

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. You can find [past issues of the newsletter here](#).

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

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

- [Provision of Generators to Ukraine](#)
- [ASEF's support for displaced people from Ukraine through WHO \(Phase 2\) Assistance for COVID-19 response](#)

2. New Year's Reflection by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida



(Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(Abridged Statement)

With the great outbreak of the Omicron strain of COVID-19, [Russian aggression against Ukraine](#), soaring prices resulting from the energy crisis and the rapidly progressing weakening of the value of the yen, and moreover, the incident in which former Prime Minister Abe was shot, last year was truly a year of turbulence, with history-making events occurring one after another.

Here at a major turning point for our time, we must create a Japan suited to the new era and overcome this challenging era by changing ourselves through everyone's efforts. In order to do so, we must confront head on the many difficult issues post-war Japan faced that have built up over the years and remain with us today.

The [New Form of Capitalism](#) that I have been advocating is an attempt to create a sustainable, inclusive, new economic model to realize the resolution of social issues simultaneously with economic growth.

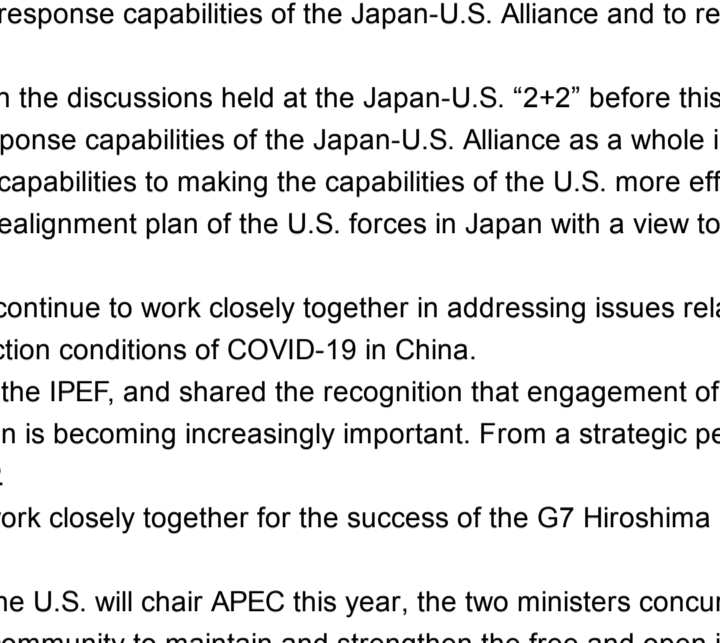
We find ourselves now facing what can be called the most severe security environment of the post-war era, with Russian aggression against Ukraine and also the increased threat surrounding nuclear weapons and divisions within the international community, among other challenges.

Against that backdrop, this year Japan will host the [G7 Hiroshima Summit](#). I intend to display our strong will to firmly reject unilateral changes to the status quo by force and nuclear threats, in a way appropriate for the weight this carries historically.

Based on the [National Security Strategy decided last year](#), we will build up Japan's own diplomatic efforts further and also do our utmost to reinforce our defense capabilities that back them up. I will resolutely carry out my mission as prime minister to fully defend the Japanese state and the Japanese people.

I firmly believe that we will be able to overcome the difficulties we now face without fail by all of us pressing forward together. In closing, I extend my heartfelt wishes for 2023 to be a marvelous year full of joy and prosperity for all of you.

3. Recent International Visits by Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi



Early in the New Year, both Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi traveled to various countries to meet with their counterparts and announce new initiatives. Please see the links below for more details.

From January 9-15, Prime Minister Kishida [visited France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States](#).

From January 4-15, Foreign Minister Hayashi [visited Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, and the United States](#).

4. Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting



On January 11, FM Hayashi held a meeting with the Honorable Antony Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America. The overview of the meeting is as follows.

The two ministers reaffirmed that they would continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. toward further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

The two ministers, building up on the discussions held at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" before this meeting, reaffirmed to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a whole including by linking the reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities to making the capabilities of the U.S. more effective. They also concurred on the steady implementation of the realignment plan of the U.S. forces in Japan with a view to mitigating the impact on Okinawa and other local communities.

The two ministers concurred to continue to work closely together in addressing issues related to China. The two ministers also concurred to monitor the infection conditions of COVID-19 in China.

They welcomed the progress of the IPEF, and shared the recognition that engagement of the U.S. in the economic order and economic security of the region is becoming increasingly important. From a strategic perspective, Minister Hayashi conveyed Japan's position on TPP.

They concurred to continue to work closely together for the success of the G7 Hiroshima Summit Meeting and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

As Japan will chair the G7 and the U.S. will chair APEC this year, the two ministers concurred that Japan and the U.S. will continue to lead the international community to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order based on the rule of law by making use of this momentum.

5. The Signing Ceremony of the Framework Agreement between Japan and the United States of America for Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space

On January 13 (local time, 14 Japan time), PM Kishida visited the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Headquarters. In the presence of Prime Minister Kishida, Foreign Minister Hayashi, and the Honorable Antony Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America, signed the Framework Agreement for Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space.

This agreement sets forth the basic terms and conditions for Japan-U.S. space cooperation for peaceful purposes. Following the signing of this agreement, both Japan and the U.S. are to proceed with their domestic procedures for its conclusion.

At the signing ceremony, PM Kishida stated that he strongly expects this agreement to vigorously promote Japan-U.S. space cooperation and expand areas of cooperation for the Japan-U.S. alliance, which is stronger than ever before. Also, FM Hayashi expressed his sincere hope that Japan-U.S. space cooperation will further deepen based on this agreement, as it will benefit the future of all humankind.

6. The 9th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

On December 24, the 9th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, chaired by Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoshimasa Hayashi, was held at the Iikura House.

The Ministers first discussed "Cooperation between Japan and Central Asia in the midst of drastically changing international circumstances." Minister Hayashi stated that the international community has been affected by Russia's aggression against Ukraine in various aspects, including food and energy supplies, and that the impact is particularly significant in Central Asia, which has close historical and economic ties with Russia. In this context, Minister Hayashi stated that Japan would like to promote a new model of development with particular emphasis on "investment in people" and "quality of growth" in order to achieve sustainable development in Central Asia.

In light of the difficult international situation, the participants also exchanged views on the future direction of cooperation regarding the "Trans-Caspian International Transport Route", a transportation route that does not pass through Russia, and agreed to hold a symposium on this issue in the first quarter of next year within the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue to further deepen discussions.

At the working lunch following the joint press conference, the participants also exchanged views on cooperation between Japan and Central Asia towards maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law. They also noted the importance of the non-proliferation regime and confirmed their intention to cooperate in the area of disarmament.

After the meeting, a joint statement was issued by the foreign ministers of the six countries.

Read the [full overview of the meeting here](#). The next Foreign Ministers' meeting will take place in Kazakhstan.

FM Hayashi also held one-on-one meetings with the foreign ministers of [Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan](#).

PM Kishida received a [courtesy call from the Foreign Ministers](#) of the five Central Asian countries as well.

7. Publication of the 3rd Report on IAEA's Review of Safety Related Aspects of Handling ALPS Treated Water at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station

On December 29, 2022, the IAEA published the third report on IAEA's Review of Safety Related Aspects of Handling ALPS treated water at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station (FDNPS), based on the Terms of Reference (TOR) on Reviews of Safety Aspects of Handling ALPS Treated Water at TEPCO's FDNPS which was signed in July 2021.

This third report describes IAEA's planned activities for the analysis and data corroboration of source monitoring of the ALPS treated water, environmental monitoring, and occupational radiation protection for workers at the FDNPS. The IAEA has published two other reports earlier this year focused on the observations of safety and regulatory review missions conducted in 2022.

The Government of Japan will continue to provide necessary information to the IAEA in its review of the safety of the discharge of ALPS treated water as well as its monitoring activities etc. The Government of Japan also remains committed to making efforts to promote better understanding in the international community regarding the handling of ALPS treated water.

[Reference 1] ALPS treated water is water which is processed by devices such as ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System) to ensure that the concentration of the radioactive materials other than tritium surely meet the regulatory standards for safety. In addition, it is planned that ALPS treated water will then be sufficiently diluted before the discharges into the sea so that concentration of all radioactive materials including tritium will be far below the regulatory standards for safety.

8. The 32nd Japan-Canada Joint Economic Committee

On December 22/23, 2022, Japan hosted the 32nd meeting of the Japan-Canada Joint Economic Committee (JEC) online.

The Japanese side welcomed the announcement of Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy, which demonstrates Canada's strong commitment to increasing its presence, engagement, and influence in the Indo-Pacific region. The Strategy is aligned with the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region" that was jointly announced by FM Hayashi and Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, during her visit to Japan in October 2022. The co-chairs concurred that both Governments were committed to implementing the Action Plan and further advancing the JEC's Priority Areas of Cooperation (PACs).

The co-chairs reaffirmed the economic and strategic significance of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and welcomed the success of the Agreement over the past three years to promote free trade, open and competitive markets, and economic integration in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, and the transformative effect it has had on bilateral and regional trade. They affirmed their intention to continue to work closely together to ensure its steady implementation and its expansion to economies that are committed to the agreement's objectives, able to fully meet and adhere to its high standards, and have a demonstrated pattern of complying with their trade commitments. They noted that economic coercion and unjustifiably restrictive trade practices are contrary to the objectives and high standards of the Agreement.

The JEC also discussed [the priorities set out by the JCCC](#), in particular in the areas of supply chain resilience, energy, agri-food, and infrastructure investment.

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

New Year's Greeting from Consul General Inagaki



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MEXT Japanese Studies Student Scholarships

Applications are now being accepted for the 2023 MEXT Japanese Studies Student Scholarships

Eligibility:
Academic background: Undergraduates majoring in a field related to Japanese language and/or Japanese culture
Age: Those who were born between April 2, 1993, and April 1, 2005
Other requirements: Please carefully read the Application Guidelines.
How to apply: Visit our website at <https://www.seattle.us.emb-japan.go.jp/ftp.../scholarship.html>
Deadline: February 1, 2023

Upcoming Events

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24TH, 2023 AT 4:30PM PST (ONLINE)

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Register Here!

A webinar to exchange ideas and information between Japan and Washington State

.....

The state of Washington and Japan have a long-standing relationship of agricultural exchanges. What should we do, in both countries, when demand for organic farming is increasing and domestic and international trends that emphasize SDGs and the environment are expected to accelerate?

In this webinar, we will have young farm owners seeking new forms of agriculture and sustainable agricultural researchers exchange information on how to build the future of agriculture from the standpoints of both Japan and the United States.

Sustainable Agriculture Webinar

The Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle will hold a webinar on sustainable agriculture in Japan and the U.S. on Tuesday, January 24 at 4:30-6:00pm PST in partnership with the Washington State Department of Agriculture. If you are interested in business, social trends in agriculture, or food production in Japan and the U.S., join us for this webinar! Seats are limited.

[Register here](#) or with the QR code above.

Eiichi Shibusawa's Legacy and Japan's "New Form of Capitalism"

For US Participants
Feb 1st, 2023 4:00 pm PST

For Japan Participants
Feb 2nd, 2023 9:00 am JST

ONLINE EVENT

MODERATOR
Adam Goff
Global Head of Research, Russell Investments

Japan's Economic Policy Webinar - February 1

The [Japan-America Society of the State of Washington](#) (JASSW) is hosting an online panel discussion on February 1 at 4pm PST.

The topic is the current economic policy of Japan and Eiichi Shibusawa, one of the most famous entrepreneurs in Japanese history and the next face of the 10,000 yen note. Mr. Shibusawa led the Japanese Economic Commission to the U.S. in September 1909, and the first place they visited was Seattle. They spent about two weeks in WA and spent three months traveling across the U.S.

Expert panelists will discuss Shibusawa's legacy and how it relates to PM Kishida's focus on a "New Form of Capitalism." Online registration is required prior to this event. [Click here](#), or scan the QR code above for more information.

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

Until next time, thank you for reading!

Sincerely,
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

View [past issues of "From Japan to the Northwest" here](#).

Visit the Consulate's Homepage here:

- [Homepage \(English・英語\)](#)
- [Homepage \(Japanese・日本語\)](#)

And be sure to follow us on social media using the icons below!

