

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan**  
*April 10, 2024*

*President Biden.* Please, have a seat.

It's an honor to stand here today with the Prime Minister of Japan, President Kishida—Prime Minister Kishida.

When I became President, I said that the United States would rebuild the muscle of our democratic alliances and we'd stand shoulder to shoulder with our allies again, because our alliances are America's greatest asset. The relationship with Japan is powerful proof of that—that in investing in our alliance and raising our collective ambitions, we yield remarkable results.

Over the last 3 years, the partnership between Japan and the United States has been transformed into a truly global partnership. And that's thanks in no small part to the courageous leadership of Prime Minister Kishida. And I mean that sincerely.

Together, our countries are taking significant steps to strengthen defense and security cooperation, we're modernizing command and control structures, and we're increasing the interoperability and planning of our militaries so they can work together in a seamless and effective way. This is the most significant upgrade in our alliance since the end of—since it was first established.

I'm also pleased to announce that for the first time, Japan and the United States and Australia will create a networked system of air, missile, and defense architecture. We're also looking forward to standing up a trilateral military exercise with Japan and the United Kingdom.

And our AUKUS defense partnership with Australia and the United Kingdom is exploring how Japan can join our work in the second pillar, which focuses on advanced capabilities, including AI, autonomous systems. All told, that represents a new benchmark for our military cooperation across a range of capabilities.

On the economic front, our ties have never been more robust. Japan is the top foreign investor in the United States. Say that again: Japan is the top foreign investor in the United States. And we, the United States, are the top foreign investor in Japan. Nearly 1 million Americans work in Japanese companies here in the United States.

And to name just one example, a few months ago, Toyota announced an \$8 billion investment in a massive battery production facility in North Carolina, which will employ thousands of people. The Prime Minister is going to travel to North Carolina tomorrow to visit that project.

Don't stay. Don't stay. We need you back in Japan. *[Laughter]* They'll probably try to keep you.

We also affirmed the science and education ties between Japan and the United States. Those ties—ties stretch up to the Moon, where two Japanese astronauts will join future American missions, and one will become the first non-American ever to land on the Moon.

And they reach into the high schools and universities, as well, where the Mineta Ambassador—Minetas Program exists, named for our dear friend Norm Mineta. We're going to invest in new student exchanges, help train the next generation of Japanese and American leaders.

We also discussed developments in the Middle East, including our shared support for a cease-fire and a hostage deal and urgent efforts to deal with the humanitarian crisis that exists in Gaza.

We also want to address the Iranian threat to launch a—they—they're threatening to launch a significant attack on Israel. As I told Prime Minister Netanyahu, our commitment to Israel's security against these threats from Iran and its proxies is ironclad. Let me say it again: ironclad. We're going to do all we can to protect Israel's security.

And finally, I want to commend the Prime Minister himself. He is a statesman. Command—you know, the fact is that you condemned Putin's invasion of—brutal invasion of Ukraine when it happened. You pledged more than \$12 billion in aid; prioritizing nuclear nonproliferation at the United Nations Security Council; standing strong with the United States as we stand up for freedom of navigation, including in the South China Sea, and as we maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits; and taking the brave step of mending ties with the Republic of Korea so we can all stand shoulder to shoulder together.

Tomorrow we will both be joined by another good friend, President Marcos of the Philippines, for a trilateral summit, the first of its kind.

And through it all, our commitment to the defense of Japan under article 5, including the — excuse me—Senkaku Islands, is unwavering.

Mr. Prime Minister, through our partnership, we have strengthened the alliance. We have expanded our work together. We have raised our shared ambitions. And now, the U.S.-Japan alliance is a beacon to the entire world. There's no limit to what our countries can and our people can do together.

So thank you for your partnership, your leadership, and your friendship.

And now, over to you, Mr. Prime Minister.

*[At this point, Prime Minister Kishida spoke briefly in Japanese; no transcript was provided. He then addressed President Biden in English as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Kishida.* Thank you, Joe.

*[Prime Minister Kishida continued in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]*

*Prime Minister Kishida.* President Biden and I have met and talked countless times and confirmed our shared notion that we are at crucial crossroads and that Japan-U.S. partnership is immensely important.

The international community stands at a historical turning point. In order for Japan, the U.S., the Indo-Pacific region, and, for that matter, the whole world to enjoy peace, stability, and prosperity lasting into the future, we must resolutely defend and further solidify a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

And again, today I told the President that now is the time to demonstrate the true values that Japan and the United States can offer as global partners, that we must together fulfill our responsibilities to create a world where human dignity is upheld and that Japan will always stand firm with the United States.

I explained that, based on our national security strategy, Japan is determined to strengthen our defense force through position of counterstrike capabilities, increase our defense budget and other initiatives, and was reassured by President Biden of his strong support for such efforts.

In such context, we confirmed again the urgency to further bolster the deterrence and response capabilities of our alliance and concurred on reinforcing our security and defense cooperation to increase interoperability between the U.S. forces and our self-defense forces, including the improvement of our respective command-and-control frameworks.

We will be discussing the specifics as we plan for the next Japan-U.S. two-plus-two.

The President and I went on to discuss various specific challenges faced by the international community.

First, we confirmed that unilateral attempts to change status quo by force or coercion is absolutely unacceptable, wherever it may be, and that we will continue to respond resolutely against such action through cooperation with allies and like-minded nations.

From such perspective, we agreed that our two countries will continue to respond to challenges concerning China through close coordination. At the same time, we confirmed the importance of continuing our dialogue with China and cooperating with China on common challenges.

We also underscored the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits and confirmed our position to encourage peaceful resolution of the cross-Straits issue.

The situation in North Korea, including nuclear and missiles development, was brought up as well. We welcomed the progress seen in many areas of cooperation based on the outcome of the Japan-U.S.-R.O.K. summit last August and concurred to coordinate even more closely as we face serious concerns under the current state of affairs. President Biden once again demonstrated his strong support towards the immediate resolution of the abduction issue.

We reaffirmed the importance of realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law and concurred to maintain close collaboration through various opportunities, including the Japan-U.S.-Philippines summit, which is planned for tomorrow.

Regarding Russia's aggression of Ukraine, based on a recognition that Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow—taking the issue as our own problem for Japan, I expressed our resolution to continue with stringent sanctions against Russia and strong support for Ukraine. And we concurred to maintain close partnership with like-minded countries.

On the situation in the Middle East, I expressed my respect for the efforts of President Biden towards the release of the hostages, improvement of the humanitarian situation, and for calming down the situation. I then explained how Japan is continuing diplomatic efforts to improve the humanitarian situation and to realize a sustainable cease-fire and agreed to continue close cooperation towards the improvement of the situation, the realization of a two-state solution, and the stabilization of the region.

Regarding the economy, we firstly concurred that for both of us to lead the global economic growth together, the promotion of investment in both directions is important. I explained how Japanese businesses are making a significant contribution to the U.S. economy by their investment and the creation of jobs, to which President Biden agreed.

In order to maintain and strengthen the competitive edge in the area of advanced technologies and to respond appropriately to issues such as economic coercion, nonmarket policies and practices, and excess capacities and to overcome the vulnerability of the supply chains and to lead a sustainable and inclusive economic growth, we affirmed that the collaboration of Japan and the United States is indispensable.

In addition, we concurred to advance our cooperation in the areas such as decarbonization, AI, and start-ups.

There was a huge achievement also in the area of space. In the first half of the 1960s, when I was in the United States, it was the dawn of space development in the United States. I am one of all those who were so excited in the U.S. by the spectacular challenge in space.

The implementing arrangement has been signed on this occasion and the provision of the lunar rover by Japan and the allocation of two astronaut flight opportunities to the lunar surface to Japan were confirmed. Under the Artemis program, I welcome the lunar landing by a Japanese astronaut as the first non-U.S. astronaut.

We also discussed the efforts towards a world without nuclear weapons. We affirmed the realistic and practical endeavors of nuclear disarmament, including the issuance of the G-7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision last year. And I welcomed the participation of the United States in the FMCT Friends, which was launched by my initiative.

Lastly, in order to further strengthen the people-to-people bond, which is the cornerstone of our unwavering Japan-U.S. relationship, we affirmed to further promote people-to-people exchanges.

As the outcome of our meeting today, we will issue the joint statement titled "The Global Partners for the Future." This is the expression of the determination of Japan and the United States to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law that underpins the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community and states the guiding principles.

With our partnership, we will defend the future of Japan and the United States, the Indo-Pacific, and the world and make that future all the more prosperous.

*President Biden.* Thank you. Now we'll take a few questions.

Jordan Fabian of Bloomberg.

#### *Federal Reserve/Inflation*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. Last month, you predicted the Federal Reserve would cut interest rates thanks to falling inflation. But today data showed that inflation rose more than expected for the third straight month. So how concerned are you about the fight against inflation stalling? And do you stand by your prediction for a rate cut?

*President Biden.* Well, I do stand by my prediction that before the year is out there will be a rate cut. This may delay it a month or so. I'm not sure of that. I don't—we don't know what the Fed is going to do for certain.

But, look, we have dramatically reduced inflation from 9 percent down to close to 3 percent. We're in a situation where we're better situated than we were when we took office, where we—inflation was skyrocketing. And we have a plan to deal with it, whereas the opposition—my opposition talks about two things. They just want to cut taxes for the wealthy and raise taxes on other people.

And so I think they're—they have no plan. Our plan is one I think is still sustainable.

#### *Nippon Steel Corporation's Effort To Acquire United States Steel Corporation*

*Q.* Mr. Prime Minister, you said that the Nippon Steel acquisition of U.S. Steel is a private matter. But I'm wondering: Did you discuss the matter today with President Biden? And do you believe that politics are influencing President Biden's decision to oppose the deal?

And I wouldn't mind, Mr. President, if you answer that one too.

*Prime Minister Kishida.* On the issue that you have raised, we understand that discussions are underway between the parties. We hope these discussions will unfold in directions that would be positive for both sides.

Japan believes that appropriate procedures based on law is being implemented by the U.S. Government. Japan is the largest investor to the United States. Japanese businesses employ close to 1 million workers in the United States. And investment from Japan to the U.S. can only increase upwards in the months and years to come.

And we wish to cement this win-win relationship. Thank you.

*President Biden.* I stand by my commitment to American workers. I can—man of my word, I'm going to keep it. And with regard to that, I stand by our commitment to our alliance. This is exactly what we're doing—a strong alliance as well.

[*Prime Minister Kishida began speaking, but his remarks were inaudible due to a technical malfunction.*]

*Interpreter.* Prime Minister's microphone, please.

### *China-U.S. Relations/Japan-U.S. Relations*

*Q.* Nakakuki of Kyodo News. My question is to both Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden. At the summit, you confirmed your strong objections against unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion by China and agreed on reinforcing response capabilities.

Under current circumstances, should Japan and the United States bolster defense capabilities? China may become more preoccupied in military expansion and intensify its coercive behavior. That is the risk of—[*inaudible*]. In order to avoid divide and expand—avoid the divide, how should Japan and U.S. respond?

*Prime Minister Kishida.* Let me then take that question first. At this summit, we confirmed that the United States and Japan will resolutely defend and bolster a free and open international order based on the rule of law and that Japan and the United States, as global partners, shall work together for that purpose.

On challenges concerning China, including the point you raised on objecting to unilateral attempts to change status quo by force or coercion, we concurred that Japan and the United States as global partners shall work in close coordination. And also, as I said previously, we will continue our dialogue with China and we will cooperate with China in tackling common challenges. And the President and I confirmed the importance of such dialogue as well.

Based on the solid trust with our ally, the United States, we will continue to call on China to fulfill its responsibilities as a major power.

Japan's policy, which I have consistently embraced, is to comprehensively promote the mutual strategic relationship we have with China and establish a constructive and stable Japan-China relationship through efforts by both sides. That has been my consistent position that I have upheld. We will continue to seek close communication with China at all levels.

That's it for me.

*President Biden.* You know, first of all, we keep improving our lines of communications with one another—and that's the United States and China. We—I've met—I've recently spoken at length with President Xi. And we've agreed that we would, number one, have personal contact with one another whenever we want to discuss to anything so there'd be no—nothing lipiped—nothing slips between, as they say—between the cup and the lip, so we know exactly what the other team is thinking. Number one.

And so we had a long discussion last—now almost—I guess almost 2 weeks ago now. And—the best way to reduce the chances of miscalculation and misunderstanding. That's number one.

Number two, in our alliance we have with Japan—is a purely defensive in nature. It's a defensive alliance. And the things we discussed today improve our cooperation and are purely about defense and readiness. It's not aimed at any one nation or a threat to the region. And it doesn't have anything to do with conflict. And so this is about restoring stability in the region. And I think we have a chance of doing that.

Okay. Third—the next question. Who—who do I call on next? Hang on a second. I've got my list here. Hang on. I apologize.

Aurelia of AFP [Aurelia End of Agence-France Presse].

*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel/Israel's Military Operations in Gaza, Palestinian Territories/Hostages Held by Hamas*

*Q.* Thank you. My first question would go to both of you, Mr. President and Mr. Prime Minister. Is there a path for Japan to become a full member of AUKUS?

And I would have a second question for you, Mr. President. You're now saying that Benjamin Netanyahu is making a mistake in Gaza. What are you willing to do to make him change his strategy? And would you consider conditioning military aid to Israel? Thank you.

*Prime Minister Kishida.* Thank you. Your question about AUKUS, I will respond. Our country—we want to contribute to the peace and stability of the region. And therefore, we have consistently supported AUKUS.

Having said that, the participants of AUKUS—U.S., U.K., Australia—with such countries' bilateral relationship or in multilateral occasions, we have established various relationships. But for Japan, to have a direct cooperation with AUKUS, nothing has been decided at this moment.

Going forward with U.S., U.K., or with Australia—with such countries, in bilateral or multilateral frameworks, we will continue our cooperation so that they will continue to be considered.

At the moment, about the relationship between Japan and AUKUS, that's it.

*President Biden.* With regard to my discussions with Bibi Netanyahu—Prime Minister Netanyahu, as well as our relationship with Israel, I have been very blunt and straightforward with the Prime Minister, as well as his war cabinet, as well as the Cabinet.

And the fact of the matter is that Bibi and I had a long discussion. He agreed to do several things that related to, number one, getting more aid—both food and medicine—into Gaza and reducing significantly the attempts—the civilian casualties in any action taken in the region.

And thus far—and we—and it's tied to the hostages. There are a number of hostages that are being held by a—by the—Hamas. And just yesterday, we were meeting with the Vice President and our National Security Adviser before that, and they—and there are American hostages as well. And they know how committed we are—the whole team—to getting their loved ones home, and we're not going to stop until we do.

The new proposal on the table—Bill Burns led the effort to—for us, and we're grateful for his work—there's a now—up to Hamas. They need to move on the proposal that's been made. And as I said, it would get these hostages home where they belong, but also bring back a 6-week—cease-fire that we need now.

And the fact is that we're—they're getting in somewhere, in the last 3 days, over a hundred trucks. It's not enough. But it needs to be more, and there's one more opening that has to take place in the north.

So we'll see what he does in terms of meeting the commitments he made to me.

Okay——

*White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre.* This will be the last reporter.

*Prime Minister Kishida.* Mr. Shimizu, please.

### *North Korea*

*Q.* Thank you. Shimizu [Shimizu Daishi] of NHK. I ask the question to both of you.

As Prime Minister Kishida mentioned, the abduction issue with North Korea, I believe, was discussed. Prime Minister, you have expressed your wish to have a direct engagement with Kim Jong Un. But they say that abduction is already result, which means that they are refusing. During the meeting, what did you tell President Biden about the outlook of a summit? And what engagement did you ask President Biden?

President Biden, my question: What did you hear from Prime Minister Kishida? And what is your observation and feeling, your President, with the nuclear missile issues? What is your position? Do you support the summit between Japan and North Korea? Thank you.

*Prime Minister Kishida.* First of all, if I may start, regarding my summit meeting with President Biden about North Korea, including the missile and nuclear issues we have discussed, and regarding the increasingly worrying situation, we have agreed to continue a close coordination.

And on top of that, we concurred that the window of a discussion with North Korea is open. And we discussed that Japan, U.S.—Japan, U.S., and R.O.K. will continue to work closely together.

I also asked for the continued understanding and cooperation for the immediate resolution of the abduction issue. And President Biden once again gave myself a very strong assurance regarding the recent announcement by North Korea.

I will refrain from commenting on each and every announcement by North Korea. But as I have been mentioning repeatedly, based on the perspective that the establishment of a meaningful relationship between Japan and North Korea is in the interest of both Japan and North Korea and that it could be hugely beneficial to the peace and stability of the region, my policy is to aim for a summit meeting with North Korea to resolve various issues and will advise high-level consultation directly under my instruction. And that remains unchanged.

That is my response.

*President Biden.* We did discuss this issue. We both agreed the D.P.R.K. must—must also address the serious human rights and humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the immediate resolution of the abduction issue.

But you know, the Prime Minister has just spoken to the potential of what his plans may mean. But welcome—I welcome the opportunity—we welcome the opportunity of our allies to initiate dialogue with the Democratic Republic of Korea.

As I've said many times, we're open to dialogue ourselves at any time, but without preconditions from the D.P.R.K.

So I have faith in the—Japan. I have faith in the Prime Minister. And I think his seeking a dialogue with them is a good thing. It's a positive thing.

Thank you. Thank——

*Q.* Sir, on the issue of abortion——

*Q.* What will you do if Israel invades Rafah?

*Q.* On the issue of abortion, sir, what do you say to the people of Arizona?

*Press Secretary Jean-Pierre.* This concludes the press conference. Thanks, everybody.

*Q.* President Biden——

*Q.* Mr. President, are the American hostages alive?

*Q.* What will you do if Israel invades Rafah?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Biden.* Why doesn't everybody holler at once?

### *Arizona Supreme Court Decision Restricting Abortion Access*

*Q.* I'll ask you briefly. On the issue of abortion, sir, respectfully, what do you say to the people of Arizona right now who are witnessing a law go in place that dates back to the Civil War era?

*President Biden.* Elect me. I'm in the 20—it's the 20th century—21st century, not back then. They weren't even a State. I find——

*Q.* Sir, how does the——

*President Biden.* I——

*Q.* What will you do if Israel invades Rafah?

*Q.* Mr. President, how does the war in Ukraine come to an end?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Biden.* Thank you. Thank you all very much. Thank you.

*Q.* Sir, how does the——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Can you elaborate on what mistake Netanyahu is making, sir?

*Press Secretary Jean-Pierre.* Thanks, everybody.

### *Ukraine*

*Q.* How does the war in Ukraine come to an end, sir?

*Press Secretary Jean-Pierre.* This concludes the press conference.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Biden.* By the House——

*Q.* Sir, how does the war in——



*President Biden.* By the House—the war in Ukraine comes to an end by the House Leader allowing a vote. There's overwhelming support for Ukraine among the majority of Democrats and Republicans. There should be a vote now.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Are the American hostages alive?

#### *Liquified Natural Gas Exports*

*Q.* Will you reconsider the LNG export ban, sir?

*President Biden.* There is no ban to Japan.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:23 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Vice President Kamala D. Harris; National Security Adviser Jacob J. Sullivan; Central Intelligence Agency Director William J. Burns; and Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson. Prime Minister Kishida referred to the FMCT Friends initiative to advance efforts toward a "Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty." A reporter referred to State Affairs Commission President Kim Jong Un of North Korea. Prime Minister Kishida and a reporter spoke in Japanese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Joint news conferences, Prime Minister Kishida of Japan.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Burns, William J.; Harris, Kamala D.; Jean-Pierre, Karine; Johnson, J. Michael; Kishida, Fumio; Marcos, Ferdinand R. "Bongbong," Jr.; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Sullivan, Jacob J.; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* Arizona, State Supreme Court decision restricting abortion access; Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; AUKUS trilateral security partnership; Central Intelligence Agency; China, President; China, relations with U.S.; East China Sea, maritime boundary disputes; Federal Reserve System; Foreign educational exchange programs; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Gaza, humanitarian situation; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Inflation; Iran, regional involvement; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Israel, Prime Minister; Israel, security cooperation with U.S.; Japan, defense relationship with U.S.; Japan, investment and business ventures in U.S.; Japan, Prime Minister; Japan, relations with South Korea; Japan, relations with U.S.; Japan, scientific and educational exchanges with U.S.; Japan, trade with U.S.; Liquid natural gas, U.S. export restrictions; National Security Adviser; News media, Presidential interviews; North Korea, human rights issues; North Korea, international diplomatic efforts; North Korea, Japanese citizens, past abductions; Nuclear weapons, nonproliferation efforts; Philippines, President; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; South China Sea, maritime boundary disputes; South Korea, relations with Japan; Space exploration, international cooperation; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Taiwan, political status with respect to China; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; Ukraine, international assistance; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Vice President; White House Press Secretary.

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