



From Japan to the Northwest

News From the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle



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

Our 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](#).



Mt. Fuji slumbering in the fall

Welcome to the September 2023 edition of From Japan to the Northwest!

It has been a month since the business of APEC has settled down and we welcome the transition to fall with the cooler, wetter weather. In this edition, we will cover some leadership changes both in Japan and in Seattle, and debut a new newsletter format with news items organized under a general topic theme.

As we mentioned last time, we are transitioning to a **once-a-month publication schedule** starting in September to bring you the most important news from Japan and our region. Please be sure to **follow us on social media by clicking the icons below** for more frequent updates on Japan-related events and the consulate's activities.



1. Japan's Domestic Politics



(Photo: Cabinet Office of Japan)

Prime Minister Kishida 2nd Cabinet Reshuffle

On September 13, 2023, Prime Minister KISHIDA [reshuffled](#) the Cabinet for the second time since the inauguration of his Second Cabinet.

After collecting letters of resignation at an extraordinary Cabinet meeting, a leaders' meeting of the ruling parties was held with Chief Representative YAMAGUCHI Natsuo of New Komeito. Then Chief Cabinet Secretary MATSUNO Hirokazu announced the list of Cabinet members. Furthermore, the attestation ceremony for newly appointed Ministers of State was held at the Imperial Palace, marking the official inauguration of the Second Kishida Cabinet (Second Reshuffle).

State Ministers and Parliamentary Vice Ministers for the Second Reshuffle were announced in the subsequent days. A complete list of current Cabinet Ministers can be found [here](#).

With the Second Reshuffle, the Japan has a new top diplomat, [Minister for Foreign Affairs KAMIKAWA Yoko](#). Soon after joining Prime Minister KISHIDA's Cabinet, Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA was engaged in Japan's foreign relations including with a visit to the U.S. for to meet with her counterpart U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and to attend the General Assembly of the United Nations with Prime Minister KISHIDA. For more coverage of the U.S. visit and the U.N. General Assembly, see the following section.

[Ms. KAMIKAWA](#) is a member of the House of Representatives (Lower House) of Japan's National Diet, representing the Shizuoka 1st Electoral District (elected seven times) and is in the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP). She has served in multiple Cabinets of four different Prime Ministers since 2005 when she was Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications in the Third KOIZUMI Cabinet.

2. Japan's Foreign Affairs



Prime Minister KISHIDA addressing the U.N. General Assembly
(Photo: Cabinet Office of Japan)

Prime Minister Kishida at the United Nations

On September 19, Prime Minister KISHIDA addressed the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City. Here is an [overview of his statement](#):

Starting off, Prime Minister KISHIDA pointed out that the world is at a historical inflection point, with the Sustainable Development Goals facing mounting obstacles, and aggression against Ukraine continuing. He called for a renewed commitment to strong and effective multilateralism, with the UN at its core, aiming for a world filled with cooperation rather than division and confrontation.

Prime Minister KISHIDA then proposed that the international community can overcome differences in national regimes and values, and steadily advance "human-centered international cooperation", by shedding a new light on "human dignity" as a common language which resonates to all of us. In this regard, Prime Minister Kishida stated that our goal should be a world where vulnerable people can live safely and securely (A World Caring for Human Dignity).

Prime Minister Kishida referred to nuclear disarmament as such international cooperation to protect and strengthen 'human dignity', specifically (1) consolidating the trend of nuclear disarmament, (2) regaining political momentum to a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices (FMCT), (3) promoting the dialogue between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, and (4) establishing the 'Japan Chair for a world without nuclear weapons' with a new 3 billion yen contribution.

The Prime Minister also shared Japan's position on issues such as (1) the safety of women and children in conflict situations, (2) taking balance between the progress of digitalization and human dignity, (3) mitigating the possible impact on people which may arise towards the path to achieve net zero, and (4) preparing for the next infectious disease outbreak. He also

stressed the importance of the rule of law in protecting the rights of vulnerable nations and peoples to live in peace. He also conveyed Japan's position on Security Council reform and other initiatives to achieve a stronger UN.

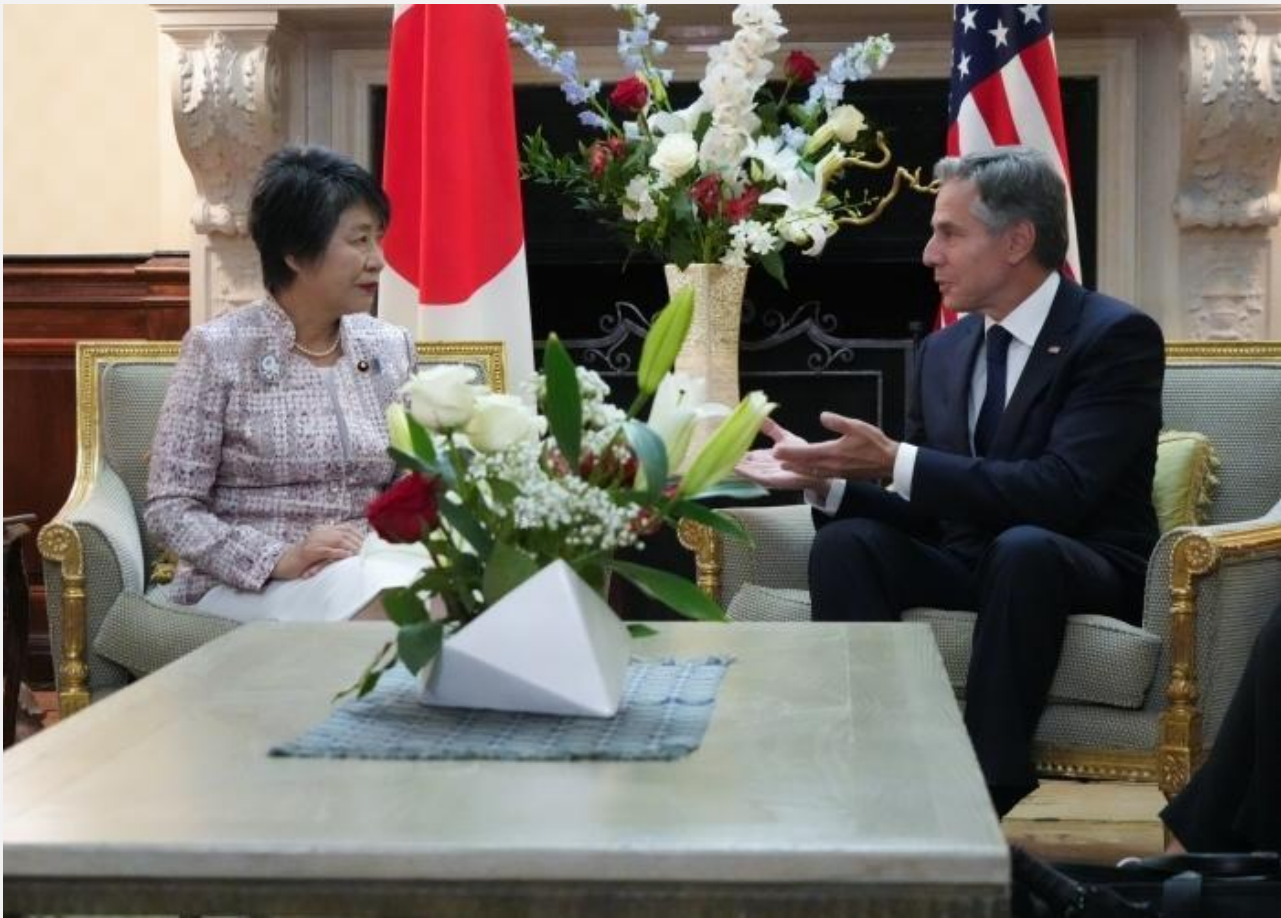
In conclusion, Prime Minister Kishida pointed out that "human dignity" deserves to be a core principle that illuminates the future of the international community, including when envisioning the international goals beyond 2030 in coming years, and expressed his determination to join our forces to strengthen "human dignity" and create a "United Nations for cooperation".

In addition to his address to the General Assembly, Prime Minister KISHIDA participated in other key U.N.-related events during his time in New York, including:

1. [The UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage \(UHC\)](#) (September 21, 2023)
2. [The Security Council High Level Open Debate on “Upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter through effective multilateralism: maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine”](#) (September 20, 2023)
3. [The SDG Summit \(Results\)](#) (September 19, 2023)
4. [The Commemorative High-Level Event on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty \(FMCT\)](#) (September 19, 2023)

On sidelines of the UNGA, Prime Minister KISHIDA also had the opportunity for several bilateral meetings with other heads of state, and to participate in other activities, all outlined [here](#).

Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA in the U.S.



(Photo: MOFA, U.S.-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting)

On September 18th, Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA held a meeting with the Honorable Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State during her visit to the U.S. for the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The [overview](#) of the meeting is as follows.

The two ministers exchanged views on regional issues and concurred on continuing to work closely together in addressing the many issues facing the international society, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine and North Korea's nuclear and

missile development and the abductions issue. There was agreement on the need to work closely in addressing issues related to China, and the two ministers also confirmed the importance of cooperating with China on shared challenges.

Minister KAMIKAWA stated her appreciation for U.S. support and understanding related to Japan’s efforts on ALPS treated water.

Regarding the increasingly severe regional security environment, the two agreed on the importance of continuing discussions for deepening concrete security cooperation to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

Minister Kamikawa also stated that she would like to collaborate closely on the field of Women, Peace and Security, and Secretary Blinken expressed his support.

In addition to the meeting with Secretary of State Blinken, Ms. KAWAKAMI [participated in U.N.-related events, bilateral meetings, and many other important activities during her time in the U.S.](#)

3. Science & Technology



Photo: JAXA, Tanegashima Space Center Yoshinobu Launch Complex

JAXA's XRISM & SLIM Launch

On September 7, two space missions by the [Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency \(JAXA\)](#), the X-ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission (XRISM), and the Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM), were [successfully launched](#) onboard the Mitsubishi Heavy Industry H-IIA Launch Vehicle No. 47 (H-IIA F47) from the Tanegashima Space Center in southern Japan.



JAXA's XRISM

The objective of [XRISM](#) is to reveal the universe in X-rays, exploring new cosmic frontiers in the field of X-ray astronomy. XRISM will expand on advanced technologies from previous JAXA missions, including a state-of-the-art spectrometer with 30 times higher energy resolution than conventional spectrometers.

Utilizing new capabilities and implementing lessons learned from past missions, JAXA is working with NASA, ESA, domestic and international universities, and research institutes to achieve state-of-the-art science with high reliability.

XRISM will be an X-ray observatory available to the international scientific community. XRISM will investigate the structural formation of the universe and the evolution of galaxy clusters, the history of material circulation in the universe, and energy transport and circulation in the universe. In addition, the mission will aim to pioneer new science using ultra high-resolution X-ray spectroscopy.



[SLIM \(Smart Lander for Investigating Moon\)](#), the so-called "Moon Sniper", is a JAXA project aiming to contribute to future lunar and planetary exploration by achieving the following two objectives:

A. Demonstration of high-precision landing technology on the moon

- Aimed landing accuracy of 100m compared to several kilometers to tens of kilometers of conventional lunar landers
- Key technology includes "Vision-based navigation" and "Navigation, guidance and control" Objective

B. Realization of a lightweight lunar and planetary probe system to allow more frequent lunar and planetary exploration missions

- Small, lightweight, and high-performance chemical propulsion system
- Weight reduction of core elements in most spacecrafts such as computers and power supply systems

The U.S.-Japan CCUS/Carbon Recycling Working Group



Photo: METI

On Thursday, August 31, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Energy, the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), hosted the [U.S.-Japan CCUS/Carbon Recycling Working Group](#) in Pittsburgh, United States. The working group is positioned as one of the cooperation areas in the "U.S.-Japan Clean Energy and Energy Security Initiative (CEESI), which was established in May 2022 as the preeminent U.S.-Japan ministerial-level energy dialogue.

In the working group, participants agreed on the need for further expansion of U.S.-Japan collaboration projects and deployment of their technologies to various regions including the Asia-Pacific, and shared future issues and policies expected in the field of CCUS/Carbon Recycling.

4. Japan-U.S. Business/Economic Affairs

Global Startup Acceleration Program

Media Note: The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), with the support of the Government of Japan's Cabinet Office, will launch this year's Global Startup Acceleration Program (GSAP) in September. The acceleration program will focus on supporting the overseas expansion of Japanese startups. [100 eager startups](#) have been carefully selected to participate in the free program.

The [Global Startup Acceleration Program \(GSAP\)](#) – formerly known as the Startup City Acceleration Program – was originally founded in 2020 to help facilitate the growth and expansion of Japanese startup ecosystems. While the program initially targeted 8 specific startup ecosystem hub cities in Japan, last year JETRO and METI decided to expand the coverage nationwide, and thus changed the name of the program to fit its broadened purpose.

This year, some of the partner accelerators will travel to Japan to conduct face-to-face boot camps. In addition, during the U.S.-based portion of the program, participants will be offered interviews with potential business partners, in-person mentoring, tours of local startup ecosystems, and demo days, as well as joint events with startups from around the world. The goal is to help the Japanese startups build strong networks with overseas investors, potential business partners, and other

active startups. Additionally, participants will receive support in formulating business plans and marketing promotion aimed at the overseas market.

Seattle APEC SOM3 Recap

[The Seattle Times](#) provides an insightful article on the APEC meetings held in Seattle from the perspective of digital trade, including between Japan and the U.S.

APEC host cities in the U.S. this year which include the tech hubs Seattle and San Francisco, reflect the importance of digital trade, including the sharing and protection of data and financial transactions between the 21 member economies.

A bilateral trade agreement between Japan and the U.S. was signed in 2019, with provisions on free data flow. This has facilitated bilateral trade and investment including through forums like the Japan-Seattle AI Meetup.

5. Other Topics & Consulate News

Consul General’s Commendation Awarded to Mrs. Mary Mariko Ohno and Mrs. Ritsuko Kashiba



Mrs. Ohno and Consul General Inagaki



Mrs. Kashiba and Consul General Inagaki

On September 12, 2023, Consul General Hisao Inagaki awarded the Consul General's Commendation to Mrs. Mary Mariko Ohno and Mrs. Ritsuko Kashiba in recognition of their achievements in promoting cultural exchange between Japan and the United States. The commendations were presented during the Farewell Reception for Consul General Inagaki and Mrs. Inagaki. More on the [Consulate's](#) homepage.

Leadership change at the consulate

Consul General INAGAKI Hisao completed his service as Consul General of Japan in Seattle on Friday, September 22. The next Consul General of Japan in Seattle, Mr. IYORI Makoto, will arrive in late October. In the interim, Deputy Consul General SUMI Junichi will serve as Acting Consul General of Japan in Seattle.

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

Thank you for reading. Until next month!

Sincerely,
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

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

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