



# US-Japan Alliance Digest

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## Headlines:

- US-Japan intelligence center opens as alliance integrates further
- Inaugural Japan-US Energy Security Dialogue meets in Tokyo
- Kagoshima governor approves Mage island for military drills
- New Japanese EV auto battery plant to bring jobs to South Carolina
- Plan to relocate US Marines from Okinawa to Guam moves ahead

## Details:

- On November 29, US and Japanese military leaders co-hosted a ribbon cutting [ceremony](#) for the opening of the **US-Japan Bilateral Intelligence Analysis Cell** (BIAC) at Yokota Air Base. The center will increase real-time information sharing capabilities between the Self Defense-Forces (SDF) and the US military to support security cooperation. The move reflects a trend toward more jointness within and among alliance forces to expand defense capacity. Japan is planning to [reorganize](#) the SDF under a permanent joint headquarters, for example, according to a new **National Defense Strategy** [scheduled](#) for release on December 16. Also, the allies conducted their “largest and most complex forward US-Japan command post exercise to date,” during the first two weeks of December at [Yama Sakura \(YS\) 83](#). Japan’s [expected](#) pursuit of counter-strike capability will be another driver of this “security integration” trend.
- Foreign Affairs Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs Namazu [met](#) US Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Security Pyatt in Japan for the [launch](#) of the **US-Japan Energy Security Dialogue** on December 1-2. The pair [discussed](#) energy security, energy transition, and energy access and assistance to Ukraine to alleviate disruption caused by Russia’s invasion. Pyatt also [met](#) Deputy Commissioner for International Policy on Carbon Neutrality Minami. The meetings built upon the action plan set by the Economic 2+2 earlier this year. Both officials [pledged](#) to continue decarbonizing their economies and assisting Indo-Pacific nations with clean affordable energy. In other **Econ 2+2 follow-up** news, on December 1 the Federal Register [announced](#) a request for public comment on US-Japan export control cooperation to inform the work of the Japan-US Commercial and Industrial Partnership’s Export Control Working Group.
- Kagoshima Prefecture Governor Shiota [approved](#) plans for building a **military training airfield on the uninhabited island of Mage** to accommodate US drills that currently take place on Iwoto. The approval of the project comes after Shiota’s recognition of the “increasingly severe security environment” around Japan, feeling that the prefecture had “no choice but” to accept the plan after many years. The project was long [hindered](#) for ecological reasons. The US military had conducted takeoff and landing practices at its Atsugi base near Tokyo, but the training site was moved to Iwoto due to noise complaints. Then the US aircraft moved to Iwakuni, and Mage is much closer compared to Iwoto.
- Japanese battery manufacturer Envision AESC will [open](#) a **new \$810 million facility in South Carolina**. The investment will create 1,170 jobs at a new 1.5 million square foot plant. The factory will produce cutting edge battery cells to be used in next generation vehicles at BMW’s group plant in nearby Spartanburg. At a county press conference on December 6, AESC Group CEO Matsumoto [said](#) the move strengthens commitment to grow the electrification supply chain and create good jobs in the United States. Construction of the plant will begin in the summer of 2023.
- A plan to [relocate](#) **around 4,000 Okinawa-based US Marines is moving forward**, according to US military officials. The move to Guam is contingent upon the construction of Camp Blaz, which was delayed by the pandemic but will now be ready to receive personnel in 2024. The nearly \$12 million funding for the project is provided [jointly](#) by the US and Japan governments under a 2006 force realignment plan to redistribute US forces off Okinawa to reduce the island’s hosting burden.