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NATO

Joint Political Declaration between Japan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

13 Apr. 2013

Preamble

The foundation of the relationship between Japan and NATO is in our shared values and the common security challenges we face. The experience we have gained in recent years contributing side-by-side to stability and security in Afghanistan has deepened our mutual understanding and appreciation. In this spirit, we are committed to building on this foundation, through enhanced political dialogue and greater practical cooperation, in order to strengthen our partnership in the areas of our mutual interests.

Principles of cooperation

Japan and NATO are dedicated to the values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We are each determined to safeguard these shared values as well as the freedom and the security of our populations. We reaffirm our adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We acknowledge our shared strategic interests in promoting global peace, stability and prosperity, through pursuing a rules-based international order that promotes peaceful settlements of disputes. The importance we attach to deterring

conflict and preventing crises through multilateral cooperation and dialogue derives from our experiences in managing crises, stabilising post-conflict situations, supporting reconstruction, facilitating humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and ensuring freedom of navigation. We believe that such an approach is indispensable to the security, prosperity and stability of both the Asia-Pacific and the Euro-Atlantic regions, and beyond these regions.

Although the security environments are different in the Euro-Atlantic region and the Asia-Pacific region, and notwithstanding geographic distance between Japan and the member nations of NATO, we believe that in a more globalised and interlinked world, each of these two regions is affected by, and can affect, political and security developments beyond its borders. We are also aware of the need to cooperate in order to face emerging security challenges. Therefore, we affirm our commitment to our close cooperation on common global security challenges for our mutual interests. Such determination is founded on the commonalities in the major policy documents of Japan and NATO including NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept. These commonalities highlight the need to improve the global security environment, the challenges that could affect the global security environment and the need to enhance cooperation between Japan and NATO.

Outlines of future cooperation

With the understanding and recognition mentioned above, Japan welcomes the endorsement by NATO Foreign Ministers at their Berlin meeting in April 2011 of NATO's new Policy For a More Efficient and Flexible Partnership, which offers partners greater consultation on security issues of common concern, and a simpler and more streamlined set of partnership activities.

We welcome the development over recent years of political dialogue and practical cooperation between us, evidenced by a series of high-level exchanges, and Japanese participation in NATO practical activities including the participation from the Ministry of Defence in programmes hosted by NATO. Furthermore, we welcome the Agreement between the Government of Japan and NATO on the Security of Information and Material concluded in 2010 which serves as a basis for closer information exchange and cooperation in the future.

Japan values the role which NATO has been playing in Afghanistan. At the same time, Japan's ongoing major commitment in Afghanistan, such as its financial contribution to NATO's efforts there, provides important support to security and development initiatives in the country. It is greatly valued by NATO Allies as one of the key contributions to the peace efforts undertaken by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan, working under a United Nations Security Council mandate and at the invitation of the Afghan Government. With our sustained support, the Afghan Government and its security forces are on track to assume full security responsibility for their country by the end of 2014, in accordance with the Transition process confirmed by the international community and the Afghan Government. In this context, the Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan and the Tokyo Declaration on Afg-

hanistan represent long-term mutual commitments of the international community and the Afghan Government to ensure peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan from Transition to the Transformation Decade. NATO welcomes the participation of Japan at the ministerial level in its latest Summit, while Japan welcomes NATO's attendance in the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan.

We are committed to the ongoing partnership which will complement the longstanding bilateral ties between Japan and individual NATO member nations. In light of the views aforesaid and of the need to effectively manage risks and threats to our mutual interests, we continue regular high-level political dialogue on mutually-identified security issues of common concern and sustain our consultations on security developments with a view to preventing crises. Reflecting our deepening engagement, Japan designates its Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium as Representative of the Government of Japan to NATO.

In parallel with the strengthening of political dialogue, we are looking forward to enhancing our practical cooperation in a spirit of joint ownership, developing a comprehensive approach to conflict management, mainstreaming a women, peace and security perspective in peace missions, and enhancing cooperation in the area of defence science and technology, and public diplomacy initiatives. We will also continue our ongoing cooperation between the Japan Self Defence Forces and NATO including our information exchange for counter piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia.

We look forward to the finalisation of an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme.

We share the view that emerging security challenges, including cyber-defence, and other issues such as disaster relief, counter terrorism, disarmament, in particular related to small arms and light weapons, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and maritime security, especially counter piracy, are among possible areas for further dialogue and cooperation. We are determined to strengthen our partnership in order to ensure our mutual interests and enhance peace and security in our regions and beyond.