



# US-Japan Alliance Digest

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Image Source: [US Energy Association](#)

## Headlines:

- Japan-US Mekong Power Partnership (JUMPP) action plan launched
- US-Japan-Korea active trilaterally as North Korea renews weapons tests
- US Congress raises “monopoly” concerns about Sony gaming in Japan
- China calls on Japan to avoid following US ‘encirclement’ plan
- US and Japan hold eighth dialogue on space cooperation

## Details:

- Japan, US, and a group of Southeast Asian countries released a new action [plan](#) on April 6 during a [meeting](#) in Vientiane. The plan is an energy initiative launched by Japan and the US to maintain and promote a more sustainable energy sector and help develop infrastructure. The Japan-US-Mekong Power Partnership [established](#) in 2019 supports the Mekong region’s energy security as energy demand grows with the regions rapid economic development. The partnership also seeks to [develop](#) regional capacity for clean energy production, greater regional power trade, decarbonization, and resilience. The new plan includes various technical assistance [programs](#), organizes “peer-to-peer” engagements, and supports capacity building in the field and at a regulatory level.
- US, South Korean, and Japanese maritime forces [held](#) two days of joint anti-submarine exercises near Jeju island on April 3. The focus was on detection, tracking, and destruction of underwater threats, in light of North Korea’s stated development of underwater nuclear attack drones called [Haeil-2](#). Separately, the three nations [held](#) deputy minister-level Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT) April 14 to boost joint deterrence. Also, the three countries’ special representatives for North Korea met in Seoul on April 7, and their [statement](#) condemned the North’s repeated missile launches, called for stricter sanctions enforcement including limiting illegal North Korean workers abroad, and endorsed South Korea’s diplomatic initiative with the North. Meanwhile, an April 13 North Korean missile test [triggered](#) alerts in Japan.
- Senator Cantwell (D-Wash) criticized Sony Interactive Entertainment’s efforts to dominate the high-end video game market in Japan in a hearing on March 23. She [said](#) that Japan’s Fair-Trade Commission failed to investigate anti-competitive conduct by Sony that involved exclusive deals and payments to game publishers. A bipartisan group of 11 members of Congress [signed](#) a letter of concern to US Trade Representative Tai and Commerce Secretary Raimondo, stating that Sony’s efforts “could violate the spirit of the US-Japan Digital Trade Agreement.” Ms. Tai [said](#) that the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) could address these kinds of competition or digital issues.
- Chinese Foreign Minister Qin called on Japan Foreign Minister Hayashi to avoid US efforts to encircle China, at an April 2 [meeting](#) in Beijing. China’s [concern](#) is with US efforts to coordinate a restriction of shipments of semiconductor manufacturing equipment. Mr. Hayashi visited during a string of several diplomatic engagements by Beijing to show the scale of its international engagement post COVID. Mr. Qin also requested Japan boost investment to help rebuild its COVID-wrecked economy, while Hayashi [pressed](#) for the release of a detained Japanese national in China.
- The Eighth Meeting of the Japan-US Comprehensive Dialogue on Space was [held](#) in Tokyo on March 24. The discussion covered national security concerns, commercial use by the private sector, and mutual science and innovation goals. Bilateral [successes](#) highlighted included the Artemis program, the Gateway lunar orbit, and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) activities. Both sides reaffirmed commitment to space cooperation and strengthening bilateral policies.

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