

Section 3. Defense Posture Review

This section describes the progress of the defense posture review conducted by the Government and Ministry of Defence.

1. Background of the Review of the National Defense Program Guidelines

The security environment surrounding Japan continues to be faced with issues of new threats and diverse contingencies, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism, as well as increasing expectations of the active involvement of Japan in international peace cooperation activities. Thus, it is important to more appropriately adapt the defense force to the future security environment. The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) are subject to necessary revisions five years after its formulation, that is, by the end of this year. Accordingly, the Government has decided to hold the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities¹² on January 7, 2009 in order to conduct comprehensive deliberations on the visions for Japan's security and defense posture from a wide range of perspectives. The Council comprises members from fields related to security and defense capabilities and expert members with knowledge and experience related to administrative works in these fields.

2. The Council on Security and Defense Capabilities

The first Council was held on January 9, 2009 and Prime Minister Aso requested that the Council carry out active discussions on security strategies and roles of defense capabilities, while foreseeing future international situations and present guidelines for the future defense strategy and of the vision for defense capabilities, based on the following points:

- 1) International peace operations have been stipulated to a primary mission of the SDF, and the SDF has made considerable achievements in Iraq and in the Indian Ocean.
- 2) While various issues exist in the situations around Japan, cooperative relations with countries such as

Fig. II-2-3-1
Holding of Council on Security and Defense Capabilities

(As of May 31, 2009)

Number of meetings	Date	Major agenda
1	January 9, 2009	Concept of the Previous National Defense Program Guidelines
2	January 26, 2009	International Security Environment
3	February 12, 2009	Issues and Responses of the International Community
4	February 24, 2009	Information and Decision-making
5	March 3, 2009	Various Issues concerning Japan-U.S. Alliance Activities Based on the International Peacekeeping Law
6	March 26, 2009	Foundation Supporting Defense Capabilities (Defense Production /Technological Infrastructure)
7	April 9, 2009	Foundation Supporting Defense Capabilities (SDF bases, etc. and local governments)
8	April 24, 2009	Future System of the SDF (1) Japan's Financial Situation and Development of Defense Capabilities
9	May 15, 2009	Future System of the SDF (2)
10	May 29, 2009	Clarification of Truly Necessary Defense Production and Technological infrastructure Discussions Regarding Major Points

China are being strengthened.

- 3) The reform of the Ministry of Defense calls for the strengthening of functions for planning defense policies and the SDF's joint operations; consolidation of defense capabilities build-up; and review of procurements.

The Council has been held ten times as of the end of May, 2009. (See Fig. II-2-3-1)

3. The Defense Posture Review Board

In order to contribute to reviews by the government as a whole on the revision of the NDPG, the Ministry of Defense established the Defense Posture Review Board¹³ chaired by the then Minister of Defense with the aim of carrying out discussions from various viewpoints on September 17, 2008.

At the first meeting of the Board, then Minister of Defense Yoshimasa Hayashi mentioned the following three points to be kept in mind in the process of the discussion:

- 1) to identify the nature of the Japan's defense capabilities and to make necessary reviews based on it;
- 2) to make reviews based on the latest domestic and international movements and trends
- 3) to work with speed while integrating wisdom inside the Ministry in order to achieve results by the summer of 2009.

In light of new developments in Japan-U.S. relations and neighboring countries since 2004 as well as the fact that international peace cooperation activities have been stipulated to a primary mission of the SDF, the Ministry of Defense is currently proceeding with reviews on an evaluation of the NDPG, international security environment, the roles of defense capabilities, and a vision for Japan's defense capabilities based on issues. These reviews are carried out in coordination with the Cabinet Office, while maintaining a close linkage with other intra-ministerial reviews including those on the reform of the Ministry of Defense. (See Fig. II-2-3-2)

Fig. II-2-3-2
Holding of the Defense Panel for Future Defense Capabilities

(As of May 31, 2009)

Number of meetings	Date	Major agenda
1	September 17, 2008	Future course of discussions
2	January 9, 2009	Evaluation of the Guidelines 04*
3	February 24, 2009	Japan's Security Environment
4	April 27, 2009	The Role of the Japan-U.S. Alliance

* The National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2005 Onward, formulated in December 2004