

Keynote Address
Friday 10 June 2022
Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan

1. Introduction: Current State of International Affairs

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong,
Dr. John Chipman,
Distinguished guests,

It is my great honor to deliver this keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue, a conference of long history held in high esteem.

I would like to share with all the participants gathered here today how I perceive the current severe situation facing the international community, and look ahead to the future we should all aspire to.

There is no better place than this Shangri-La Dialogue to deepen such discussions. This is because Asia is indeed the center of gravity of the ever-expanding global economy, accounting for nearly 35% of it, and because the region continues to enjoy growth characterized by diversity and inclusiveness, with ASEAN, upholding unity and centrality, at its core.

With the very foundations of the international order being shaken by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the international community now stands at a historic crossroads.

The last time the world faced such a major turning point was some 30 years ago.

That was around the time that the Cold War—a period when the world was divided into two camps and people were afraid that the two sides' cold antagonism might heat up again—came to an end, and the "post-Cold War" era began.

In an address to the Japanese Diet, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, who went before me as both a fellow legislator from Hiroshima and the leader of the Kouchikai, the policy group I belong to, characterized the “post-Cold War era” as "the start of an era of building a new order for global peace.” Squarely addressing the reality that Japan was called upon to play a greater international role in the security arena, Miyazawa, after an extensive debate in Japan, managed to get the Peacekeeping

Operations Cooperation Act passed, and he deployed Japan's Self-Defense Forces to Cambodia based on this Act.

With some 30 years having passed since Miyazawa's time, in what kind of era are we now living?

Since the pandemic broke out, the world has become even more uncertain. Amidst continuing economic disruption, we have come to recognize the importance of reliable and secure supply chains.

Then, as the world was still recovering from the pandemic, Russia's aggression against Ukraine occurred. No country or region in the world can shrug this off as "someone else's problem." It is a situation that shakes the very foundations of the international order, which every country and individual gathered here today should regard as their own affair.

In the South China Sea, are the rules really being honored? Neither international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to which all relevant countries agreed after years of dialogue and efforts, nor the award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal under this convention, is being complied with.

In the East China Sea, where Japan is located, unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in violation of international law are continuing. Japan is taking a firm stand against such attempts.

Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, which is located between these two seas, is also of extreme importance.

Unfortunately, much of activities not respecting people's diversity, free will, and human rights is also taking place in this region.

Furthermore, since the beginning of this year, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles, including a new type of ICBM, with unprecedented frequency and in new ways. As such, North Korea is strengthening its nuclear and missile activities in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, posing a clear and serious challenge to the international community. It is deeply regrettable that the recently proposed Security Council resolution was not adopted as a result of the exercise of the veto. The abductions issue, which is a top priority for my administration, is also a serious violation of human rights.

At the root of all these problems is a situation in which confidence in the universal rules that govern international relations is being shaken. This is the essential and most serious underlying problem.

Can the rules-based international order we have built through hard work, dialogue, and consensus be upheld and the march of peace and prosperity continue? Or will we return to a lawless world where rules are ignored and broken, where unilateral changes to the status quo by force are unchallenged and accepted, and where the strong coerce the weak militarily or economically?

That is the choice we have to make today.

2. Japan's Responsibility and Efforts

Japan is the world's third largest economy and has consistently sought to bring about peace and prosperity in the region since the end of the Second World War, making contributions mainly in the economic field. Accordingly, the responsibility Japan must fulfill is heavy.

With that understanding, what role should Japan play in realizing peace and prosperity, as we face this crossroads in history?

While focusing on universal values that everyone should respect and defend, we must firmly hold aloft the banner of our ideals for the future, such as a world without nuclear weapons, while also responding astutely and decisively as the situation demands. I am committed to "realism diplomacy for a new era" that adheres to this kind of thorough pragmatism.

In the midst of all this, Japan will not lose its humility, flexibility in valuing diversity, or tolerance that respects the individuality of others. However, we will be more proactive than ever in tackling the challenges and crises that face Japan, Asia, and the world.

Taking that perspective, in order to maintain and strengthen the peaceful order in this region, I will advance the "Kishida Vision for Peace" and boost Japan's diplomatic and security role in the region by promoting the following five pillars of initiatives.

The first is maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order; in particular, we will press forward in bringing new developments towards a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

The second is enhancing security. We will advance the fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities in tandem with reinforcing the Japan-U.S. Alliance and strengthening our security cooperation with other like-minded countries.

The third is promoting realistic efforts to bring about a world without nuclear weapons.

The fourth is strengthening the functions of the United Nations, including UN Security Council reform.

The fifth is strengthening international cooperation in new policy areas such as economic security.

2-1 Maintaining and Strengthening the Rules-based Free and Open International Order; Bringing New Developments towards a Free and Open Indo-Pacific

(1) Maintaining and Strengthening the Rules-based Free and Open International Order

In order to bring peace to the international community, it is imperative that we first press forward in maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order.

The rule of law serves as the foundation supporting this kind of international order. Alongside it are the peaceful resolution of disputes, the non-use of force, and respect for sovereignty.

On the sea, it is freedom of navigation, and in the economy, free trade.

Needless to say, respect for human rights is also critical, as is a democratic political system that reflects people's free will and diversity.

These are common and universal principles developed by all people worldwide, who, longing for world peace, have amassed collective wisdom. It goes without saying that the rules and principles I have just mentioned are also consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

Rules must be respected. Even if they become inconvenient, one cannot be allowed to act as if they did not exist, nor can one be allowed to unilaterally change them. If one wants to change them, a new consensus must be made.

(2) Bringing New Developments towards a Free and Open Indo-Pacific

Japan has been promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific with a view to maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order in this region, and the vision we have advocated has come to gain broad support in the international community.

Japan has consistently and vigorously supported the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" (AOIP), which ASEAN has developed as its own basic policy.

Looking around the world, a variety of actors, including the United States, Australia, India, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the European Union, have all laid out visions for the Indo-Pacific.

Sharing a common grand vision, like-minded partners are each taking action on their own initiative, not at the behest of others. This is the very concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which is based on inclusiveness.

In particular, here in the Indo-Pacific region, collaboration with ASEAN is absolutely essential.

After assuming the post of prime minister, I first visited Cambodia, which holds this year's ASEAN Chairmanship. Later, I visited Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand, and today, I am here in Singapore. I have also held meetings with the leaders of ASEAN countries.

The history of Japan and Southeast Asia is underpinned by a long history of goodwill and friendship. After the war, Japan supported the development of Southeast Asia, and Southeast Asian countries extended a helping hand to Japan in its recovery from the unprecedented earthquake and tsunami disaster.

I would like to continue to work hand-in-hand with the leaders of ASEAN countries to deepen discussions on ways to ensure peace and prosperity in the region.

Along with ASEAN countries, Pacific Island Countries are also important partners for the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. We will contribute to strengthening the foundation for their sustainable and resilient economic development, including addressing the existential challenge of climate change. We have provided timely assistance in response to recent changes in the security environment, such as laying an undersea cable in east Micronesia in partnership with

Australia and the U.S., and we will work together with our Pacific Island partners to ensure a rules-based sustainable maritime order.

Cooperation based on a Free and Open Indo-Pacific is cooperation built upon long-standing trust. It is not limited to hardware, such as infrastructure construction, but instead also focuses on supporting the development of local human resources, promoting autonomous and inclusive development, and fostering industry through public and private initiatives as potential investment partners. We have also supported efforts to strengthen ASEAN's connectivity.

It is also necessary for like-minded countries to work together to increase the investment of resources in this region.

In addition to the ASEAN and Pacific Island Countries that I mentioned earlier, Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S., also known as the Quad, is playing an important role in promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. At the recent Quad Leaders' Meeting in Tokyo, we confirmed that the Quad will seek to extend more than US\$50 billion of further infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific over the next five years, which will be essential in promoting productivity and prosperity in this region.

I will further accelerate these efforts. We intend to enhance existing Free and Open Indo-Pacific cooperation by beefing up our diplomatic efforts including by expanding our Official Development Assistance (ODA), while engaging in an optimized, efficient, and strategic use of international cooperation through ODA. I will lay out a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Plan for Peace" by next spring, which will strengthen Japan's efforts to further promote the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, with an emphasis on providing patrol vessels and enhancing maritime law enforcement capabilities, as well as cyber security, digital and green initiatives, and economic security.

In recent years, Japan has particularly been strengthening its maritime security efforts while utilizing advanced technologies such as satellites, artificial intelligence, and unmanned aerial vehicles, and will continue to share its knowledge and experience with other countries. From this perspective, over the next three years, we will make use of technical cooperation, training, and other means conducive to strengthening the maritime law enforcement capabilities of at least 20 countries to promote efforts to train at least 800 maritime security personnel and strengthen their human resources networks. In addition, we will provide at least approximately US\$2 billion in assistance, such as the provision of maritime security equipment including patrol vessels and development of maritime transportation infrastructure, to Indo-Pacific countries over the next three years. We will strengthen our support to Indo-Pacific

countries, utilizing cooperation of Quad and frameworks of international organizations.

In addition, in order to maintain and strengthen the international order based on rules and universal values such as the rule of law, we will strengthen connections and networks among countries and peoples. To this end, we will train more than 1,500 personnel in the fields of the rule of law and governance over the next three years.

2-2. Expanding Japan's Security Role

(1) Fundamentally Reinforcing Japan's Own Defense Capabilities

Second, I would like to talk about the role Japan should play in the realm of security.

In light of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, countries' perceptions on security have drastically changed around the world. Germany has announced that it will shift its security policy and raise its defense budget to 2% of its GDP. Finland and Sweden, Russia's neighbors, have changed their historical policy of neutrality and announced they have applied for NATO membership.

I myself have a strong sense of urgency that "Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow." Japan has also made the decision to shift its policy towards Russia and is united with the international community in efforts to impose strong sanctions against Russia and support Ukraine. As prime minister of the peace-loving nation Japan, I have a responsibility to protect the lives and assets of the Japanese people and to contribute to a peaceful order in the region.

I will seek to build a stable international order through dialogue, not confrontation. At the same time, however, we must be prepared for the emergence of an entity that tramples on the peace and security of other countries by force or threat without honoring the rules.

As a means of preventing such situations and protecting ourselves, we need to enhance our deterrence and response capabilities. This will be absolutely essential if Japan is to learn to survive in the new era and keep speaking out as a standard-bearer of peace.

As the security environment surrounding Japan becomes increasingly severe, we will set out a new National Security Strategy by the end of this year. I am determined to

fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities within the next five years and secure substantial increase of Japan's defense budget needed to effect it.

In doing so, we will not rule out any options, including so-called "counterstrike capabilities," and will realistically consider what is necessary to protect the lives and livelihoods of our people.

To all of you, I stress that Japan's posture as a peace-loving nation will remain unchanged. Our efforts will proceed within the scope of our Constitution and in compliance with international law, in a manner that does not alter the basic roles and missions shared between Japan and the U.S. under our alliance. We will continue to explain our approach to other countries in a transparent and thorough manner.

(2) The Japan-U.S. Alliance and Security Cooperation with Like-minded Countries

No country can ensure its security entirely on its own. That is why I will promote multilayered security cooperation with like-minded countries that share universal values, positioning the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the linchpin.

In my meeting with U.S. President Biden during his recent visit to Japan, he strongly supported my determination regarding Japan's defense capabilities. We were also in full agreement on expanding and deepening Japan-U.S. security and defense cooperation.

We will further reinforce the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, which has become the cornerstone of peace and stability in not only the Indo-Pacific, but also the entire world.

At the same time, we will actively promote security cooperation with Australia and other like-minded countries.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, I am very pleased to begin negotiations with Singapore to conclude a defense equipment and technology transfer agreement. We will continue to promote our efforts to conclude defense equipment and technology transfer agreements with ASEAN countries and materialize specific cooperation projects according to their needs.

Regarding Reciprocal Access Agreements, following the signing of an agreement with Australia in January, we have recently reached an agreement in principle with

the United Kingdom. Japan will work closely with like-minded partners in Europe and Asia towards the conclusion of these agreements.

In addition, in order to contribute to the realization of a free and open maritime order, Japan will dispatch a Maritime Self-Defense Force unit led by the destroyer Izumo to the Indo-Pacific region from June 13 and conduct joint exercises with countries in the region including Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

2-3. Promoting Realistic Efforts towards a World without Nuclear Weapons

Third, we will do our utmost towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

Amid the crisis in Ukraine, the use of nuclear weapons by Russia is being discussed as a real possibility. We must not repeat the scourge of nuclear weapons. The threat of nuclear weapons, let alone the use of them, should never be tolerated. As the prime minister of the only country that has suffered the devastation of atomic bombings, I strongly appeal for this.

The ramifications of Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons are not limited to the threat itself. The threat may have already caused serious damage to the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It may have already made it even more difficult for countries seeking to develop nuclear weapons to abandon their plans. Moves to develop and possess nuclear weapons might even spread further to other countries. These are among the various concerns that have been voiced.

Even before the Ukraine crisis, North Korea frequently and repeatedly launched ballistic missiles, including ICBM-class ones, and we have grave concerns that yet another nuclear test is imminent.

The non-transparent buildup of military capacity, including nuclear arsenals, that can be seen in the vicinity of Japan has become a serious regional security concern.

The return to compliance with the Iran nuclear agreement has not yet been realized.

I must admit that the path to a world without nuclear weapons has become even more challenging. It is, however, precisely because of this extremely difficult situation that I, prime minister with roots in Hiroshima, where an atomic bomb was dropped, have decided to speak out, work tirelessly to reverse the current situation, and contribute to any scale of improvement towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

There is no contradiction between ensuring Japan's national security while squarely facing the reality of the harsh security environment surrounding Japan and at the same time advancing towards the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Based on the relationship of trust we enjoy with the United States, our sole ally, Japan will present a roadmap that will take us from the "reality" to our "ideal" and press forward with realistic nuclear disarmament efforts.

Greater transparency of nuclear forces is what underpins such efforts. It serves as the first step in supporting the irreversibility and verifiability of nuclear disarmament and in building trust among nuclear-weapon States, as well as between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. Mindful of the non-transparent manner in which some countries have been increasing their nuclear capabilities, we call for all nuclear-weapon States to disclose information regarding their nuclear forces.

Together with countries concerned, we will encourage the US and China to engage in a bilateral dialogue on nuclear disarmament and arms control.

In addition, it is also key to bring back discussions on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), which have recently become nearly forgotten.

More than ever before, we need to maintain and strengthen the NPT, the very cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We will do everything to ensure that the NPT Review Conference in August, in which both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States will participate, achieves a meaningful outcome.

With the use of nuclear weapons now becoming a real possibility, reminding the world once again about the scourge and inhumanity of the use of nuclear weapons is vital. As the only country to have suffered the devastation of atomic bombings, Japan will seize every opportunity, including the upcoming "Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons," to convey the stark realities of the atomic bombings to the world.

Furthermore, with a view to further bolstering discussions taken by the "Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament" which I established when I served as foreign minister, and to rekindle the momentum for international nuclear disarmament, we will establish the "International Group of

Eminent Persons for a world without nuclear weapons." This group will enjoy the involvement of incumbent and former political leaders of various countries, and our plan is to hold its first meeting in Hiroshima this year.

With regard to North Korea, working towards the complete denuclearization of North Korea in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions, Japan, the United States, and the Republic of Korea will work closely together in the areas of regional security, deliberations at the United Nations, and diplomatic efforts, and Japan will furthermore act in cooperation with the international community as a whole.

Through each and every concrete effort, we will strive to move step by step towards a world without nuclear weapons.

2-4. Strengthening the Functions of the UN, including UN Security Council Reform

Fourth, no time can be lost in reforming the United Nations, which should serve as the guardian of peace.

Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a body having primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, has engaged in an outrageous act that has shaken the very foundations of the international order, causing the United Nations to face a time of trial.

Japan's stance of attaching importance to the United Nations remains unchanged. Since my time as foreign minister, I have been actively working towards the reform of the United Nations. Now, having assumed office as prime minister, I have taken advantage of summit-level diplomatic opportunities to hold discussions with leaders of various countries on ways to strengthen the functions of the United Nations.

UN reform is not an easy task, given the complexity of the intertwined interests of various countries, but Japan, as a peace-loving nation, will lead discussions to strengthen the functions of the United Nations, including the reform of the UN Security Council. Japan will join the UN Security Council starting next year, and in the Security Council too we will work tirelessly. At the same time, we will also seek a way forward for global governance that responds to the new challenges of the international community.

2-5. International Cooperation in New Policy Areas such as Economic Security

Finally, I would like to discuss international cooperation in new policy areas such as economic security.

In the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, the vulnerabilities of the global supply chain have come to the fore. Exerting unjustifiable economic pressure on other countries to impose unilateral claims or intentionally disseminating disinformation can also never be accepted.

The aggression against Ukraine has made us even more aware of the clear and urgent need to make our own economy more resilient, as it directly affects our everyday lives.

Taking into account that the economy is directly linked to national security and that areas such as cyber security and digitalization are becoming increasingly important for national security, we will promote economic security initiatives to ensure the security of the nation and its people from an economic perspective.

In Japan, to address this challenge, the Economic Security Promotion Legislation was enacted under my leadership.

However, Japan cannot go at this alone; international cooperation is essential, including within frameworks of like-minded countries such as the G7.

Japan and ASEAN have long been building multilayered supply chains. It is crucial that our public and private sectors continue to invest in maintaining and strengthening these supply chains.

To this end, Japan will support more than 100 supply chain resilience projects over the next five years.

In addition, once a country's status in the international community, including its economic development, has been elevated, that country should not only enjoy the benefits, but more importantly, it should also fulfill the responsibilities and obligations commensurate with that status. Economic cooperation and financing must be characterized by transparency and they should lead to the long-term welfare of the people of the recipient country.

We will continue to promote economic cooperation based on the idea of human security, respecting the ownership of each country and the interests of its nationals.

To achieve prosperity in these difficult times, ASEAN, and the Indo-Pacific region, must remain the growth engine of the world. Japan will contribute to building resilient nations that can overcome any great or difficult challenges they may face.

3. Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen,

I ask you to contemplate our future.

The vision I have shared with you today, the vision of a rules-based free and open international order, is one in which we all work together. We will elevate a Free and Open Indo-Pacific to the next stage.

I firmly believe that if we do so, a future of peace and prosperity will surely await us— a bright and glorious world full of hope, where there is trust and empathy shared amongst us.

Thank you very much.