



Leaders of the IP4 with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and U.S. President Joe Biden.

JAPAN AND NATO: PURSUING DIVERSE ITTP-BASED COOPERATION

The NATO Summit was held in Washington, D.C., in July 2024, at which Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio—attending for the third consecutive year—held meetings with the NATO secretary general and the leaders of its Indo-Pacific partners to further strengthen ties with NATO members states and like-minded countries.

In July 2024, Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio visited Washington, D.C., to attend the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit. While there, he first met with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. During the meeting, both Japan and NATO affirmed that they welcomed flagship projects (including support for Ukraine, cyber defense, disinformation, hostile information, and technology) between NATO and the Indo-Pacific partners (IP4: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea). This was done under the premise that the deepening of coordination between

the IP4 and NATO is crucial, as the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is inseparable. The two leaders concurred to further promote cooperation between Japan and NATO.

At the Partners Session of the NATO Summit, the international security environment, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the situation in the Indo-Pacific, and the future cooperation between NATO and IP4 and other issues were discussed. Prime Minister Kishida, who has participated in the NATO Summit for three consecutive years, welcomed the fact that many



Left: Meeting between Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.
Below: A scene from the Partners Session of the NATO Summit.



leaders share the recognition that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is inseparable, and that they are increasing their interests and engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

Prime Minister Kishida also stated that Japan's position to strongly support Ukraine and impose sanctions against Russia remains unchanged. In June of this year, Japan became the first non-Atlantic country to sign a bilateral document with Ukraine, reiterating the fact that the issue of Ukraine is not only the issue of the European, but also the entire international community. Japan has contributed approximately 67 million dollars to NATO's Trust Fund since 2023 to provide the Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Detection Systems and others for Ukraine. Japan will also work closely with NATO in supporting Ukraine in the medical field, which has become one of the flagship projects between IP4 and NATO.

In the Indo-Pacific, Japan is seriously concerned about the recent moves to advance Russia-North Korea military cooperation which not only leads to further deterioration of the situation in Ukraine but also affects the security of the region surrounding Japan. Any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force in the East and South China Seas is unacceptable. In order to respond to such a severe security environment, Japan has been working on making the level of its budget, for both the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and complementary initiatives, reach 2% of its GDP in fiscal year 2022, and has been strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries. Prime Minister Kishida also expressed the importance of deepening cooperation between the IP4 and NATO.

Additionally, regarding the Japan-NATO cooperation, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan intends to promote the following

cooperations based on the Individually Tailored Partnership Programme (ITPP). It will strengthen a classified information sharing system with NATO and cooperation in the cyber field, as well as dispatch new personnel to the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (NATO StratCom COE).

While Prime Minister Kishida was in Washington, D.C., the Japan-Australia-New Zealand-Republic of Korea Leaders' Meeting was also held. The leaders of those four countries exchanged views on the strategic environment in the region, including North Korea, and shared grave concerns over the development of military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, including the result of the recent Russia-North Korea Summit Meeting. They also affirmed that they would deepen communication and cooperation with European countries and NATO member states on issues in the Indo-Pacific region.

Japan will continue to strengthen coordination with like-minded countries such as NATO member states and make efforts to uphold a free and open international order based on the rule of law. ●



Prime Minister Kishida also participated in the ceremony of issuing the Ukraine Compact, attended by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the leaders of the countries and region that have signed or are drafting bilateral documents with Ukraine.