

OSCE ASIAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION GROUP MEETING
“Perspectives on Enhancing Stability and Prosperity
in the Indo-Pacific and Trans-regional Cooperation”

17 November 2023

Statement of Japan

Dear Mr. Chairperson, Moderator, and Distinguished Speakers,

Good morning. Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Hałaciński, Chair of the Asian Partners for Cooperation Group, and the Republic of Korea for co-organizing this meeting, which will be the last APCG meeting for this year.

Today, we stand at a turning point in history. We remain steadfast in upholding and strengthening the free and open international order based on the rule of law and the values that the international community has built through long and tireless efforts.

Yet, that international order is currently at serious risk. Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, which has been continuing for more than 630 days, and the escalating tensions in the Gaza strip, resulting from the Hamas terrorist attack, are just a few examples of crises which put that order under threat.

Japan, holding the Presidency of the G7, has taken leadership in its coordinated efforts to tackle the issue, including in the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting that took place in Tokyo earlier this month.

Looking into the Indo-Pacific region, under the current challenging circumstances including situations in the East China Sea, South China Sea and serious concern over North Korea including its military threats and abduction issues, it is vital to examine and discuss different perspectives and integrate our strategies on the Indo-Pacific region not only among Asian Partners but also participating States across the OSCE region.

This year, Japan launched the New Plan for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” in March. Under this concept, we intend to enhance the connectivity of the

Indo-Pacific region, foster the region into a place that values freedom and the rule of law, free from force or coercion, leading its way towards prosperity. We trust our new FOIP will lead the international community toward cooperation, rather than division and confrontation.

The fundamental concept of FOIP, such as defending freedom and the rule of law, respect for diversity, inclusiveness, and openness, as well as new approaches such as rule-making through dialogue and people-focused approaches, are aligned with North Macedonia's theme this year.

Japan has been working closely through strengthening coordination with many other countries and regions such as Korea, Australia, US, Canada and many European countries for the challenges in Indo-Pacific regions and we will double our efforts in the future.

I am pleased to see that today's discussion provided us with some tangible suggestions on how the international community can best confront the complex security challenges it faces.

I thank you.

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