

Dear friends of the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle,

Our bi-monthly newsletter, "From Japan to the Northwest," is intended to share important and interesting information related to Japan, our region, and the Consulate's activities.

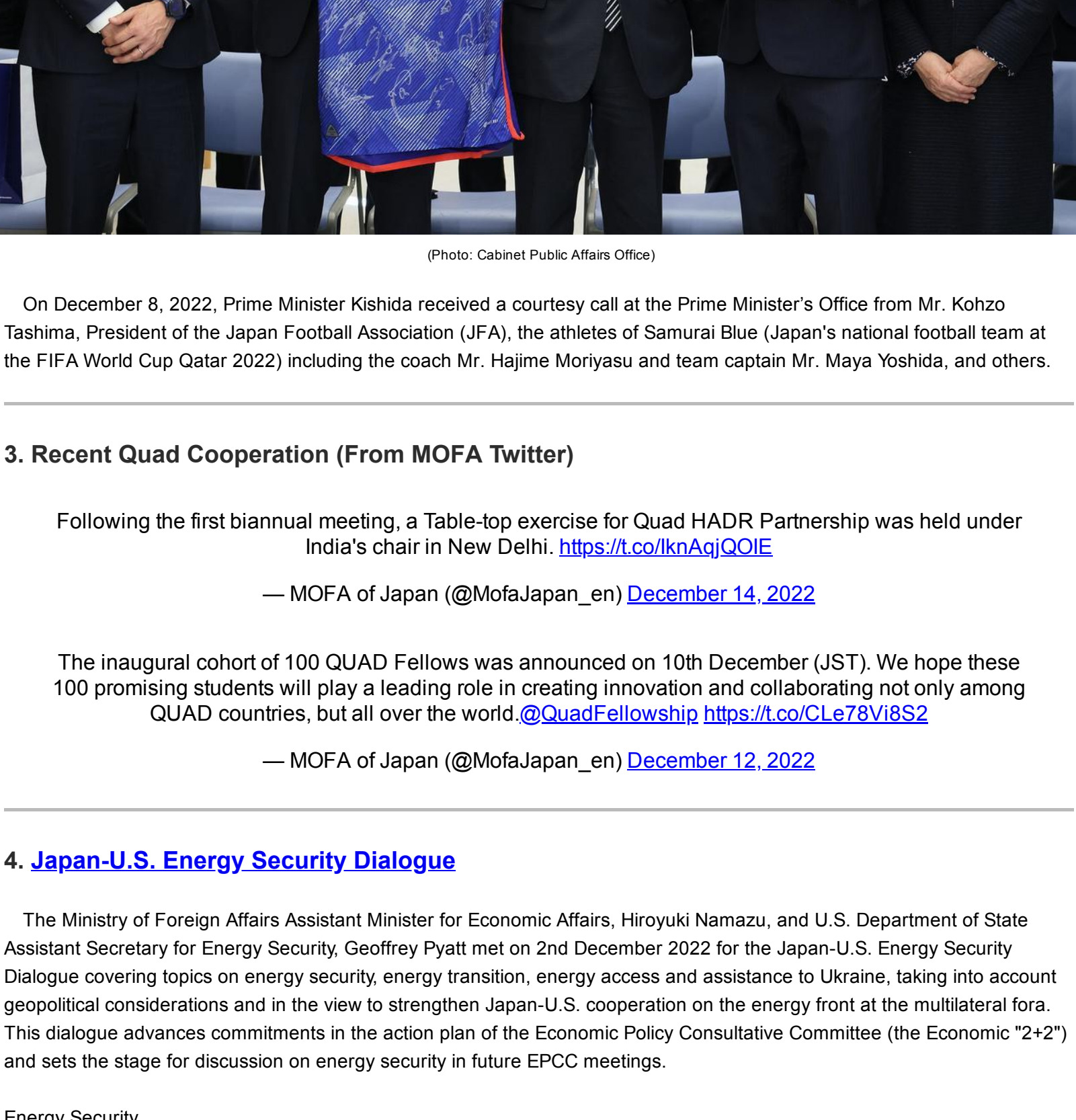
**In Case You Missed It, Special Edition last week!**  
On December 8, we sent out a special edition of this newsletter focusing on the issue of **Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea**. Read that issue and other **past issues of the newsletter here**.

This will be the last edition of 2022, as we will be taking a break during the holiday season. See you in the new year!

## 1. Response to the Situation in Ukraine (Updated regularly)

[Measures by the Japanese Government \(PDF\)](#)

## 2. Courtesy Call from the Samurai Blue (Japan National Football Team) at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022



(Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

On December 8, 2022, Prime Minister Kishida received a courtesy call at the Prime Minister's Office from Mr. Kohzo Tashima, President of the Japan Football Association (JFA), the athletes of Samurai Blue (Japan's national football team at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022) including the coach Mr. Hajime Moriyasu and team captain Mr. Maya Yoshida, and others.

## 3. Recent Quad Cooperation (From MOFA Twitter)

Following the first biannual meeting, a Table-top exercise for Quad HADR Partnership was held under India's chair in New Delhi. <https://t.co/lknAqjQQiE>  
— MOFA of Japan (@MofaJapan\_en) [December 14, 2022](#)

The inaugural cohort of 100 QUAD Fellows was announced on 10th December (JST). We hope these 100 promising students will play a leading role in creating innovation and collaborating not only among QUAD countries, but all over the world. [@QuadFellowship https://t.co/CLe78Vl8S2](https://t.co/CLe78Vl8S2)  
— MOFA of Japan (@MofaJapan\_en) [December 12, 2022](#)

## 4. Japan-U.S. Energy Security Dialogue

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs, Hiroyuki Namazu, and U.S. Department of State Assistant Secretary for Energy Security, Geoffrey Pyatt met on 2nd December 2022 for the Japan-U.S. Energy Security Dialogue covering topics on energy security, energy transition, energy access and assistance to Ukraine, taking into account geopolitical considerations and in the view to strengthen Japan-U.S. cooperation on the energy front at the multilateral fora. This dialogue advances commitments in the action plan of the Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic "2+2") and sets the stage for discussion on energy security in future EPPC meetings.

### Energy Security

The Japan side and the United States side shared serious concerns towards the surge in energy prices and supply disruption resulting from Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Further, discussions were held to explore measures to provide energy assistance to Ukraine, especially in the face of a harsh winter.

### Energy Transition and Access to Affordable Energy

Both sides shared the urgency to secure access to affordable energy, with the understandings that access to energy is a basic human need and that cooperation to promote energy access, including in Southeast Asia, is necessary. Both sides reaffirmed the importance to deepen the cooperation for realizing the practical energy transition, especially in the Asia Pacific region, and the necessity to make the resilient supply chain of critical minerals, which is crucial for the clean energy transition, through the framework of the Minerals Security Partnership.

Further, both sides acknowledged the need to build strong foundations for smooth and practical energy transitions by making the best use of fossil fuels albeit with utilizations of advanced technologies and to bring about an affordable energy to those in need.

The next dialogue is scheduled to take place in 2023 and will be hosted by the United States.

## 5. Tenth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") & Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

On December 9, Mr. Yoshimasa Hayashi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Mr. Yasukazu Hamada, Minister of Defence of Japan, held the tenth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting with the Hon. Richard Marles MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence of the Commonwealth of Australia, and Senator the Hon. Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Australia in Tokyo.

FM Hayashi stated that Japan and Australia, which share fundamental values and strategic interests, have been working closely together to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and have developed this vision into a core component for cooperation among like-minded countries. Minister Hayashi also stated that following up on the outcomes of the Japan-Australia Leaders' Meeting, including the "Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation" between the Foreign and Defence Ministers, just over a month after Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's visit to Australia in October, shows the strong commitment of Japan and Australia to the security and defence cooperation between both countries. Minister Hamada showed the recognition that with the issuance of the Declaration, security cooperation between Japan and Australia is now ready to move forward into the next era, and he expressed his intention to explore ways to improve the effectiveness of defence cooperation between the two countries.

Regarding the strategic response to regional issues, the four Ministers confirmed that they will further discuss the direction of Japan-Australia cooperation against the background of the ongoing process of reviewing of strategic documents in Japan and Australia. FM Hayashi and Minister Hamada stated that, as the security environment around Japan has become increasingly severe, they are proceeding to formulate a new National Security Strategy and will strengthen Japan's diplomatic and security role to ensure peace and prosperity. The four Ministers then reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen security and defence cooperation between Japan and Australia.

Read the [full overview of the meeting here](#).



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Also on December 9, FM Hayashi held a meeting with Senator the Hon. Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Australia.

At the outset, FM Hayashi welcomed Australian Minister Wong's visit to Japan. He stated that, as both leaders concurred at the leaders' meeting in October, Japan and Australia have become central pillars of coordination among like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region, and the "Special Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Australia has been elevated to a new dimension.

The two ministers had a frank discussion on regional affairs and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) from a strategic perspective, and shared the view to continue to work closely together.

The two ministers also exchanged their views on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and confirmed to continue to work together between Japan and Australia.

## 6. The Adoption of the Draft Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons submitted by Japan in the Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly

On December 8 (December 7 local time), the draft resolution entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons," submitted by Japan, was adopted with the support of 147 countries in the Plenary Meeting of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

This draft resolution was adopted in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly on October 31. Taking into consideration the discussions at the Tenth NPT Review Conference held this August, the Government of Japan cognizant of the need to present a way forward for realistic and practical measures to realize a world without nuclear weapons. To this end, Japan has submitted this resolution, which calls on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons, enhancing transparency as well as disarmament and non-proliferation education that fosters the accurate understanding on the realities of nuclear weapons use.

The draft resolution this year was adopted with broad support from states with various positions including nuclear-weapon-States such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and France as well as many non-nuclear-weapon States. Through this draft resolution, Japan will work to enhance the momentum of the international community to achieve a world without nuclear weapons and steadily advance realistic and practical efforts, bearing in mind that the G7 Summit will be held in Hiroshima next year.

## 7. World Assembly for Women: WAW! 2022



On December 3, World Assembly for Women: WAW! 2022 was held in a hybrid format at the Mita Conference Center in Tokyo. The assembly was attended by H.E. Dr. Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson, President of the Republic of Iceland; H.E. Dr. Maia Sandu, President of the Republic of Moldova; Sima Bahous, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women; and other dignitaries from various countries and international organizations, as well as those working in various fields at home and abroad.

At the outset, Prime Minister Kishida gave opening remarks (excerpts below):

"Women's economic independence is at the core of the "New Form of Capitalism." In order to realize a society in which everyone can live their lives to the fullest, it is imperative that we reflect the perspectives of women in our policies and systems. To this end, I have been promoting a "virtuous circle of growth and distribution" that incorporates gender mainstreaming."

Prime Minister Kishida also introduced not only domestic efforts for gender equality, but also international development cooperation. He specifically referred to the provision of temporary shelters for women fleeing from Afghanistan and war-torn Ukraine.

"Japan will continue to focus on each and every woman in the world to protect their human rights and empower them, while also promoting women's participation in peace and security. We will do so through JICA, UN Women, the Global Fund for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, and other organizations."

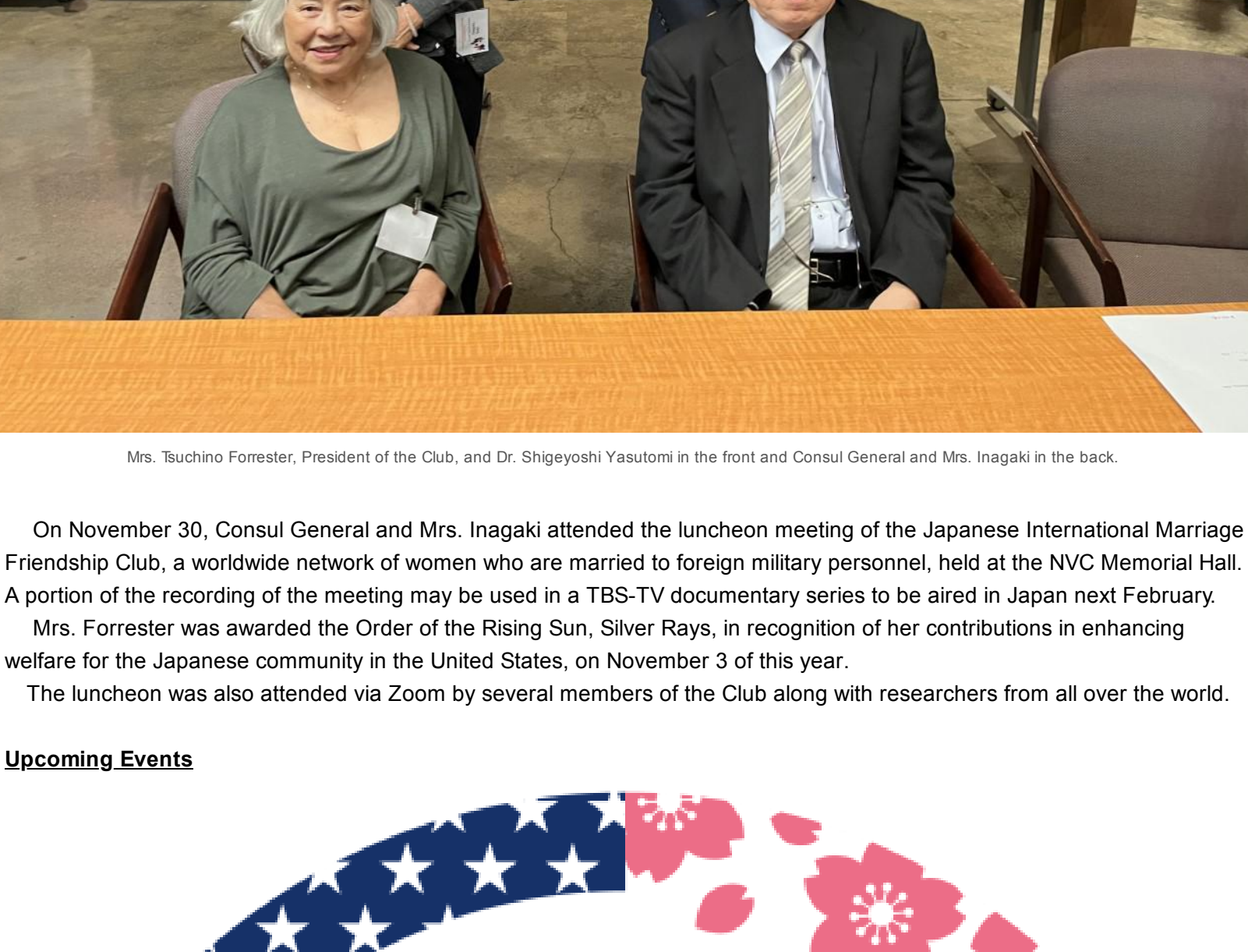
To conclude, he expressed his hope that the assembly will serve as an important opportunity for the realization of a society in which everyone can feel a sense of fulfillment in life, while ensuring that more men get involved in gender initiatives.

Read [PM Kishida's full remarks here](#).

Additionally, the latest issue of *Kizuna*, the official e-magazine of the Government of Japan, explores topics related to WAW! and women's empowerment. [It can be read here](#).



## 8. International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP) (The Prime Minister in Action)



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

On December 11, 2022, Prime Minister Kishida attended the first meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP) held in Hiroshima. PM Kishida gave remarks at the Opening Session. Below are excerpts from his remarks.

"We must take the path toward a "world without nuclear weapons," however difficult it may be. This is the strong aspiration, not only of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also of Japan, the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war. It is also my strong personal, as well as Japan's determination as the chair of the G7 Summit meeting here in Hiroshima next May.

The post-Cold War era has come to an end and we are now at a historic turning point. The global security environment has become increasingly severe. The threat of the use of nuclear weapons is higher than at any time since the height of the Cold War. Russia's nuclear threat during its aggression against Ukraine is absolutely unacceptable, let alone their actual use. It has also been pointed out that North Korea may conduct another nuclear test.

We don't have the luxury to stand still. Mindful of the G7 Hiroshima Summit next year, Japan intends to take realistic and practical steps forward in accordance with the "Hiroshima Action Plan."

I sincerely hope that today's first meeting will be an important step in building international momentum toward a "world without nuclear weapons" and in building on our tireless efforts toward the ideal. I would also like to reiterate my pledge to continue holding the torch aloft, strong and high, together with all of you, to find a path to leading from the harsh reality to the ideal."

## 9. Updates on the COVID-19 Situation and Travel to Japan

### Daily COVID Data Updates

### Traveling from the U.S. to Japan:

**Fast Track function will be added to Visit Japan Web**

For all travelers entering Japan: the **Fast Track** pre-registration service for entry to Japan will be integrated into [Visit Japan Web](#) from November 1st, 2022.

If your **arrival date is after November 1, please use Visit Japan Web**, an online **service for quarantine, immigration, and customs procedures**. The service is for **both international travelers and Japanese citizens**. Please refer to [Visit Japan Web](#) for further information.

### The relaxation of border restrictions including visa exemption entry to resume after October 11, 2022.

The Prime Minister of Japan announced that Japan will resume the short-term stay visa exemption measure after October 11, 2022. This will only apply to nationals of those countries that originally had visa exempt status, including the United States. ([See list of visa exempt countries here](#).)

For information on the current requirements and procedures for visiting Japan, [please check our website](#).

## Consulate Activities

### Secretary of State Steve Hobbs' Swearing-In Ceremony



On December 12, Consul General and Mrs. Inagaki attended the swearing-in ceremony for [WA Secretary of State Steve Hobbs](#). Secretary Hobbs, who is the second generation of Japanese immigrants, is the first Asian American to hold the position. He was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu during a ceremony at the State Capitol. His wife, Pam, and their three sons also attended. Congratulations, Secretary Hobbs!

### JASSW Annual Holiday Celebration

The [Japan-America Society of the State of Washington](#) (JASSW) celebrated its 99th Annual Holiday Celebration & Auction on November 29. Consul General and Mrs. Inagaki joined the event and enjoyed the festivities! This year marked the joyous return to an in-person celebration after two years as a virtual event due to the pandemic. Congratulations to JASSW for a successful event! It was truly a memorable evening and a wonderful way to get back on track for next year's centennial celebration!

### International Marriage Friendship Club Gathering



Mrs. Tauchino Forrester, President of the Club, and Dr. Shigeyoshi Yasutomi in the front and Consul General and Mrs. Inagaki in the back.

On November 30, Consul General and Mrs. Inagaki attended the luncheon meeting of the Japanese International Marriage Friendship Club, a worldwide network of women who are married to foreign military personnel, held at the NVC Memorial Hall. A portion of the recording of the meeting may be used in a TBS-TV documentary series to be aired in Japan next February.

Mrs. Forrester was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Silver Rays, in recognition of her contributions in enhancing welfare for the Japanese community in the United States, on November 3 of this year.

The luncheon was also attended via Zoom by several members of the Club along with researchers from all over the world.

### Upcoming Events



### 4th annual SEIJIN-shiki USA - Sunday, January 15

Experience the coming-of-age celebration in the Japanese style! The event welcomes anyone whose birthday falls between January 2001 and March 2003 and who resides in the USA, regardless of nationality.

Event and registration details can be found here: <http://seijinusa.org/2023-celebration/>

That's it for this issue of "From Japan to the Northwest."

Until next year, happy holidays, and thank you for reading!

Sincerely,  
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

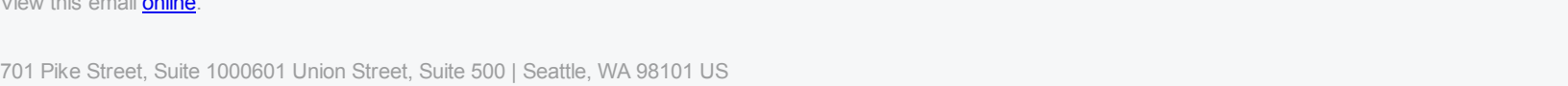
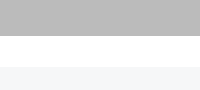
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