



US-Japan Alliance Digest

Vol: 1.9

Date: May 13, 2022



Image Source: [The Jiji Press Ltd](#)

Headlines:

- Austin and Kishi discuss defense strategy and Ukraine implications for Asia
- In-person diplomacy in full swing as Diet Members/Ministers visit Washington
- First Vice-ministerial “Economic 2+2” meeting held in Washington
- Next Alliance Initiative hosts dialogue on countering economic coercion
- Honoring the life and contributions of Toshihiro Nakayama

Details:

- **US Defense Secretary Austin met Japanese Defense Minister Kishi** in Washington on May 4 to promote alignment of their national defense strategies and consider the security implications of recent actions by Russia, China, and North Korea. They also discussed ways to deepen cooperation with other like-minded partners, including Australia, South Korea, and India. Kishi [explained](#) Japan's plan to develop its next-generation fighter jet with UK and US input, and he visited US Cyber Command and US Missile Defense Agency.
- Several other **Japanese Cabinet Ministers, Diet Members, and top policy makers took advantage of more relaxed Covid rules to visit Washington** during Japan's Golden Week holiday in the first week of May. Two Diet delegations led by the LDP's [Amari](#) and [Kono](#) engaged with US legislative counterparts and government officials, along with visits by METI Minister [Hagiuda](#) (meeting Commerce Secretary Raimondo and Energy Secretary [Granholm](#)), National Security Advisor [Akiba](#) (meeting National Security Advisor Sullivan and Secretary of State [Blinken](#)), and Economic Security Minister [Kobayashi](#). Kobayashi met NASA administrator Nelson and acting Science Advisor to the President Collins, among others.
- The inaugural vice-ministerial [meeting](#) of the **US-Japan Economic Policy Consultative Committee** (EPCC, or Economic “2+2”) occurred in Washington on May 6. Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Fernandez joined Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Lago in hosting Japanese Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki and METI Vice Minister for International Affairs Hirose. They began [preparing](#) to collaborate more closely on supply chain resilience, coordination on export controls, countering economic coercion, and competing in the digital economy. A ministerial EPCC is being [planned](#) for later in 2022.
- On May 3 the [US-Japan NEXT Alliance Initiative](#) convened a bilateral dialogue on an emerging area of alliance interest: **countering economic coercion measures** applied by China against third countries. The discussion was attended by about two dozen high-ranking parliamentarians of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, Japanese scholars, US government officials, US Congressional staff members, and US scholars. The group considered ways in which the US and Japan could help support third countries that were being targeted by Chinese economic coercion tactics and what kinds of policy tools might be helpful in this regard. A not-for-attribution summary of the dialogue will be published on Sasakawa USA's website.
- *Alliance Digest* would like to take a moment to **honor the innumerable contributions** to US-Japan friendship and mutual understanding that Professor [Toshihiro Nakayama](#) made throughout his professional life. Nakayama died suddenly and far too soon on May 1, and the alliance must now carry on without one of Japan's finest scholars of American politics and society. Sasakawa Peace Foundation was proud to sponsor Nakayama's time at the [Wilson Center](#) as Japan Fellow in 2018-2019. As US author Sheila Smith [noted](#) eloquently in a memorial essay, the US-Japan community is confronting a profound loss of this “renowned scholar, gifted public intellectual and gracious colleague.”

“US-Japan Alliance Digest” is a bi-weekly summary of bilateral and related developments compiled by [Sasakawa USA's](#) “US-Japan [NEXT Alliance Initiative](#).” To receive “Alliance Digest” via email, contact egulum@spfusa.org