This agreement was concluded in 2015 to supplement the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement for cooperation in environmental matters. It stipulates establishment and maintenance of procedures for access to the facilities /areas in case of a contemporaneous environmental incidents as well as issuance and maintenance of environmental standards by the U.S. side.

6 A collective term for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl compounds, which consist organic fluorine compounds. PFOS and PFOA are included in PFAS.

Section 3 Public Relations Activities, Public Records and Archives Management, Information Disclosure, and Related Activities

1 Various Public Relations Activities

As the activities of the MOD/JSDF cannot be carried out without the understanding and support of the Japanese people, public relations activities are important to gain the trust and cooperation of the public. Hence, the MOD/JSDF will be more proactive in undertaking public relations activities in a variety of ways in order to get the public to understand its activities and initiatives.

In addition, given that understanding and support from foreign countries are also of utmost importance for the JSDF to conduct its missions successfully, it is essential that the MOD strengthens efforts to provide information to the international community about MOD/JSDF initiatives, including JSDF activities abroad.

See Reference 79 ("Public Opinion Survey on the Self Defense Forces and Defense Issues" (excerpt) (Public Relations Office of Cabinet Office))

1 Providing Information Both Domestically and Internationally

The MOD/JSDF conducts active PR activities using the Internet, including through official websites, SNS (Social Networking Service), and video distribution. The MOD has also been making great efforts to provide accurate information in a more extensive and timely fashion by creating brochures and PR videos, assisting in editing the PR magazine "MAMOR," cooperating with media coverage, dispatching instructors to give lectures and talks, etc. In addition, as part of its efforts to disseminate information to young people, the MOD/JSDF is posting content for young people, including videos, on the "Ministry of Defense/Self-Defense Forces KIDS SITE," and also publishes "Maru wakari! (I know everything) Japan's Defense" aimed at elementary school to high school students.

Furthermore, MOD/JSDF activities are reaching out worldwide even more now, so it is extremely important to accurately transmit those activities to the international community and secure the understanding and trust of the respective countries. To achieve this, the MOD/JSDF is disseminating information in English and in other foreign languages and, in particular, upgrading the MOD's English website and actively sharing timely, easy-to-understand information through social media. At the same time, it is engaging in PR activities aimed at the international community through various means, such as providing opportunities for interviews by overseas media, creating an English version of the Defense White Paper, and issuing the English-language PR pamphlet "Japan Defense Focus" (JDF).

See Fig. V-2-3-1 (Usage Status of Social Media (number of followers) of The MOD/JSDF), Fig. V-2-3-2 (Example of Outreach Activities Conducted by Units and Others)

2 Events and PR Facilities

The MOD/JSDF conducts activities to widely inform nationals of the current circumstances of the JSDF. These activities

Fig. V-2-3-1 Usage Status of Social Media (number of followers) of The MOD/JSDF

(as of March 31, 2025)	X	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube
MOD / JSDF	Approx. 1,240,000 Approximately 30,000 English-language accounts	Approx. 160,000	Approx. 90,000	Approx. 70,000
JSO	Approx. 320,000	Approx. 40,000	Approx. 30,000	Approx. 10,000
GSO	Approx. 870,000	Approx. 230,000	Approx. 100,000	Approx. 300,000
MSO	Approx. 930,000	Approx. 270,000	Approx. 130,000	Approx. 350,000
ASO	Approx. 710,000	Approx. 120,000	Approx. 170,000	Approx. 160,000
MOD ATLA	Approx. 50,000	Approx. 400	Approx. 1,000	Approx. 60,000

Fig. V-2-3-2 Example of Outreach Activities Conducted by Units and Others

7th Infantry Regiment, GSDF (Fukuchiyama)
Official PR Channel (YouTube)

Tsuiki Air Base, ASDF
Official Account (X)
The technique used by the maintenance personnel to repack a F-2 drag chute (deceleration parachute) after use.

include cruises to experience MSDF vessels and Blue Impulse demonstration flights by the ASDF. In addition, at camps and bases throughout the country, events including equipment exhibitions and unit tours are held on occasions such as the anniversary of the unit's foundation. There are also examples of parades being held in cities with the cooperation of the region. Furthermore, as part of the commemorative activities for the JSDF's anniversary, the JSDF Marching Festival is held every year.

In addition, the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF take turn at conducting either a troop review, a fleet review, or an air review every year. In 2024, the MOD/JSDF held the Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD and JSDF at the GSDF Asaka Maneuver Area (Saitama Prefecture).

Moreover, the MOD has also been actively opening its PR facilities to the public. The number of visitors who participated in tours of the MOD's PR facilities in the Ichigaya area (Ichigayadai Tour), where the underground bunker of the Imperial General Headquarters is now open to the public, exceeded a cumulative total of approximately 500,000 persons in January 2025, so a commemorative ceremony was held. In addition, each JSDF service also has PR facilities and archives, and these facilities open to the public.

These events, etc. are intended to be utilized as opportunities to increase interest in the JSDF, through the participation of young people, particularly those who are interested in enlisting in the JSDF, based on the decision at the Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel to further promote public relations and recruitment efforts in order to secure JSDF personnel, which was deemed a vital imperative. Furthermore, the MOD/JSDF also strives to provide opportunities for more citizens to learn about the activities of the JSDF by streaming videos of events, etc. on the Internet.

The scene at a city parade (Setouchi Town, Kagoshima Prefecture) (January 2025)

JSDF Marching Festival (November 2024)

REFERENCE: Events and exchange activities (a list of various events held by the MOD/JSDF throughout Japan)

URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/////////press/events/index.html

Commentary

The Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD/JSDF and the Commemorative Events for the 70th Anniversary of the ASDF

■Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD and JSDF

On November 9, 2024, the MOD and JSDF held the Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD and JSDF, under the review of Prime Minister ISHIBA Shigeru, at the Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF)'s Asaka Maneuver Area (Saitama Prefecture).

At this ceremony, aircraft, vehicles, and infantry units from the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces performed a march in review and demonstrated their perfect coordination.

Prime Minister Ishiba gave an address to the troops in which he stated, among other things, that "I would like to express my heartfelt respect to the JSDF personnel who have single-mindedly devoted themselves to their missions over the past 70 years. Our JSDF personnel form the greatest foundation for our defense capabilities. We are determined to reinforce our human resource base, protect Japan, and strongly protect its people in a rapidly changing security environment." His words greatly lifted the morale of the personnel.

Prime Minister ISHIBA Shigeru giving an address to the troops

Scene at the march in review

■The Commemorative Events for the 70th Anniversary of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF)

On April 25, 2024 at the Ichigaya Air Base, the ASDF held a commemorative ceremony for its 70th anniversary, reinforcing its unity as it evolves into an Air and Space Self Defense Force.

Furthermore, in October the same year, it held the Air Force Forum in Japan (AFFJ), an event which invites the attendance of air chiefs and others, as a related event.

At the AFFJ, mutual understanding and relationships of trust among the air services were deepened through a variety of exchange programs, including the Indo-Pacific Air chiefs Conference in Tokyo (InPACT) multilateral consultations, meetings between ASDF Chief of Staff UCHIKURA Hiroaki and the air chiefs of the other countries, and others.

The marching music composed to commemorate the 70th anniversary, "~Arc in the sky~," can be viewed on YouTube.

Note that the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) celebrated 70 years since its founding in 2022.

See Part III, Chapter 3, Section 1-3-1 (3) b. (Initiatives of Each Service)

Commemorative logo for the 70th anniversary of the ASDF

MOVIE: Commemorative marching music for the 70th anniversary of the ASDF"~Arc in the sky~"

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hnwsnGgxqA

MOVIE: Commemorative Troop Review for the 70th Anniversary of the MOD and JSDF

URL: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=VwDftsMb-X4

Commentary

The Olympics and the Initiatives of the JSDF Physical Training School

In order to contribute to the promotion of sports and other activities through the development of medalists, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) are offering special physical education courses in the JSDF Physical Training School (Asaka City, Saitama Prefecture) with the objective of developing international-level athletes for the Olympics and other events. A total of 13 events are included in the curriculum: wrestling, boxing, judo, shooting, weightlifting, archery, modern pentathlon, athletics, swimming, canoeing, women's rugby football, biathlon, and cross country skiing.

The courses at the JSDF Physical Training School develop athletes who can compete on the world stage, and through its excellent support structure based on the perspective of athletes-first, it has produced international-level athletes for the Olympics and other events, and seven of its athletes competed in the Paris Olympics held last year and achieved excellent results. Furthermore, even after retiring from competition, as JSDF personnel, they utilized their experience of competition to work successfully in a variety of fields. For these courses, top prizewinners in national level competitions (all-Japan championships, national sports competitions, and others), athletes designated to receive training support from various sports organizations (central sports governing bodies) or athletes who have achieved the selection criteria (time records) in the JSDF Physical Training School are admitted to the Physical Training School after going through selection based on a hiring examination.

Past Olympic medalists

Swimmer EBINA Airi [Photo: Kyodo News]

Introduction of the athletes who competed at the Paris Olympics (list)

Competition	Rank at the time	Name	Achievements at the Paris Olympics
Wrestling	Captain	TAKATANI Daichi	Silver medal (freestyle 74Kg event)
Wrestling	Sergeant 1st Class	ISHIGURO Hayato	7th
Judo	First Lieutenant	NIIZOE Saki	Silver medal (mixed team)
Swimming	Sergeant 1st Class	EBINA Airi	13th
Modern pentathlon	Petty Officer 2nd Class	SATO Taishu	Silver medal
Modern pentathlon	Sergeant	UCHIDA Misaki	23rd
Women's rugby football	Sergeant 1st Class	KAJIKI Marin	9th (Japanese national team)

3 Enlistment Experience Programs

The MOD/JSDF offers JSDF Life Experience Tours for women as well as undergraduate and graduate students,[5] and Enlistment Experience Programs for groups, companies, and other organizations.[6] These programs are intended to promote participants' understanding of the JSDF by offering opportunities to experience the daily life and training of the MOD/JSDF, as well as to have direct contact with JSDF personnel.

The scene at the JSDF Experience for Women in the Naha Air Base of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) (July 2024)

REFERENCE: Limited-time tours (JSDF experience tours, tours for women, tours for undergraduate and graduate students, etc.)
URL: https://www.mod.go.jp/j/////////press/tour/index.html

2 Initiatives for Public Document Management and Disclosure of Administrative Documents

1 Necessity of Proper Management of Public Records and Archives and Proper Operation of the Disclosure System of Administrative Documents

Democracy, which is the most important system of the country, is founded on the principle that the public has access to accurate information, thereby making appropriate judgment and exercise of sovereignty. Administrative documents held by the government are of the utmost importance for the public's access to accurate information. For this reason it is an important responsibility for the government, including the MOD/JSDF, to manage information in an appropriate manner and appropriately respond to the public's disclosure requests for administrative documents.

2 Promotion of Proper Management of Public Records and Archives and Proper Operation of the Disclosure System of Administrative Documents

The MOD/JSDF takes it seriously that the issues over daily reports in South Sudan and Iraq brought about the public's distrust in the MOD/JSDF.[7]

The MOD/JSDF is making every effort to prevent recurrence based on measures[8] necessary for the proper management of public records and archives by the entire government. The MOD/JSDF is also working on ensuring proper management and responding to disclosure requests for administrative documents by reforming the awareness of personnel and the organizational culture, enhancing the supervisory framework, etc.

We will promote systematic and efficient management by managing administrative documents electronically, from their creation to storage, disposal, and transfer, facilitating tracking administrative documents, history management,

5 Members of the general public may apply to participate in various JSDF Life Experience Tours on the MOD/JSDF website.
6 These tours are designed for participants to experience everyday life in the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF. They are held upon request by private companies and other organizations through the Provincial Cooperation Offices.
7 In 2016, the MOD gave inappropriate responses and external explanations with respect to disclosure requests for daily reports in South Sudan and other information. Furthermore, as a part of its measures to prevent recurrence of the problem related to daily reports in South Sudan, the MOD advanced work on the management of daily reports and other information, and in 2017, the Defense Minister Tomomi Inada (then) gave instructions to search for the daily reports in Iraq. Even though they were discovered, this was not reported to the Minister.
8 "Measures for Ensuring Appropriate Management of Public Records" (adopted by the Ministerial Council on the Management of Administrative Documents and Related Matters on July 20, 2018)

and search. At the same time, we also promote improvement in the efficiency of document management operations by reducing the use of paper-based administrative documents, contributing to improved work environment and work style reforms such as telework.

See Reference 80 (Record of Disclosure of Administrative Documents by the Ministry of Defense [FY2024])

3 Initiatives for Policy Evaluation, etc.

1 Engagement in Policy Evaluation

The MOD has been conducting the evaluation of various policies based on its policy evaluation system. In FY2024, the MOD conducted policy evaluations of research and development (R&D) programs and projects concerning regulations.[5]

2 Promotion of Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM)

The MOD, under the supervision of Director-General for Evidence-based Policymaking, practices EBPM through the Administrative Project Review and promotes its initiatives such as in decision-making process.

3 Initiatives for the Personal Data Protection System

In light of respecting individual rights and interests in line with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information,[6] the MOD/JSDF has adopted measures to manage the security of personal information under its control and responds appropriately to requests for the disclosure of such information.

4 Appropriate Operation of the Whistleblower Protection System

The MOD/JSDF sets up a system to handle whistleblowing made by its officials, employees and outside workers, establishing internal and external contact desks to deal with whistleblowing and to protect whistleblowers.

5 Policy evaluation is an initiative carried out to measure and analyze the effects of the policies of each ministry and agency, and use its results to revise the policies, or plan and formulate new ones. In FY2024, the MOD carried out its first policy evaluation concerning regulations (related to wind power generation, the transfer of defense equipment and technology, and active cyber defense).

6 Act on the Protection of Personal Information

Contents

Reference 1 National Security Strategy of Japan 1
Reference 2 National Defense Strategy 16
Reference 3 Defense Buildup Program 30
Reference 4 Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect its People 47
Reference 5 Major Ground Systems (Fire Arms and Armored Vehicles) 50
Reference 6 Number of Major Aircraft and Performance Specifications 51
Reference 7 Number of Major Ships Commissioned into Service 51
Reference 8 Pattern of Defense-Related Expenditures (Original Budget Basis) ... 52
Reference 9 Trend of Defense Expenditures of Major Countries 53
Reference 10 Conditions Required for Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces (Including Diet Approval) and Authority for the Use of Weapons Concerning Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces 53
Reference 11 Implementation Guidelines for Article 95-2 of the JSDF Law 58
Reference 12 Summary Comparison of Laws Concerning International Peace Cooperation Activities 59
Reference 13 Number of Days and Total Incursions into the Territorial Waters Around the Senkaku Islands by Ships Belonging to the China Coast Guard Bureau, etc. 60
Reference 14 Government's Efforts to Ensure the Safety of Japan-Related Vessels in the Middle East 61
Reference 15 History of Efforts for BMD Development in Japan 63
Reference 16 Efforts in Recent Years by the MOD on Cybersecurity 64
Reference 17 Participation of the MOD/JSDF in Civil Protection Joint Training Exercises with Central and Local Government Bodies (FY2024) ... 65
Reference 18 Record of Disaster Relief (Past Five Years) 65
Reference 19 Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas by the Self-Defense Forces 66
Reference 20 Record of Transportation of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas 67
Reference 21 Government Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas in the Middle East and Africa 68
Reference 22 List of Maneuver Areas 69
Reference 23 Track Record of Asset Protection for the U.S Forces and Other Forces (JSDF Law Article 95-2) 70
Reference 24 The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation 71
Reference 25 Chronology of the Japan-U.S. Alliance 78
Reference 26 Japan-U.S. (Minister-Level) Consultations (Since 2021) 79
Reference 27 Joint Statement of the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (U.S.-Japan "2+2") 91
Reference 28 Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (the Japan-U.S. "2+2") (Outline) (July 2024) 96
Reference 29 Record of Main Japan-U.S. Bilateral Exercises in FY2024 98
Reference 30 Japan-U.S. Joint Research and Development Projects 104
Reference 31 United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation (tentative translation) 105
Reference 32 Background of the Futenma Replacement Facility 108
Reference 33 Estimated Timelines for the Return of Facilities and Areas South of Kadena 112
Reference 34 Chronology of Osprey Deployment by the U.S. Forces 113
Reference 35 Outline of the Act on Special Measures on Smooth Implementation of the Realignment of United States Forces, etc. in Japan 114
Reference 36 Outline of 23 Issues 115
Reference 37 The SACO Final Report (tentative translation) 116
Reference 38 Progress of the SACO Final Report 120
Reference 39 Consultative Bodies on the Mitigation of Impact of Bases on Okinawa 122
Reference 40 Situations Concerning the Conclusion of Agreements 123
Reference 41 International Student Acceptance Record (Number of Newly Accepted Students in FY2024) 124
Reference 42 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Australia (FY2021 and Beyond) 125
Reference 43 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with India (FY2021 and Beyond) 128
Reference 44 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with European Countries (FY2021 and Beyond) 131
Reference 45 Recent Japan-ROK Defense Cooperation and Exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond) 143
Reference 46 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Canada and New Zealand (FY2021 and Beyond) 144
Reference 47 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with ASEAN Member States (FY2021 and Beyond) 146
Reference 48 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Asian Countries (FY2021 and Beyond) 154
Reference 49 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Pacific Island Countries (FY2021 and Beyond) 155
Reference 50 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Middle Eastern Countries (FY2021 and Beyond) 157
Reference 51 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with Other Countries (FY2021 and Beyond) 161
Reference 52 Recent Defense Cooperation and Exchanges with China (FY2021 and Beyond) 164
Reference 53 Recent multilateral high-level exchanges (FY2021 and Beyond) ... 164
Reference 54 Record of Major Multilateral Security Dialogues (Indo-Pacific Region, FY2021 and Beyond) 165
Reference 55 Multilateral Security Dialogues Organized by the Ministry of Defense 166
Reference 56 Other Multilateral Security Dialogues 168
Reference 57 Vientiane Vision 2.0 171
Reference 58 Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE) 172
Reference 59 Participation in Multilateral Exercises (FY2021 and Beyond) 173
Reference 60 Dispatch of Ministry of Defense Personnel to International Organizations 196
Reference 61 The JSDF Record in International Peace Cooperation Assignments . 198
Reference 62 Participation of MOD/JSDF in PSI Interdiction Exercise (Since FY2013) 202
Reference 63 Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel (Provisional translation) 203
Reference 64 Authorized and Actual Strength of Uniformed JSDF Personnel and Changes in Them (Over the Past 10 Years) 209
Reference 65 Status of Application and Recruitment of Uniformed JSDF Personnel 210
Reference 66 Breakdown of Ministry of Defense Employees, etc. 211
Reference 67 Main Measures for Re-employment Support 211
Reference 68 Employment of Retired Uniformed JSDF Personnel in Local Government Disaster Prevention Agencies 212
Reference 69 Basic Policy on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases 214
Reference 70 Defense Technology Guideline 2023 (Executive Summary) 225
Reference 71 FY2024 Awarded Research Projects for the "Innovative Science & Technology Initiative for Security" Program 227
Reference 72 Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology 230
Reference 73 Implementation Guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology 231
Reference 74 Activities in Civic Life 235
Reference 75 List of U.S. Forces Japan Facilities/Areas (including joint use facilities) 236
Reference 76 Outline of Measures to Promote Harmony Between Defense Facilities and Surrounding Areas 242
Reference 77 Achievements of Antarctic Research Expedition 243
Reference 78 External Construction Project Achievements 244
Reference 79 "Public Opinion Survey on the Self Defense Forces and Defense Issues" (excerpt) (Public Relations Office of Cabinet Office) 245
Reference 80 Record of Disclosure of Administrative Documents by the Ministry of Defense [FY2024] 246
Reference 81 22nd Shangri-La Dialogue Speech by Defense Minister Nakatani 246

Defense Chronology 248

■References

https://www.mod.go.jp/en/publ/w_paper/index.html

Index

The numbers written in **bold with under line** are pages that explain the definition of the terms.

A

ACE ／ **50**
ACM ／ 23, 200, 318, 321, 322
ACSA ／ 24, 318, 319, 355, 357, 358, 361, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 373, 374, 383
ADI ／ 393
ADIZ ／ 69, 252, 253
AI ／ 18, 25, 55, 57, 68, 79, 87, 117, 136, 165, **167**, 168, 169, 175, 177, 181, 182, 187, 207, 268, 276, 280, 286, 293, 296, 317, 414, 426, 459, 461, 471, 490
ARF ／ 145, 152, 380, **393**, 404
ARIA ／ 169
ASAT ／ 171, 172, 272
ASBM ／ 61, 64, 188
ASCA ／ 169
ASW ／ 65, 226
ATR ／ **342**
ATACMS ／ 40, 41
AUKUS ／ 49, 54, 87, 136, 154, 366, 483
AWACS ／ 245, 248
A2/AD ／ 50, 57, 61, 68, 123, 135

B

BIAC ／ 318
BMD ／ 54, 104, 110, 206, 210, 245, 246, 250, **265**, 267, 292, 324
BPM ／ **322**, 323
BWC ／ 187, 413, 414

C

CARAT ／ **141**, 143, 144
CBRN ／ 248, 294
CCDCOE ／ 178, 179, 277, 376
CCW ／ 413, 414
CDPWG ／ ／277
CIA ／ 45
CLIAD ／ 148
COC ／ 145, 183, 404
CSpO ／ 171, 272, **273**, 397
CTBT ／ 413
CUES ／ 183, 371
CV-22 ／ 342, 343, 348, 496
CWC ／ 42, 187, 413, 414
C4ISR ／ 171

D

DA-ASAT ／ 272
DAPA ／ 170
DARPA ／ 169, 471
DASA ／ 169
DF-17 ／ 36, **61**, 62, 63, 166, 186
DF-41 ／ **60**, 61, 63, 186
DIANA ／ 169
DICAS ／ 27, **315**, 324, 325, 477
DIDS ／ 170
DII ／ 275
DIU ／ 169, 477
DMAT ／ 308
DMO ／ 50
DMZ ／ **96**, 98, 117
DPAS ／ 465
DRDO ／ 146
DSIS ／ 170
DSR ／ 135
DTT ／ 372
DX ／ 293

E

EABO ／ **50**, 351, 353
EBPM ／ 507
EDD ／ 319, **320**
EDIS ／ 170
EEZ ／ 21, 72, 73, 74, 75, 109, 113, 141, 243, 248, 250, 259, 260
EU ／ 45, 69, 120, 151, 152, 153, 154, 163, 168, 169, 170, 174, 178, 181, 184, 356, 366, **370**, 371, 377, 393
EMP ／ 278, 294
EUNAVFOR ／ 256, 258, 371, 405
EW ／ 126, 181
EWG ／ 393, 394, 402, 403

F

FCLP ／ 328, 330, 331
FDO ／ **317**
FIMI ／ 168, **169**
FPDA ／ 138, **141**, 143
FOIP ／ 19, 24, 49, 50, 52, 87, 88, 191, 200, 205, 353, 355, **356**, 360, 363, 365, 366, 367, 373, 374, 375, 377, 380, 383, 384, 388, 395, 397, 398, 399, 402, 404, 405
FMS ／ 324, 464, **488**, 489
F-35A ／ 52, 208, 213, 262, 264, 279, 294, 351, 353, 376, 416, 477, 478, 486, 489
F-35B ／ 10, 14, 50, 53, 54, 208, 213, 262, 279, 280, 288, 294, 348, 486, 489

G

GCAP ／ 27, 217, 365, 366, 368, **469**, 470, 474, 476, 481
GDP ／ 19, 20, 59, 122, 135, 139, 152, 153, 154, 155, 221

GIGO ／ 27, 217, 366, 469, **470**
GPI ／ 21, 166, 203, 262, 265, **267**, 477, 478, 479, 486

H

HA/DR ／ 358, 361, 381, 382, 384, 385, 386, 387, 393, 394, 395, 398, 399, 400, 403, 410, 416, 417, 418, 419, 481
HALE ／ 67
H-6 bomber ／ 61, **67**, 68, 72, 131
HCM ／ 36, 125, 166
HGV ／ 36, 61, 125, **166**, 265, 266, 267, 272
HIMARS ／ 38, 39, 92, 350, 351
HTS ／ 158

I

IAEA ／ 99, 100
ICBM ／ 16, 17, 51, 60, 61, 62, 63, 82, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103, 104, 108, 111, 112, 114, 115, 123, 125, 166, **186**, 188
IMED ／ **418**
INF ／ 52, 61, 87, 130
IPD ／ 398, 399, 401, 405, **417**
IRBM ／ 63, 99, 103, 104, 107, 110, 148, 186, 188
ISAF ／ 159
ISIL ／ 154, 163, 187
ISR ／ 17, 45, 64, 69, 93, 99, 140, 146, 174, 237, 262, 268, 314, 317, 318, 343, 361
ISRT ／ 269, 280, 317
ITPP ／ 369, 370
IUU ／ 405

J

JADGE ／ 22, 213, 245, 265, 280
JASSM ／ 213, 264
JAXA ／ 246, 270, 272, 301, 471
JL-2 ／ 61, 186
JPIDD ／ 386, **396**
J-20 ／ **67**, 68, 94, 95
JXR ／ 307, **308**, 312

K

K Program ／ 471, **490**

L

LAWS ／ 167, 414
LTAMDS ／ 266, 267

M

MAGTF ／ 328, 339
MaRV ／ 105
IIIMEF ／ 335, 339
MD ／ 121, 125
MDA ／ 382, 404
MDR ／ **51**, 52, 318
MFO ／ 24, **407**, 408
MINUSMA ／ 160
MIRV ／ 101, 108, 147, 148
MISWG ／ 465
MLR ／ 50, 54, 328, 343
MRBM ／ 61, 62, 63, 104, 186, 188
MV-22 ／ 54, 330, 331, 342, 343, 346

N

NATO ／ 15, 18, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 52, 120, 121, 127, 130, 132, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 159, 168, 169, 174, 178, 179, 181, 185, 221, 277, 356, 368, **369**, 370, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 380, 403, 499
NCGP ／ 369
NDIS ／ 169, 170
NDS (U.S.) ／ **47**, 49, 51, 52, 85, 87
NDS ／ **194**, 196, 198, 199, 200, 205, 214, 223, 229, 243, 257, 263, 270, 284, 289, 291, 317, 321, 355, 379, 404, 435, 443, 452, 453, 455, 490, 491
NGOs ／ 369, 398, 407
NISC ／ 176, 297, 298
NIST SP800-171 ／ 465
NOCS ／ 178
NORAD ／ 155
NPR ／ 51
NPT ／ 119, 186, 193, 413
NSATU ／ 45, 370
NSS (U.S.) ／ 19, 20, 47, 48, 49, 50, 85, 87
NSS ／ 194, 195, 221, 223, 296, 297, 300,306, 322, 390, 404, 413, 445, 471

O

OECD ／ 220, 221, 222, 367, 467
OPCW ／ 42, 413, 414
OSA ／ **298**, 299, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 388, 391, 395, 479
OSCE ／ 369

P

PAC-3 ／ 94, 158, 203, 245, 246, 266, 309, 346, 477, 479
PAC-3MSE ／ 208, 213, 262, 265, 267, 291, 292
PBL ／ 220, 293, 488
PCRS ／ 406
PFAS ／ 501
PFI ／ 207, 213, 216, 286, 288, 303, 426, 432, 435, 487
PFOS ／ 28, 500, 501
PKO ／ 24, 79, 162, 239, 240, 355, 381, 386, 388, 390, 391, 393, 394, 399, 400, 402, 403, **406**, 407, 408, 409, 410, 417
PSI ／ 413, **415**
P-3C ／ 245, 249, 257, 258, 259, 260

Q

QDR ／ 91

R

RAA ／ 24, **355**, 357, 361, 365, 366, 367, 382, 383
RDP MOU ／ 324
RMF ／ 213, 276

S

SACO ／ 214, 215, 219, 222, 326, 327, 344, 346, 347
SAF ／ 143, 500
SBS ／ 174
S&TF ／ 324, 325
SCC ／ 314, 316, 317, 322
SCCM ／ 489
SDA ／ 3, 22, 171, 174, 206, 207, 216, 246, 262, 270, 271, 272, 273, 317, 486
SDC ／ 314, 316, 322
SEW ／ 245
SIPRI ／ 35, 79, 81, 83, 100, 170, 186, 221, 469
SLBM ／ 51, 61, 102, 104, 106, 107, 111, 117, 123, 186
SM-3 ／ 203, 208, 213, 245, 246, 265, 266, 267, 291, 292, 479, 486, 489
SNS ／ 459, 496, 502
SoSA ／ 465
SRBM ／ 63, 98, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 110, 111, 188
SSBN ／ 61, 123, 127, 129, 134
START ／ 52, 53, 87, 130, 186
S-300V4 ／ 129
S-500 ／ 125

T

TCBM ／ 272
TEL ／ 60, 99, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110
THAAD ／ 54, 120, 158

U

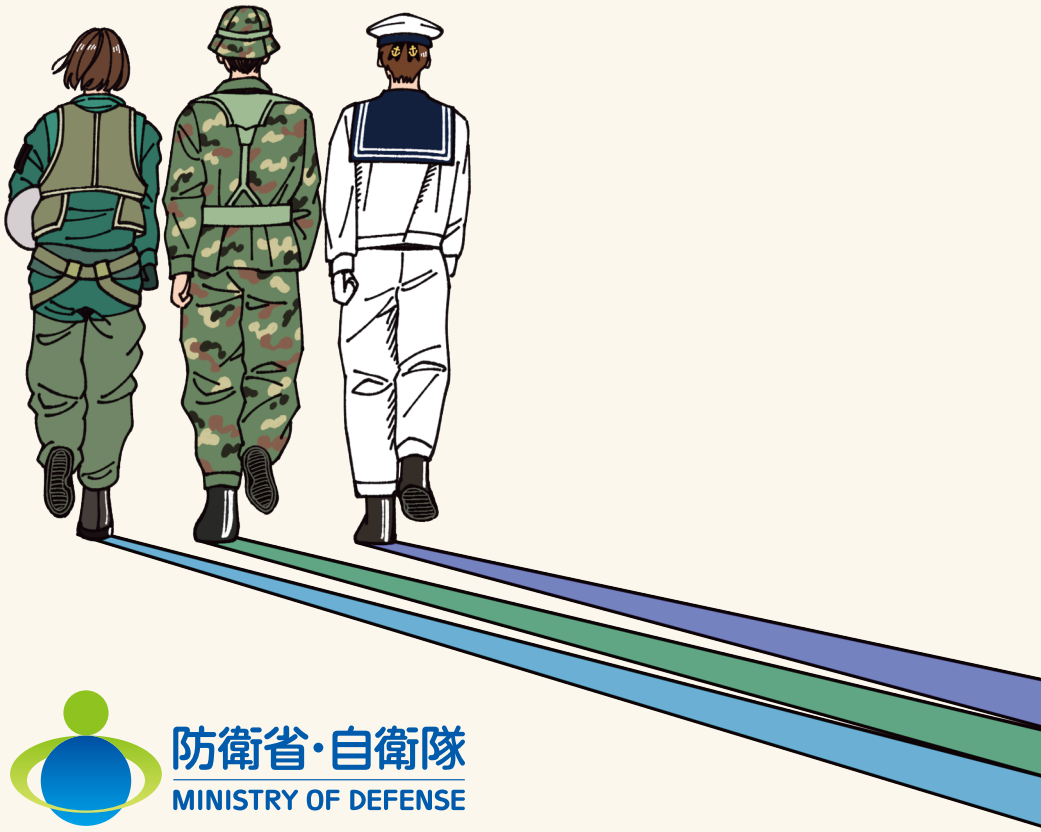
UAV ／ 20, 67, 70, 126, 167, 182, 201, 207, 213, 262, 264, 268, 269, 492
UNCLOS ／ 143, 183, 404
UNMISS ／ 24, 79, 159, 161, 390, 407, 408, 409, 412
UUV ／ 208, 269, 486
UGV ／ 208, 213, 269
USV ／ 208, 268, 269, 486

V

VLS ／ 63, 266
V-22 ／ 288, 479, 486, 489

W

WMD ／ 98, 99, 118
WPNS ／ 183
WPS ／ 13, 24, 369, 383, 387, 395, 401, 402, 403, 445



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