

Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden

Prime Minister of Japan, ISHIBA Shigeru, and Prime Minister of Sweden, Ulf Kristersson met in Tokyo on 4 December 2024 on the occasion of Prime Minister Kristersson's visit to Japan.

1. The two leaders noted that Japan and Sweden have a long history of friendship supported by exchanges between the Imperial and Royal Families, and confirmed with satisfaction that the bilateral friendship and cooperation between Japan and Sweden is stronger than ever as partners sharing values and principles such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Recognizing the shared interest in working more closely together on bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues to respond to the changing strategic environment, and building onto the solid foundation of more than 150 years of diplomatic relations, they hereby announced the Strategic Partnership between Japan and Sweden, working for maintaining and strengthening the rules-based international order. The Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement and the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement provide the basis for the Strategic Partnership between Japan and Sweden to further intensify economic and political cooperation, including in the bilateral context between Japan and Sweden.

2. Cooperation in the International Arena

(i) The two leaders expressed mutual appreciation of each other's contributions in the international arena. Both Japan and Sweden are contributing proactively in areas such as peace and security, humanitarian affairs, human rights and climate change in the United Nations (UN). The two leaders confirmed their commitment to continued cooperation in international fora including the UN. They also gave high priority to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. They underlined the need for UN reform initiatives, as well as implementation of the Pact for the Future, with a view to ensuring that the UN is effective, accountable and inclusive. They concurred on the importance of enhancing the role of the UN General Assembly, and they concurred on working closely towards the UN Security Council reform, including expansion of its permanent and non-permanent membership.

(ii) The two leaders concurred on striving for the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, achieved through a balanced, verifiable and irreversible approach. They further acknowledged the value of practical efforts, like the multilateral work on nuclear

disarmament verification. They deeply regretted Russia's decision to suspend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), and Russia's decision to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and denounced the irresponsible Russian nuclear rhetoric. Furthermore, they shared their concerns on China's build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency. They called on China and Russia to engage substantively in all relevant initiatives and dialogues for arms control, disarmament and risk reduction in line with their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and commitments including the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races of 3 January 2022.

(iii) The two leaders underlined the importance of promoting sustainable development globally and recalled their commitments to the SDGs. Furthermore, they confirmed their continued support for vulnerable countries and displaced populations affected by conflicts, climate change as well as the global food and energy crisis brought about by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. They shared the importance of emphasizing measures, in international development cooperation, that can lift people out of poverty for good.

(iv) The two leaders affirmed that women in leadership remain their focus and reaffirmed their pledge to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity. Highlighting that women have leading roles to play in the prevention and management of violent conflicts, in delivering efforts for relief and recovery and in forging lasting peace, the two leaders encouraged the advancement of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and highlighted the importance of multilateral cooperation such as that in the UN and regional organizations. They shared the view that it was important to have a clear gender perspective in the work for peace, the environment and a more climate-resilient society.

(v) The two leaders concurred on facilitating closer dialogue and cooperation between Japan and the Nordic countries, including through the joint Nordic participation at Expo 2025 in Osaka, with a particular focus on innovation, digitalization and the green transition.

(vi) Due to a demanding international political and security environment, the two leaders consented to strengthen political cooperation by regular meetings and dialogue on both senior official and political level to discuss issues of key international and regional

importance.

3.A. Russia's War of Aggression against Ukraine

(i) The two leaders condemned in the strongest terms Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a serious violation of international law, including the UN Charter. They called on Russia to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The two leaders reiterated their support for Ukraine's efforts to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, consistent with international law, including the UN Charter, with full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and also emphasized that the obligations of international humanitarian law must be upheld. They concurred that there must be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocities. Those responsible must be held to account. They stressed the importance of the severe sanctions against Russia carried out by both countries, reaffirmed their unwavering support for Ukraine for as long as it takes, and remain strongly committed to its recovery and reconstruction priorities. They condemned third parties who are facilitating and thereby prolonging Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

(ii) The two leaders stressed that threats by Russia of nuclear weapon use are reckless and inadmissible, and underlined that Russia must never use nuclear weapons. The two leaders also expressed their gravest concern over Russia's illegal seizure of and irresponsible actions in and around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

(iii) They condemned the increasing military cooperation between the DPRK and Russia, including the DPRK's export and Russia's procurement of DPRK ballistic missiles in breach of multiple UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs), and Russia's use of these missiles and munitions against Ukraine, as well as the DPRK's deployment of troops to Russia for combat against Ukraine. In this context, they condemned the decisions by Russia and the DPRK to expand Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. The cooperation negatively impacts security both in the Indo-Pacific and in Europe.

3.B. Situation in the Middle East

(i) The two leaders expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. They also underscored that all actions must be taken in accordance with international law including international humanitarian law. In particular, all parties must protect the civilians affected by the hostilities. They also expressed grave concern for the

serious humanitarian situation in Gaza. They reiterated their call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the unconditional release of all hostages, a significant and sustained increase in the flow of humanitarian assistance, safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all parts of Gaza, and an end to the conflict. They expressed their support for mediation efforts made by the United States, Egypt and Qatar and urged all parties concerned to act in good faith based on related UN Security Council resolutions, including UNSCR 2735, which contains a comprehensive deal. They reiterated their commitment to a two-state solution in which two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, coexist peacefully within secure and recognized borders, in accordance with international law and relevant UNSCRs.

(ii) The two leaders expressed serious concern over the tensions beyond Israel and the Gaza Strip throughout the Middle East region. Avoiding further exchange of attacks and calming the situation remain of utmost importance. In this regard, they welcomed the ceasefire agreement between the governments of Israel and Lebanon on November 26, and strongly demand that all parties take all measures to fully implement the ceasefire agreement and commit to the regional stability.

3.C. Indo-Pacific

(i) The two leaders affirmed the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific to both countries, which are maritime states. A free and open Indo-Pacific is inclusive, prosperous, secure, based on the rule of law, and protects shared principles including sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as fundamental freedoms and human rights. From this perspective, they affirmed their support for ASEAN centrality and unity as well as the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

(ii) The two leaders expressed their readiness to build constructive and stable relationship with China, recognizing the importance of engaging candidly and expressing their concerns directly to China. They concurred on the necessity to cooperate with China on global challenges and in areas of common interest.

(iii) The two leaders affirmed the importance of upholding freedom of navigation and overflight in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, and emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, in particular UNCLOS and the UN Charter. They

strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion anywhere in the world. In this context, the two leaders shared their serious concerns over the situation in the East and South China Seas and stressed that all maritime claims must be based on the relevant provisions of UNCLOS.

(iv) The two leaders strongly condemned the DPRK's continued development of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, which is in violation of relevant UNSCRs and threatens the safety of civil aviation and maritime traffic in the region. They underlined the need for dialogue and the goal of achieving the DPRK's abandonment of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. They urged the DPRK to fully comply with all obligations under the relevant UNSCRs. They called on all UN member states to fully implement the relevant UNSCRs on the DPRK. They urged the DPRK to respect human rights and immediately resolve humanitarian issues of concern to the international community, including the abductions issue.

4. Security and Defense

(i) The two leaders shared the same assessments on the severe international security environment, and concurred on continuing to conduct inter-governmental dialogues, including regular political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of both countries. Recognizing the importance of strengthening cooperation on security and defense policy and smooth communication between defense authorities of both countries, the two leaders confirmed the further development of the bilateral defense dialogue including defense talks between senior officials.

(ii) The two leaders underlined the importance of increased vigilance and enhanced coordination among like-minded countries to address economic, social and security risks in the digital sphere, including protecting critical infrastructure from challenges posed by exercise of illegitimate influence, espionage, foreign information manipulation and interference, information theft, illicit knowledge leakage, sabotage, and others.

(iii) The two leaders recognized that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions is increasingly interlinked, and highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration between NATO and its partners in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan. Prime Minister Ishiba affirmed the importance of Sweden's accession to NATO.

(iv) The two leaders concurred on mutually cooperating on information and cyber security to ensure that the two countries stay ahead of growing cyber threats and build resilience in the information and communication technology domain.

(v) The two leaders concurred on mutual cooperation within the defense equipment and technology domain to ensure that the two countries develop their technology and stay ahead of growing threats, building upon the bilateral Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology entered into force in 2022.

(vi) The two leaders acknowledged the importance of a strong defense industrial base among like-minded countries in this current security environment and underlined the importance of progress of technology and defense materiel cooperation by both countries.

5. Economic Security

(i) As it was encouraged during the G7 Hiroshima Summit on May 20, 2023, the two leaders recognized that transparency, diversification, security, sustainability, trustworthiness and reliability are essential principles on which to build and strengthen resilient supply-chain networks with like-minded partners who honor international norms and obligations, and are committed to free and mutually beneficial economic and trade relationships. They also recognized the need to work on relevant criteria that take into account not only economic factors, but also factors linked to the Principles on Resilient and Reliable Supply Chains, reduce harmful dependencies in critical supply chains as well as build and strengthen resilient supply chains with like-minded partners for advanced technologies and critical materials, including products essential for clean energy transition.

(ii) The two leaders expressed concerns over economic coercion and strategies to use a wide and evolving range of non-market policies and practices, such as the use of standard setting as a tool for forced technology transfer, as well as excess capacity resulting from them, that distort the global level playing field. They concurred that such policies and practices should be addressed in an appropriate manner. They opposed the illegitimate transfer of critical and emerging technologies through research activities and the misuse of such technologies. They also affirmed their shared responsibility and determination to coordinate on preventing the cutting-edge technologies developed by both countries from being used to enhance military capabilities that threaten international peace and security.

6. Trade, Investment and Competitiveness

(i) The two leaders recognized the importance of maintaining and strengthening the free and rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, and concurred on working together on WTO reform to improve all its functions. They commended the efforts to intensify discussions in the WTO on contemporary trade-related issues, such as trade and industrial policy. They acknowledged the positive role of plurilateral negotiations at the WTO as a means to advance issues of interest. They welcomed the achievement of the “stabilized text” on the Agreement on Electronic Commerce under Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) and called for the early incorporation of the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement and the Agreement on Electronic Commerce into the legal framework of the WTO. The two leaders reiterated their support for making permanent the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions.

(ii) The two leaders recalled the steady progress in bilateral trade and investment, welcomed the recent collaboration between Japanese and Swedish companies in areas such as the green transition, digitalization and life science, and recognized the importance of jointly ensuring open and transparent markets. It was recognized that both countries should strive to lower trade barriers as much as possible.

(iii) The two leaders recognized the significance of enhanced mobility between both countries for business, research and education, and they particularly appreciated the important role the Agreement between Japan and the Kingdom of Sweden on Social Security has been playing.

7. Science, Technology and Innovation

(i) The two leaders shared the importance of learning from each other’s experiences and knowledge and advancing together through science and innovation towards achieving equitable and vibrant societies. They confirmed their intention to explore avenues for cooperation among like-minded countries to promote initiatives on science, research and advanced technology in a wide range of fields, with priority areas such as energy and environment, marine research including in the Arctic, quantum science and technology, space, critical minerals, advanced materials, ICT, medical, life science and, health and welfare technology, taking advantage of opportunities such as the Joint Committee Meeting on Cooperation in Science and Technology.

(ii) The two leaders recognized the importance of science and technology and confirmed

the mobilization of private investment in respective start-up environments to foster innovation.

(iii) The two leaders underlined the fundamental importance of the promotion of digitalization for achieving economic growth and a sustainable society and confirmed the importance of mutual learning and cooperation between Japan and Sweden, both of which have strengths in this field. They also welcomed closer cooperation between Japan and Sweden in the digital sector. The two leaders recognized that the Internet must be open, global, interoperable, stable, and secure in order to fully benefit all, and that Internet governance must continue to be global and multi-stakeholder in nature. They confirmed that they would continue to work together to promote inclusive digitalization, including digital government (e-government), and to promote cross-border data flows and Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT). They also shared the view on the importance of working together to promote safe, secure and trustworthy AI systems, including through the implementation of the outcomes of the Hiroshima AI Process as well as the UN Global Digital Compact, and of advancing cooperation on AI in international fora such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in light of its recently revised AI Principles, the Committee on Artificial Intelligence at the Council of Europe as well as the newly established Integrated Partnership on AI between the OECD and the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI).

(iv) The two leaders committed to deepening joint research between Japan and Sweden in the development of 6G communications systems, recognizing the importance of working jointly and cooperating to support secure, trusted, open, free, global, interoperable, reliable and resilient connectivity that is protective of privacy and global industry led.

(v) The two leaders committed to supporting secure and trusted telecom infrastructure deployment. Advanced telecommunications such as 5G will underpin future digital economies and innovation, and is foundational in bridging the digital divide. Strengthened connectivity between the Indo-Pacific region and Northern Europe is of importance. The two leaders therefore appreciated the potential benefits of fiberoptic cables across the Arctic. Enhanced connectivity between these regions could provide increased data capacity, reduced latency and faster transfer speeds. Improved infrastructure would strengthen economic ties and, increase competitiveness and innovation between the two countries.

(vi) The two leaders shared the ambition to contribute to building the scientific knowledge basis on the rapid climate change in the Arctic, the impact on ecosystems, endangered species and the role of the Arctic for the global climate including through cooperation and exchange on Arctic research. The two leaders concurred on cooperating to promote stability, constructive cooperation and sustainable development in the rapidly changing Arctic. They affirmed the importance of respect for the existing legal framework, with UNCLOS at the core, and confirmed their commitment to the Arctic Council as the pre-eminent forum for international cooperation and development of the Arctic.

(vii) The two leaders welcomed the newly signed Memorandum of Cooperation on Energy and Innovation covering Civil nuclear energy (including advanced and small modular reactor, nuclear supply chain and nuclear waste), Batteries, Mobility, Circular economy and Startup.

8. Green Transition

(i) The two leaders concurred that this decade represents a closing window of opportunity to get on track with limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and that it will require bold decisions. They welcomed the joint ambition to promote economic cooperation within the realm of the green transition, and concurred on enhancing the communication and cooperation between both countries on climate, environment, energy and industrial transformation. They confirmed that both countries are well-positioned and ambitious to further develop and implement measures to accelerate the green transition. They shared views on the need to accelerate the deployment of clean energy solutions to further enhance energy security, and the development and deployment of next-generation technologies to ensure sustainable, inclusive, resilient economic and climate-friendly growth. They expressed their determination to work together to transition away from fossil fuels, to promote clean energy transitions globally and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

(ii) The two leaders recognized the importance of circular economy as a tool to end the triple planetary crisis (climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), and as a tool for the green industrial transition. The leaders underlined the major role of circular economy, sustainable resource management and enhanced recycling of raw materials for the future of the planet.

(iii) The two leaders recognized the importance of ending plastic pollution and, in this regard, reaffirmed their strong commitment to closely work together to complete the work of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, at the earliest opportunity. Climate change mitigation and the transition to a circular economy can lead to significant possibilities for green jobs and businesses. It was concurred upon by both leaders that the transition to a circular economy and the actions taken should aim at minimizing environmental negative impact, removing obstacles, strengthening competitiveness, and increasing incentives.

9. People-to-People Exchange

(i) The two leaders recognized the importance of the cultural ties and people-to-people contacts, as well as cooperation in education between Japan and Sweden. The two leaders expressed a commitment to promoting bilateral exchanges, not least, in the field of culture.

(ii) Both Japan and Sweden are super-aged societies and share challenges. The two leaders recognized the opportunities for sharing experience and knowledge to better meet the challenges posed by demographic change. This applies both to health and social care, and to society as a whole.

(iii) The two leaders recognized the value of cultural and creative industries for growth, employment and innovation, as well as the diversity of cultural expression and cultural events in each country. They believe that these effects can be strengthened by sharing experiences and promoting exchanges between the two countries.