

JAPAN AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION: STRIDING FORWARD TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP FOR 2050

The 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) was held in Tokyo from July 16 to 18, 2024. To further strengthen the PALM's robust and enduring partnership, leaders and representatives of Japan and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) members, that is, 16 countries and 2 regions, committed to work in close collaboration on seven priority areas of cooperation.

The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) is a summit-level meeting held every three years since its inception in 1997. Its objectives are to contribute to the region's stability and prosperity and strengthen the partnership between Japan and Pacific Island countries through candid discussions in addressing common challenges. At this

10th commemorative summit—co-chaired by Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio and Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands—the leaders and representatives of Japan and the PIF (hereinafter referred to as “Leaders”) firstly reaffirmed the pioneering role that the PALM process has played in promoting friendly and cooperative relations

between Japan and the Pacific Islands region, and the commitment to strengthening this even more. With that foundation, Leaders set seven priority areas of cooperation, aligned with thematic areas articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent which was issued by PIF in 2022 as a common strategy for the future of Pacific Island countries.

In the area of “Political

Leadership and Regionalism,” Leaders welcomed Japan’s respect for regional leadership and regionally established mechanisms, including the Pacific region’s determination to act in unity and solidarity in its engagement and advocacy with partners.

As for “People-Centered Development,” while expressing their commitment to addressing health challenges and their determination to promote education and human resource development, Leaders underlined the importance of expansion of people-to-people exchanges between Japan and the PIF members, in particular among the youth who are leaders in the future.

Regarding “Peace and Security,” Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan—upholding a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)—would cooperate with Pacific Island countries and regions that share common values and principles, work together to maintain and strengthen international order based on the rule of law, and contribute to peace and stability in the region, while considering the perspective of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Leaders also opposed any war of aggression and strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by the threat or use of force or coercion.

For “Resources and Economic Development,” Leaders welcomed the commitment to regional cooperation and integration through approaches such as



Leaders and representatives from 19 countries and regions attended PALM10: Japan, 14 Pacific Island countries, 2 French territories, Australia, New Zealand, and the secretary general of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

promoting local industries, and enhancing financial integrity and inclusion, including efforts to address the issue of correspondent banking matters. In addition, Leaders further reaffirmed their determination to accelerate efforts to promote business matching and support peer-to-peer learning activities in the private sector.

With regard to “Climate Change and Disasters,” Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan fully shared the sense of crisis over climate change—“the single greatest existential threat”—for the Pacific countries region and announced the Pacific Climate Resilience Initiative, an all-Japan initiative which consists of three pillars: (1) strengthening disaster risk reduction and response capabilities, (2) promoting clean energy, and (3) supporting Pacific-led efforts. PIF leaders welcomed this effort.

For “Ocean and Environment,” Leaders committed to working together to enhance cooperation across various priority areas such as monitoring and sustainable use of fisheries and marine resources, capacity building and provision of equipment in the field of maritime security and safety, waste management and pollution reduction, and combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated

(IUU) fishing.

Regarding “Technology and Connectivity,” Leaders welcomed their continued cooperation in developing quality infrastructure and Japan’s commitment to support cybersecurity capacity building in the Pacific region. Leaders also concurred on the importance of countering the spread of disinformation.

As the outcome of the discussions, Leaders adopted the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) Leaders’ Declaration and the 10th Pacific Islands Meeting (PALM10) Joint Action Plan. It was reaffirmed that Japan and Pacific Island countries and regions would continue to “stride forward together” for the realization of a common future vision.



Food stalls (photo) and a mikoshi portable shrine were exhibited at the banquet held on July 17, demonstrating a traditional Japanese summer festival, which embodies the spirit of interpersonal interactions.



At the closing session on July 18, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated Japan’s determination to further strengthen “kizuna” (bonds) between Japan and Pacific Island countries and regions.

