

JAPAN

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PM Takaichi visits New York for UNGA

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi visited New York on 22-23 September in order to address the United Nations General Assembly's eighty-first general session. Prior to her address, she held summit meetings with the leaders of [Turkiye](#), [Ukraine](#) and the [United States of America](#), as well as [UN Secretary-General](#) Antonio Guterres. Her meeting with President Donald Trump covered many areas, but focused primarily on 'economic security cooperation to win the technological race and enhance resilience' and continued 'efforts to strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-US Alliance'. Takaichi took the opportunity to convey Japan's stance on issues relating to China in light of Trump's then-upcoming scheduled meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

In her UNGA [address](#) Takaichi explicitly [came out](#) in support of the ICC, though she refrained from criticising actions by the US to 'dismantle' the tribunal. She rebutted Chinese claims that Japan was engaging in a 'neo-militarist' rearming by reaffirming Japan's 'peace-loving' nature and explaining the defensive nature of Japan's security posture. She called on the body to take steps to remove the so-called 'enemy nations' clause in the UN Charter, which, in a holdover from the UN's genesis in the late stages of the Second World War, explicitly names Japan and Germany as 'enemy nations'.

Speaking on the nature of the international order, Takaichi told the assembly that 'stable era after the Cold War' is already a thing of the past,' though current

international crises underline that there has 'never been a time when the United Nations was more important for bringing peace and stability to the world.' She also raised 'concerns about arbitrary export restrictions' and the economic disruptions caused by the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz, called for greater cooperation on AI governance and postulated that 'climate change [counter]measures and economic growth can be achieved together'.

PM Takaichi reshuffles party leadership, Cabinet

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi presided over a major reshuffle of the leadership of the Liberal Democratic Party (of which she is the party leader) on 16 September, followed by a comparatively minor reshuffle of her Cabinet on 17 September. The party reshuffle [left](#) major power brokers such as former Prime Minister Taro Aso and former Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki in place, while promoting former party policy strategist Hiroshi Kajiyama to the general council. Lawmakers tainted by the 2023-24 slush fund and Unification Church scandals, such as Koichi Hagiuda and Yasutoshi Nishimura, were retained in their party posts. Overall, the party reshuffle was read as a move by Takaichi to cement control of her party and ensure party uniformity in light of the significant disgruntlement observed after her plan to temporarily reduce the consumption tax came to light.

Takaichi's Cabinet [reshuffle](#) too [retained](#) 'core' members such as Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Ryosei Akazawa.

However, Internal Affairs Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, who most observers regard as a strong challenger to Takaichi in the upcoming leadership elections to the LDP, was replaced by Hisayuki Fujii. The LDP's new coalition partner, the Japan Innovation Party (also known as *Nippon Ishin no Kai*), obtained a berth, with former Secretary-General Hiroshi Nakatsuka appointed minister with special charge.

Japan-Mongolia Summit Meeting

Mongolian Prime Minister Nyam-Osor Uchral [visited](#) Tokyo on 29 September for a summit meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi. At the outset of their 35-minute-long summit meeting, Prime Minister Takaichi welcomed her Mongolian peer to Japan, and conveyed her country's commitment to cooperate with Mongolia as its 'most important 'Third Neighbour''. Mongolia, which is bordered on all sides by Russia and China, pursues a Third Neighbour policy with countries such as Japan, India and the United States of America, in order to diversify its relations beyond its territorial neighbours.

The two leaders agreed to pursue further cooperation under the Special Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, with security cooperation and AI cooperation ranking foremost. The two leaders also agreed to review areas of cooperation between the countries in the context of the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia next year. The two leaders welcomed progress in ongoing projects in Mongolia, such as the expansion of the Chinggis Khaan International Airport in

Ulaanbataar, which was built with Japanese loans and involves several Japanese companies. Uchral notably [remarked](#) that the airport project 'can be described as a symbol of the friendship and cooperation between our two countries', expressing willingness to 'continue working closely with Japan' as 'one of the most important priorities of Mongolia's foreign policy'.

Japan's elderly population reaches new highs

Two related government statistics released in September brought into sharp relief the pace of demographic aging in Japan. Data [released](#) by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare on 15 September showed that the number of people aged 100 or older reached a record high of 107,677, the 56th consecutive year of increase. A year-on-year increase of 7,914 was recorded, with women making up 87.6 percent of the sample size (6,514, vis-à-vis 1,400 men). In terms of their ratio within Japan's total population, centenarians represented 87.51 Japanese per 100,000 people.

On 20 September, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications added to information on demographic aging when it [put out](#) data estimating that 29.6 percent of the Japanese population was now aged 65 years or older, with a record total of 36.24 million persons in 2026. Women outpaced men by a ratio of almost four to three, with 15.71 million men and 20.54 million women making up the elderly population. The proportion of the elderly is expected to reach 36 percent by 2045 according to projections by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.