



US-Japan Alliance Digest

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Headlines:

- Defense chiefs Austin, Kihara meet to discuss next alliance initiatives
- US & Japan participate in Indo-Pacific Economic Framework meeting
- US-Japan business leaders call on govts to invest in supply chain
- US-Japan-Korea trilateral maritime interdiction exercises resume
- New US and Japanese businesses investment for chips and green tech

Details:

- **Defense Minister Kihara met Secretary of Defense Austin** at the Pentagon on October 4. The pair [reaffirmed](#) their strategic alignment and shared goals to optimize force posture, bolster [deterrence](#), and modernize roles and missions. Following their meeting, Kihara [announced](#) Japan would start purchasing 400 US Tomahawk missiles in FY2025, a year earlier than scheduled, to bolster deterrence via counterstrike capabilities. Meanwhile, Okinawa governor Tamaki [rejected](#) Tokyo's order to endorse design modifications that would facilitate the Futenma US Marine base relocation to Henoko, prompting what could be a final round of [legal](#) action before Japan's Minister of Land, Transport, Infrastructure and Tourism obtains the authority to approve the modifications in place of Governor Tamaki.
- US Trade Representative Katherine Tai [hosted](#) a **virtual Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) ministerial** on October 5. Japan was represented by Yasutoshi Nishimura, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, and Kiyoto Tsuji, State Minister for Foreign Affairs who called for achievement of a well-balanced and ambitious outcome while considering interests and concerns of each partner. Separately, Foreign Minister Kamikawa spoke with USTR Tai in a [teleconference](#) on October 5 about trade issues, economic security, and Japan's role as a leader in IPEF. The pair also discussed WTO reform and their intention to work closely at the G7 trade ministers meeting in Osaka this month.
- The **60th annual US-Japan Business Conference** [concluded](#) in Tokyo Oct 4. In a [joint statement](#), business leaders called on their governments to strengthen supply chains for critical goods and technologies. They also encouraged utilization of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), economic engagement of southeast Asian nations, and promotion of the G7 Hiroshima Artificial Intelligence Process. Co-Chair of the conference and President and CEO of NTT Jun Sawada [said](#) that a private sector version of the QUAD grouping (US, Japan, Australia, India) also held talks for the first time.
- Seven vessels of the US, Japan and South Korea [engaged](#) in a **joint maritime exercise off of Jeju Island** on October 10. The two-day anti-submarine and electronic warfare training focused on strengthening deterrence and [response](#) capabilities of the three allied nations to active regional threats. While the three navies [conducted](#) a joint trilateral training earlier this year, this was the [first](#) anti-piracy/maritime interdiction drill in more than six years.
- Japanese firms Mitsubishi Electric and auto parts supplier Denso [announced](#) the **acquisition of 25% of US materials maker** Coherent's silicon carbide (SiC) business on Oct 10. Mitsubishi plans to increase SiC production through investment, a new factory in Kumamoto Prefecture, and closer collaboration with Coherent. The value of the high-performance material used for semiconductors is forecast to quadruple by 2030. Separately, BlackRock CEO Larry Fink said in an [interview](#) on Oct 6, that he looks to expand operations in Tokyo, "we see some wonderful opportunities to co-invest with some major Japanese companies as they move from brown to green." He noted the country's great potential in decarbonization tech, hydrogen power, robotics, artificial intelligence, and youth interest in startups.

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