



US-Japan Alliance Digest

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Headlines:

- Deputy Secretary of State Sherman in Tokyo for bilat/trilat talks
- 9th annual US-Japan Mt. Fuji Dialogue convenes in Tokyo
- Japan to purchase SM-6 missiles for air and missile defense
- US and Japan agree to jointly advance air taxi certifications
- Naha City elects LDP-backed mayor, agrees on military port relocation

Details:

- **US Deputy Secretary of State Sherman arrived in Tokyo** on October 24 to meet her Japanese and South Korean counterparts (vice ministers Mori and Cho) to [discuss](#) regional security and trilateral cooperation. Japan's foreign minister Hayashi [joined](#) the meeting. The allies discussed North Korea's recent provocations, China, Taiwan, and Russia's war in Ukraine, among other topics. Sherman [condemned](#) North Korea's destabilizing actions and [reaffirmed](#) America's commitment to safeguard its allies using the "full range of US defense capabilities...including nuclear, conventional and missile defense capabilities." The three warned North Korea of an "unparalleled" response to a new nuclear test. This was the fourth vice-ministerial trilateral during the Biden era. During the trip, Sherman also convened a hybrid discussion with Japanese and Korean university students on the importance of women's empowerment.
- The 9th annual US-Japan [Mt Fuji Dialogue convened in Tokyo](#) on October 22, featuring a series of expert panel discussions and policy maker presentations on pressing security and economic challenges facing the alliance. Japan Foreign Minister Hayashi and US Ambassador Emanuel were among featured speakers that included well over 100 current and former government officials, Diet members, business leaders, and scholars. During his [speech](#) on alliance defense cooperation, Assistant Secretary of Defense Ratner "welcomed Japan's commitment to increase defense spending" and described joint efforts to support "alliance modernization," which includes enhancing interoperability and sharing certain facilities.
- Japan's air and missile defense capabilities should get a boost following the US State Department's October 20 approval of **Japan's plan to [purchase up to 32 SM-6 interceptor missiles](#)**. The \$450 million sale, pending congressional approval, will make Japan the only country other than the US to [field](#) the weapon. The missile system has three [modes](#) including ballistic missile defense capabilities and can be deployed by Japan's Atago-class destroyers.
- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB), [agreed](#) on October 18 to collaborate on **advancing air mobility certification and operations**. The announcement follows partnerships with other countries such as Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand to synchronize certification plans for air taxis known as electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. Acting FAA chief Nolen [said](#) the FAA and JCAB have a long history of collaboration and that working with international partners is critical for the advancement of these emerging technologies. Earlier this month, Delta Air Lines [invested](#) \$60 million in California based air taxi startup [Joby Aviation](#) which received FAA Air Carrier Certification in May and formally applied for Japan certification on October 18.
- LDP-backed mayoral candidate **Chinen [won the October 23 Naha City mayoral election](#)** in Okinawa, defeating the son of former Okinawa governor Onaga. Chinen focused his [campaign](#) on stimulating the local economy, although the future of US base realignment from the Naha area is an important political backdrop. Separately, the city governments of Naha and Urasoe [agreed](#) on October 25 that an area of reclaimed land off the coast of Urasoe in Okinawa would become the new site of a relocated US military port from Naha. The agreement [concludes](#) a process that began in 1974. Governor Tamaki did not object and [said](#) the port relocation would contribute to Okinawa's economy.