PM KISHIDA'S TOUR LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR SUCCESSFUL G7 SUMMIT

Assuming this year's G7 Presidency, Japan will host the Summit in Hiroshima from May 19 to 21. To confirm cooperation for the success of the Summit, and to confirm further collaboration between like-minded countries by deepening security cooperation with these countries, Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio visited five of them in January. At the Summit, Japan will lead the discussion as chair and demonstrate to the world the G7's strong determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law.

Ahead of the G7 Summit to be held in Hiroshima in May, Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio visited five countries—France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States—from January 9 to 15. The prime minister spoke with the head of state of each country and held discussions concerning a wide range of topics, such as regional and international affairs, including Ukraine, as well as bilateral relations. The prime minister also explained Japan's way of thinking under the G7 Presidency and received the understanding and support of his fellow heads of state. At the end of his tour, Prime Minister Kishida held a press conference, saying of the outcome of the trip, “we succeeded in reconfirming that the G7 will unite and act in cooperation so as to fully defend the international order, which is based on the rule of law.”

The first stop on the tour was France, where Prime Minister Kishida met with French President Emmanuel Macron. The two leaders concurred that the next Japan-France “2+2” meeting should be held in the first half of this year. They also exchanged views on Pacific Island countries and confirmed that cooperation between Japan and France would be further promoted, based at the new consular office of Japan in Nouméa in New Caledonia that opened in January. The two leaders furthermore welcomed the Japan-France Comprehensive Maritime Dialogue, held on February 2.

In Italy, Prime Minister Kishida met with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. The two leaders agreed to elevate the relationship between Japan and Italy to that of “strategic partners” based on deepening bilateral cooperation, including the trilateral joint development of next-generation fighter jets among Japan, Italy, and the United States—from January 9 to 15. The prime minister also explained Japan's way of thinking under the G7 Presidency and received the understanding and support of his fellow heads of state. At the end of his tour, Prime Minister Kishida held a press conference, saying of the outcome of the trip, “we succeeded in reconfirming that the G7 will unite and act in cooperation so as to fully defend the international order, which is based on the rule of law.”

The next stop of the tour was the United Kingdom, where Prime Minister Kishida met with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The two leaders signed the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement, a new platform for defense cooperation between the two countries. The agreement is expected to further promote bilateral security and defense cooperation.

In Canada, in a dialog with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his intention to work together toward the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) through the steady implementation of the “Japan-Canada Action Plan contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region,” which was announced last October.

At the Japan-U.S. summit meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and U.S. President Joe Biden, the two leaders confirmed that the national security strategies of both countries were aligned with each other, renewed their determination to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and issued a joint statement by the two countries. The two leaders will also strengthen Japan-U.S. security cooperation across a broader range of areas extending to the economy and technology, such as the strengthening of supply chain resilience and cooperation in protecting critical technologies such as semiconductors.

Since this year’s Summit will be hosted by the sole Asian G7 member, Japan intends to discuss Indo-Pacific regional affairs in depth and reaffirm further cooperation toward the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.”

The most prominent issue ahead of the G7 Hiroshima Summit is Russia's aggression against Ukraine. At the Hiroshima Summit, member states will continue to demonstrate their commitment to peace.