

Keynote Speech

‘Global Japan - Japan's Foreign Policy and Implications for Canada’,

Webinar hosted by Macdonald Laurier Institute

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● Good morning (evening) I would like to thank the Macdonald Laurier Institute for organizing this timely and meaningful discussion. I am delighted to deliver a keynote about recent developments in Japan’s foreign and security policies.

● Prime Minister Kishida won a majority of support at the general election which was held on October 30. Today, I will first elaborate on Prime Minister Kishida’s priorities in foreign and security policies and then explain Japan-Canada cooperation towards the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific which is also one of Prime Minister Kishida’s foreign and security policy priorities.

● In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Kishida made clear that his foreign and security policies are his administration’s key policies. Prime Minister prioritizes in three areas.

●Firstly, to defend the universal values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Such values and the rules-based international order, which have been fundamental to the peace and prosperity of the world, face severe challenges including unilateral attempts to change the status quo by the use of force. It is necessary to vigorously promote the Free and Open Indo-Pacific in cooperation with allies and with like-minded countries. Not only Japan but also US, Australia, India, EU and its member countries, as well as ASEAN have their own strategies or visions targeting the Indo-Pacific. Japan will continue to work with our allies and with like-minded countries to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

●Secondly, Prime Minister Kishida is determined to safeguard the peace and stability of Japan. The security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe with frequent intrusions in territorial waters by vessels of foreign governments and attempts to change the status quo by internationally unlawful ways such as through the use of force. Nuclear and missile development by North Korea, which is against United Nations Security Council Resolutions,

has worsened the situation. It is necessary for Japan to engage in a reinforcement of our defense capabilities, including territorial land, waters, airspace and missile defense capabilities and, at the same time to cooperate with allies and like-minded countries for the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific. The abductions issue by North Korea, which affects the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese nationals, is one of the highest priority issues for Prime Minister Kishida. At least 12 out of 17 Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea in 1970s and 80s have not returned to Japan. Prime Minister Kishida has committed to do everything to ensure the return of all the abductees to Japan as soon as possible. With new challenges faced by the world today such as space, cyber and economic security, Prime Minister Kishida made clear that Japan will revise and draft our new National Security Strategy, National Defense Program Guidelines, and Mid-Term Defense Program within a year or so.

●Thirdly, the Prime Minister is determined to exert himself to confront global issues. As a Prime Minister from Hiroshima, Prime Minister Kishida will strive for a world free of nuclear weapons. With this ultimate goal of nuclear free world in mind, Japan will continue to exert a pragmatic effort to take a step closer to the

goal by acquiring trust and cooperation from both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. Japan will promote global climate change measures. At COP 26, Japan announced the development of major projects worth 100 million USD to transform fossil-fuel-fired thermal power into zero-emission thermal power in Asia. While Japan and Canada share the goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and a green growth strategy, Japan has also aimed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46 percent in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, and furthermore, to continue major efforts in its challenge to meet the ambitious goal of cutting its emissions by 50 percent. Japan will cooperate with other countries in international rule-making for example Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT) in the digital age as well.

●With regards to his determination for global issues, Prime Minister Kishida also will contribute to the international discussion to seek the so called new capitalist economy which would respond to the call for a new approach in the new era, along with the international efforts such as “Build Back Better” by the US and “The Next Age EU” by the European Union. It aims to resolve negative aspects of the contemporary social economic system such as slow growth of the middle-class and

the deepening rift between “haves” and “have-nots” realize a social economic system focused on sustainability and people. Prime Minister Kishida will pursue an economic policy to achieve a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution. Science, technology, innovation as well as the Digital Garden City Nation – which aims to connect rural areas to the world – are major components of the ‘growth strategy’, while the major part of the ‘distribution strategy’ is strengthening the distributive functions for working people in both private and public sectors in order to increase middle-class wages.

- Facing these aforementioned challenges in the foreign and security environment surrounding Japan and the world, it is necessary for Japan and Canada to enhance their cooperation. In this regard, it is highly welcomed that in their meeting last Saturday, our two Foreign Ministers, Minister Hayashi and Minister Joly, shared their views to advance discussions about the concrete details of the cooperation for the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

- Japan-Canada Free and Open Indo-Pacific cooperation was first mentioned by Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Trudeau when they shared their views on

the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific in April, 2019. Then, in May of this year, the Foreign Ministers announced the six operative areas of cooperation towards the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, namely, (1) The Rule of Law, (2) Peacekeeping Operations, Peacebuilding, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, (3) Health Security and Responding to COVID-19, (4) Energy Security, (5) Free Trade Promotion and Trade Agreement Implementation, (6) Environment and Climate Change. Minister Hayashi and Minister Joly's meeting last month followed and further developed Japan-Canada FOIP cooperation discussion. Among cooperative areas, the highest priority is to protect the rule of law. It is worth noting Canada's contribution through Operation Neon which is monitoring and surveillance activity for ship-to-ship transfer by North Korea to stop their nuclear weapons development and launch of ballistic missiles. Ship-to-ship transfers violate United Nations Security Council Sanctions as it is one of North Korea's means to earn cash. North Korea's ballistic missiles and development of nuclear weapons are challenges and threats to world security. It is the same for Canada as well. Japan and Canada have already started their concrete cooperation to protect the rule of law in our FOIP cooperation.

● Programs to realize Free and Open Indo-Pacific should be multilayered and inclusive. It is necessary to strengthen Japan-Canada cooperation in accordance with such principles.

● Today, we live in a world which faces increasingly serious challenges to universal values and the rules-based international order which have been fundamental to the peace and prosperity of the world. The world also needs to cope with an increasingly severe security environment. It is unavoidable for our allies and like-minded countries including Japan and Canada to work closely together. Prime Minister Kishida and Japan are determined to lead such an endeavour. Working together is power. I reiterate again working together is power.

● I am very much looking forward to listening to the discussion on Prime Minister Kishida's foreign policy and its implication for Canada by distinguished panelists from Japan, Canada, US and Europe who are all specialized and internationally recognized in the study of Japanese politics, foreign and security policies.

● Thank you for your kind attention.