



US-Japan Alliance Digest

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Image Source: [Japan Times](#)

Headlines:

- Japan mostly in step with US, Europe on Russia sanctions
- “Japan-US Partnership on Trade” Convenes First Meeting
- US-Japan Begin Planning for Economic 2+2 Launch
- US Army Radar Site in Japan Finally Completes Construction Plan

Details:

- Japan has been working swiftly with the international community to levy **punitive measures** against Russia and the Putin regime since its invasion of Ukraine began on February 24. Japan has issued \$200 million in [loans](#) and assistance to Ukraine, frozen the assets of Russian government officials, helped isolate the Russian government from the **SWIFT banking system**, levied sanctions on Belarus, and refused to recognize Donetsk and Luhansk independence. Kishida has [said](#) “the Russian attack shakes the foundation of international order that never tolerates unilateral change to the status quo by force, and we strongly condemn Russia.” Polls show that 82% of Japanese support the sanctions on Russia, although industry minister Hagiuda on March 8 expressed caution on the question of [withdrawing](#) from the Sakhalin natural gas joint venture with Gazprom, worried that China will take over Japan’s 22.5% share. Japan **relaxed its interpretation** of guidelines to transfer defense equipment to Ukraine, sending [bullet-proof vests](#) and other equipment on March 8. US Assistant Secretaries of State and Defense, Krittenbrink and Ratner, are in Tokyo from March 9 to coordinate further [measures](#) against Russia with counterparts Ichikawa and Masuda.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; and Office of the United States Trade Representative held their [first meeting](#) on March 1 of the **Japan-US Partnership on Trade**. Director General Ono from MOFA’s Economic Affairs Bureau, Director General Matsuo from METI’s Trade Policy Bureau, and Assistant USTR Michael Beeman attended the meeting. The group discussed regional trade practices, environment, labor, digital and trade facilitation, as well as bilateral trade issues.
- Vice Minister Hirose of Japan’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry visited Washington from March 8 to meet with counterparts at State and Commerce departments to **prepare for the start of Economic 2+2 meetings** this spring or summer. The Economic 2+2 was agreed to at a Biden-Kishida [summit](#) in January, but its exact format, agenda, and timing still need to be determined. Analysts expect this forum to focus on economic security issues, supply chain resiliency, support for innovation, and possibly some regional issues connected to the US-proposed Indo-Pacific Economic Framework.
- The US Army’s **Kyogamisaki Communication Site** on the Japan Sea coast northwest of Kyoto was finally [completed](#) on March 1, after 9 years of intermittent construction. This AN/TPY-2 Radar installation in Japan [hosts](#) the 14th Missile Defense Battery radar unit that gathers missile track data for the alliance. The radar has been [operational](#) since late 2014, but the just-completed facilities better accommodate Army teams that work 24-hour shifts.