

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. G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Karuizawa, Nagano



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

From April 16-18, the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Karuizawa, Nagano Prefecture. On April 16, FM Hayashi hosted a working dinner on the Indo-Pacific. Minister Hayashi expressed Japan's intention, during the year of its G7 Presidency, to demonstrate the importance of a free and open international order based on the rule of law and the G7's strong determination not to accept unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force, as well as to strengthen engagement with the countries known as the "Global South."

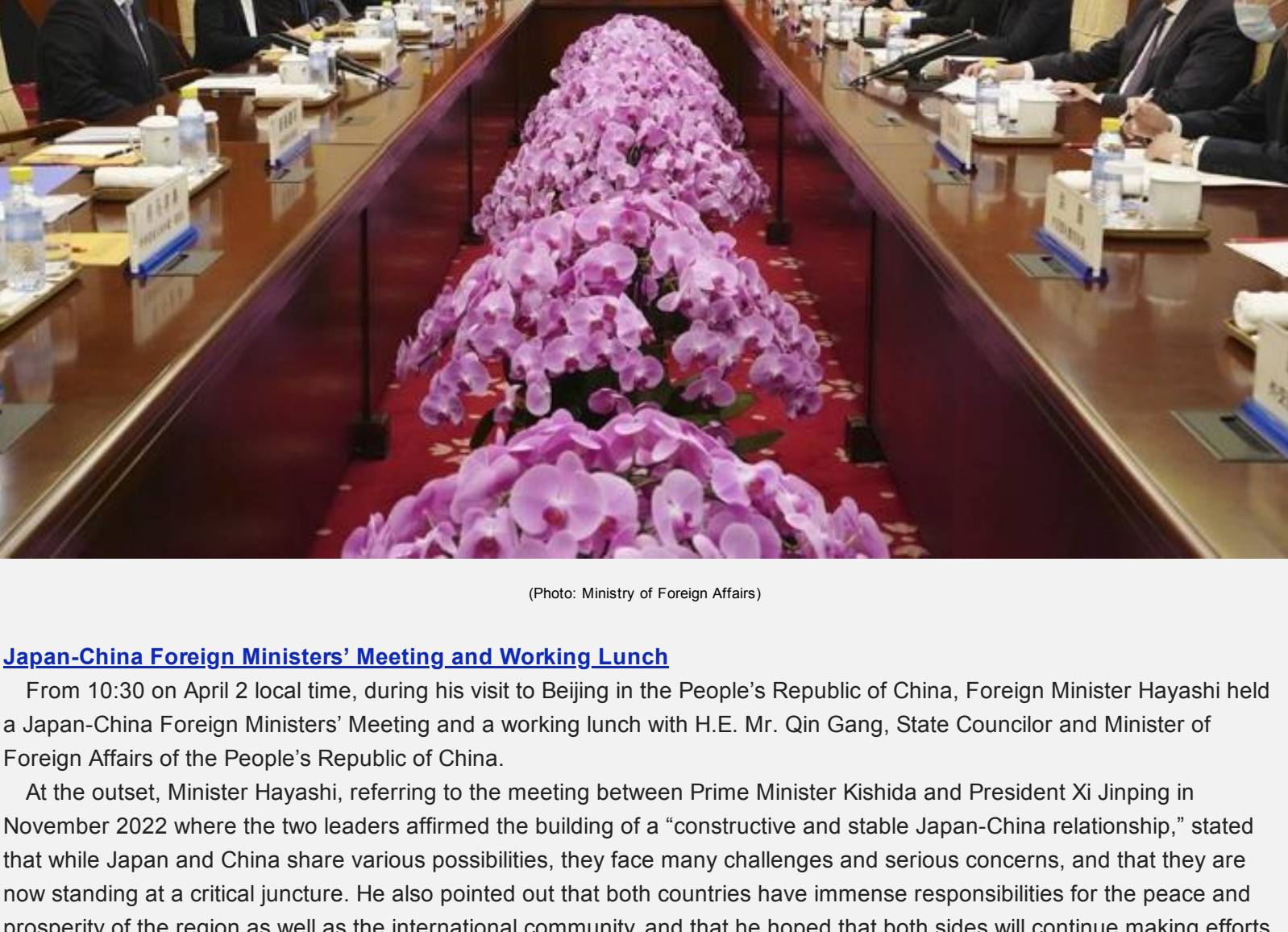
Following this, Minister Hayashi, as the representative of the only G7 member from Asia, explained recent developments in the Indo-Pacific, among other matters, and held an open exchange of views with the other G7 Foreign Ministers on various challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, including China and North Korea, and the G7 Foreign Ministers shared the view that the unity of the G7 is extremely important to this end.

Regarding North Korea, Minister Hayashi expressed grave concern over North Korea's launch of ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, including the launch in the previous week, and the G7 Foreign Ministers strongly condemned North Korea's repeated launches of ballistic missiles. Furthermore, the G7 Foreign Ministers once again expressed their support for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

The G7 Foreign Ministers also continued to discuss matters such as regional affairs, [including the Indo-Pacific, on April 17](#). Other sessions were held on topics such as [Ukraine](#), and [Cooperation with International Partners](#), among others.

FM Hayashi also held bilateral meetings with his counterparts from the [United States](#), [the UK](#), [Italy](#), and [Germany](#). [See a full overview of the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting here](#).

## 2. Foreign Minister Hayashi Visits China - (April 1-2, 2023)



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

[Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Working Lunch](#)

From 10:30 on April 2 local time, during his visit to Beijing in the People's Republic of China, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting and a working lunch with H.E. Mr. Qin Gang, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

At the outset, Minister Hayashi, referring to the meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and President Xi Jinping in November 2022 where the two leaders affirmed the building of a "constructive and stable Japan-China relationship," stated that while Japan and China share various possibilities, they face many challenges and serious concerns, and that they are now standing at a critical juncture. He also pointed out that both countries have immense responsibilities for the peace and prosperity of the region as well as the international community, and that he hoped that both sides will continue making efforts to put the common understanding shared by the two leaders into practice. Minister Qin indicated that he was of the same view.

Minister Hayashi made a protest regarding the recent incident of the detention of a Japanese national in Beijing and strongly reiterated Japan's resolute position on this matter, including the Japanese national's swift release.

Minister Hayashi reiterated Japan's serious concerns about matters such as the situation in the East China Sea, including the Senkaku Islands, and the intensification of Chinese military activities near Japan which include joint exercises with Russia. The two ministers reaffirmed the importance of maintaining communication, including in security-related areas.

Minister Hayashi referred to Prime Minister Kishida's recent visit to Ukraine, and called on China to play a responsible role in maintaining international peace and security. The two ministers also exchanged views on the regional situation, such as the response to North Korea including the abductions issue, the nuclear and missile programs, cooperation in the forum of the United Nations, and also on international issues, including climate change and development finance, among others.

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

## Foreign Minister Hayashi Pays a Courtesy Call on State Council Premier Li Qiang

From 16:00 pm on April 2 local time, FM Hayashi paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Li Qiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.

Minister Hayashi stated that it is important that both governments support the economic and people-to-people exchanges, and pointed out that it is extremely important for the Chinese government to ensure an environment in which Japanese nationals and Japanese companies can conduct activities with a sense of security in China.

Both sides concurred on the importance of continuing close communication at all levels, including at the high level.

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

## Meeting and Dinner between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee Wang Yi

From 17:30 on April 2 local time, FM Hayashi held a meeting and a dinner with H.E. Mr. Wang Yi, Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

Both sides engaged in candid dialogue, including at dinner, on the international situation, such as North Korea.

The two ministers concurred on continuing close communication at all levels, including at the leader and foreign ministerial levels.

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

## 3. Latest News on the Situation in Ukraine



(Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

[Video Message by Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio at the Bucha Summit on Russia's Accountability for the Crimes in Ukraine](#)

On March 31, Ukraine hosted the "Bucha Summit on Russia's Accountability for the Crimes in Ukraine" which was attended by H.E. Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine and representatives of Ukraine, relevant countries and international organizations.

On this occasion, Prime Minister Kishida participated in delivering a video message. In his message, Prime Minister Kishida recalled his recent visit to Bucha during his visit to Ukraine and stated that the G7 Presidency, Japan will demonstrate a strong determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law.

PM Kishida's abridged remarks (video message):

*Last week, during my visit to Ukraine, I stopped by Bucha and witnessed the scourge of Russia's aggression with my own eyes. In Bucha, I offered flowers to the victims and listened directly to those who had experienced atrocities, and was truly outraged by the gravity of inexcusable violence of Russia. I once again extend my sincerest condolences to victims and their families in various parts of Ukraine.*

*I told President Zelenskyy that Japan is determined to continue strict sanctions against Russia and strong support for Ukraine, and reaffirmed Japan's solidarity with Ukraine at the summit meeting in Kyiv.*

*Russia's aggression is a serious violation of the international law.*

*Russia must be held accountable. There must be no impunity for war crimes and other acts of atrocities. Japan will continue demonstrating its strong determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law as the G7 Presidency this year.*

*Japan will stand with Ukraine to restore peace on the beautiful land of Ukraine.*

## Video Message by Mr. HAYASHI Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, at an online discussion event of the USTR for Democracy 2023 on "A Just and Lasting Peace in Ukraine"

On March 28, Foreign Minister Hayashi, Minister for Foreign Affairs delivered a video message at a discussion event on "A Just and Lasting Peace in Ukraine," one of the pre-events of the Summit for Democracy 2023 hosted by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in which Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba attended. Minister Hayashi delivered a video message at the event.

[Read FM Hayashi's remarks here](#).

Other Ukraine News:  
[Response to the Situation in Ukraine \(Overview\)](#)  
[Additional Assistance for Recovery and Reconstruction in Ukraine](#)  
[Measures by the Japanese Government](#)

## 4. Meeting between Foreign Minister Hayashi and H.E. Mr. Kwon Youngse, Minister of Unification of the Republic of Korea



(Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

On March 23, FM Hayashi held a meeting with H.E. Mr. KWON Youngse, Minister of Unification of the Republic of Korea, who is visiting Japan upon invitation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The overview of the meeting is as follows.

At the outset, Minister Hayashi appreciated the visit of H.E. Mr. YOON Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, to Japan last week and stated that the two leaders had a fruitful discussion and concurred to facilitate smooth communication between the two governments, and that he was pleased to meet with Minister Kwon right after the President's visit to Japan.

The two ministers also exchanged views on North Korea and shared a recognition that North Korea's ballistic missiles launches with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners not only constitute a grave and imminent threat to the regional security but also pose a clear and serious challenge to the international community.

The two ministers affirmed that they would continue to coordinate in dealing with North Korea, including on the nuclear and missile issues. In addition, Minister Hayashi asked for continued understanding and cooperation for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, and gained support from Minister Kwon.

## 5. Japan-Iran Foreign Ministers' Telephone Talk

On April 12th, FM Hayashi held the telephone talk with H.E. Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At the outset, Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that he was pleased to hold the third telephone talk with Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian. In response, Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian expressed Iran's intention to further deepen the relationship between Japan and Iran, which has a long established history.

The Ministers exchanged candid views on the latest developments surrounding Iran's nuclear issue. Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Japan has consistently supported the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and expressed his strong hopes for a constructive response from Iran, including the full and unconditional cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Further, the Ministers decided to continue close communication on this matter.

The Ministers also exchanged views on the situation in Ukraine and agreed on continuing bilateral dialogue in a wide range of fields.

## 6. Signing of the Japan-U.S. Critical Minerals Agreement (CMA)

On March 28th local time, the "Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States on Strengthening Critical Minerals Supply Chains" (Japan-U.S. Critical Minerals Agreement (CMA)) was signed at the office of the USTR in Washington, D.C., between Ambassador Tomita Koji, and the Honorable Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative. The Agreement entered into force upon signature.

Facing the prospect of significant increase in demand of electric vehicle batteries, it is urgent to secure critical minerals which are essential to the production of clean vehicles. The Agreement is envisaged to build robust supply chains through coordination between Japan and the U.S. and among like-minded countries with strengthened cooperation for ensuring sustainable and equitable supply chains for such critical minerals, including to promote the goals of the Inflation Reduction Act.

Reference:  
 Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States on Strengthening Critical Minerals Supply Chains ([English\(PDF\)](#) / [Japanese\(PDF\)](#))

## 7. Awarding of the Prime Minister's Award to Dr. SEN Genshitsu (Statement by Foreign Minister HAYASHI Yoshimasa)

Statement by FM Hayashi:

*I offer my congratulations on the decision to confer the Prime Minister's Award to Dr. SEN Genshitsu, the 15th-generation Iemoto (Grand Master) of the Urasenke school of tea.*

*For over half a century, Dr. Sen has been introducing Japanese culture, focusing on chado (way of tea; commonly referred to as the Japanese tea ceremony in English), and its spirituality to the world. In addition, he has devoted himself to spreading peace around the world through international cultural exchanges by way of chado, and as Japan-United Nations (UN) Goodwill Ambassador, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and others.*

*The decision was made to award Dr. Sen in recognition of his achievements, which have contributed to the promotion of the key Japanese policy of peace diplomacy. I would like to express my deepest respect to Dr. Sen for his long-standing contributions.*

Reference:  
 Dr. Sen Genshitsu was appointed the 15th-generation Urasenke Grand Master in 1964 and transferred the position to his son, the 16th-generation Grand Master, in 2002. Dr. Sen has served as Japan-UN Goodwill Ambassador since 2005 and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador since 2012. The award ceremony is scheduled to be held on Thursday, April 20 at the Prime Minister's Office.

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

[Daily COVID Data Updates](#)

### "New" Mask Use Guidance Starting From 13 March 2023

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan has issued new mask use guidance. Please [see the new guidance here \(PDF\)](#).

### 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

### Upcoming Events

#### Manga Hokusai Manga

The Japan Foundation Traveling Exhibit: "Manga Hokusai Manga" is coming to the Seattle Opera Center Lobby from April 7-30!

This fascinating exhibit compares the similarities and differences between the artwork by the ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai and modern Japanese manga artists. Make sure to stop by and learn more about Japan and its culture!

#### Washin Kai Lecture - Visions of the Katsura Imperial Villa

UJW's Washin Kai will be hosting a special lecture "Visions of the Katsura Imperial Villa" with Professor Ken Tadashi Oshima on Wednesday April 19.

The lecture will unpack the many facets of Katsura including the literal and photographic interpretations to consider its implications for the future of Japanese traditions in a global context.

To attend the lecture either in-person or online, please register here: <https://tinyurl.com/Katsura2023>

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

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