US-Japan Alliance Digest

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Image Source: Axios

Headlines:

- US-Japan-Korea bolster trilat bonds in historic Camp David summit
- US and Japan to co-develop Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI)
- Notable defense/foreign policy personnel changes (*continued*)
- US Space Force to establish subordinate command in Japan
- Japan provides $2 million in humanitarian relief for Maui wildfires

Details:

- US President Biden, Japan Prime Minister Kishida, and South Korean President Yoon met in the **first standalone trilateral summit** at Camp David in Maryland on August 18. The trio agreed to strengthen and expand trilateral cooperation built around a new "commitment to consult" in order to "coordinate our responses to regional challenges, provocations, and threats affecting our collective interests and security." This will prompt not only more frequent and higher-level dialogues between the foreign and defense ministries to increase information sharing, military interoperability, and diplomatic coordination, but also collaborative work on economic security, technology development, regional development financing, and other areas. The leaders declared a new era in their partnership "at a hinge point of history" focused on both advancing mutual interests and promoting regional peace and prosperity. The foundation for this partnership is a set of principles they articulated including a free and open Indo-Pacific, opposing unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, support for the UN Charter, respect for human rights, addressing climate change, a free and peaceful unified Korean Peninsula, among other principles.
- The Department of Defense (DOD) announced August 18 it will work with Japan to develop a **Glide Phase Interceptor** to counter hypersonic missiles as part of the 2023 US-Japan bilateral MOU for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation Projects. DOD spokesperson Lt. Col. Martin Meiners said "Japan and the US are working to negotiate and finalize a formal project arrangement sometime next year." Japan's Defense Ministry said April is the target for starting the joint project. Hypersonic weapons, like ones in development by China and Russia, can elude traditional air defense technologies. Separately, the US State Dept approved a potential sale of JASSM-ER Air-to-Surface missiles to Japan.
- Continuing our update of **alliance personnel changes**: At Japan's Defense ministry, former Defense Policy Bureau Director General Kazuo Masuda replaced Atsuo Suzuki as vice defense minister this summer, and Koji Kano moved over from the Cabinet Secretariat to take Masuda's job. Masaki Fukasawa is new chief of the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency, and Kiyoshi Serizawa replaced Masami Oka as vice minister of defense for international affairs. At the Foreign Ministry, Kosuke Amiya replaced Shuji Maeda as Director of the Japan-US Security Treaty Division. In the US, Deputy Asst Secretary of State Mark Lambert will shift from his Japan and Korea portfolios to China and Taiwan.
- A US Space Force officer said on August 30 that his service will establish a **new subordinate component command in Japan** "shortly" to coordinate relevant space operations and services. This would follow the activation of Space Forces Korea last December under Space Forces Indo-Pacific, which was created in Hawaii in November 2022.
- Japan announced it would provide two million dollars in **aid for Hawaiian wildfire victims** on August 16. The aid will be extended through the American Red Cross and Japan Platform (JPF), a Tokyo based non-profit. Foreign Minister Hayashi vowed Tokyo's continued support toward the earliest possible recovery of the devastated areas.

"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