



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

JAPAN

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February 2022

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Japan's Response to Ukraine

Stating Japan's position on Ukraine, Prime Minister Kishida [argued](#) that the "recent invasion of Ukraine by Russia is an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force". He said these developments have shaken the "foundation of the international order" and violates international law. Japan has strongly condemned the developments in Ukraine. Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi [observed](#) that "if something happens on the Ukraine border, that outcome might affect other people's calculations in Asia". In early February, the [Lower House](#) adopted a resolution voicing solidarity with Ukraine.

Japan has implemented a number of steps in response to this development including extending loans at a scale of US\$ 100 million, along with emergency humanitarian assistance of US\$ 100 million. Tokyo has supported EU's decision to remove [seven Russian banks](#) from SWIFT network. They are freezing assets of Russian Central Bank, Promsvyazbank, VTB Bank, Bank Otkritie, Novikombank and Sovcombank. Japan has also frozen assets of Russian President Vladimir Putin and other important government officials. Furthermore, Japan has imposed sanctions on exports to Russian military-related entities, exports of controlled items listed on the internationally agreed list and of other dual-use goods for instance semiconductors. Beyond Russia, Japan has imposed sanctions on designated individuals and entities in Belarus. It includes President Lukashenko.

Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Melbourne

On 11 February, Foreign Ministers of the US, Australia, India and Japan met in Melbourne. The goal was to further drive Quad's determined agenda in pursuit of realising a free and open Indo-Pacific. Beyond the Quad Vaccine Partnership, other issues that are increasingly gaining space in the discussion are climate change, cyber security, space and critical and emerging technologies. Regional security challenges also featured in the agenda including maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR), counter-terrorism, fighting disinformation and cyber security. The joint statement condemned terrorist attacks including 26/11 Mumbai and Pathankot. Quad ministers categorically underscored that Afghan territory must not be used for sheltering and training terrorists. The leaders also stressed on resolving the crisis in Myanmar. They extended support to ASEAN and urged the military regime to immediately implement ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus. In addition to Myanmar, North Korea's "destabilising" missile launches which stand in violation of UNSC resolutions was also on the high-table.

Japan's Foreign Minister Hayashi in his remarks during the [joint press availability](#) did share his concerns on escalating tension in Ukraine, developments in the East and South China Seas, Myanmar and Taiwan. He indicated that Tokyo will continue to undertake a leadership role in building an order anchored on the rule of law. He reiterated that Japan is committed to advancing practical cooperation in shaping a free and open Indo-Pacific. Japan will

host the Quad Leaders' Summit in the first half of this year.

India-Japan strengthens security cooperation

India-Japan annual military exercise, called [Dharma Guardian](#)-2022 is conducted at the Foreign Training Node in Karnataka between 27 February and 10 March. It is a joint training exercise which started in 2018. The emphasis of Dharma Guardian-2022 is on platoon level training in jungle and semi urban/urban terrain operations. The exercise includes raid on terrorist hideaways in semi urban terrain, combat first aid, unarmed combat, in addition to combat firing. During the exercise, participants from the Indian Army and Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces intend to improve interoperability, both in terms of planning and execution of tactical drills in order to deal with likely threats. The aim is to augment tactical skills to fight the menace of terrorism.

US-Japan-South Korea Trilateral Ministerial Meeting

Honolulu hosted State Secretary Antony Blinken, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and their South Korean counterpart Chung Eui-yong for the US-Japan-South Korea Trilateral Ministerial Meeting. In the backdrop of Pyongyang's latest ballistic missile launches, they underscored the importance of this trilateral cooperation in realising denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. They urged Pyongyang to [engage in dialogue](#) and reiterated that they do not have any hostile intention towards North Korea and are open to a meeting without preconditions. For Washington, alliance with both Japan and South Korea are indispensable in upholding regional stability. Besides North Korea,

they also exchanged views on escalation of tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Furthermore, the discussion also underscored the importance of reinforcing a rules-based economic order, advancing economic security and innovation related to critical and emerging technologies.

Russian warships near Japan

Media [reports](#) in Japan suggested that in the first half of February, around 24 Russian warships including destroyers and submarines operated in the Sea of Japan and also the southern part of Sea of Okhotsk. Maritime Self-Defence Force destroyers and a P-3C anti-submarine and surveillance plane identified Russian activities. Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi reportedly called it "unusual" large-scale military exercise. He mentioned that despite rising tensions in Ukraine, Moscow wants to demonstrate that it is equipped to operate in both east and west simultaneously. Defence Ministry observed that it is uncommon for Russia to conduct large-scale military exercises during this time of year.

In a separate development on 25 February, [Russian missile](#) has reportedly hit a Japanese-owned cargo vessel in the Black Sea.

Washington eases tariff on Japanese steel

In February, the US struck a deal with Japan to ease some additional tariffs on limited volumes of steel, imposed during the Trump administration. But this does not include aluminium. It is reported that around [1.25 million metric tons](#) of steel will have exemption as part of a tariff-rate quota system. It is expected to further smoothen Washington's relationships with Japan which suffered during Trump presidency. Meanwhile, Japan has urged the US to ease additional tariffs on its aluminium as well.