



## U.S.-Japan 2+2 Joint Press Availability With Defense Secretary Robert Gates, His Excellency Taro Aso, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and His Excellency Fumio Kyuma Minister of Defense of Japan

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**  
Washington, DC  
May 1, 2007

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**SECRETARY RICE:** (in progress) -- Aso and Defense Minister Kyuma to discuss the many aspects of our security cooperation. This has been the fourth 2+2 that I have attended since I became Secretary and these discussions are always very useful because they reflect the deep significance that the United States attaches to this important alliance, one that plays a vital role in the security and prosperity of Northeast Asia and increasingly in global security.

Today, we discussed areas of concern including Iran's and North Korea's nuclear weapons ambitions and we discussed the need to diffuse and resolve regional tensions. On [North Korea](#), we agreed that we must continue to expect North Korea to immediately fulfill its initial action agreements. On [Iran](#), we agreed on the need to achieve swift and full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1737 and 1747. Iran must fully comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency requirements, cease support for terrorism and play a positive role as a responsible member of the international community.

During the past year, we have made excellent progress in implementing our plans to transform and realign our security posture in response to the challenges posed by the 21st century global security environment. We remain committed to the goal of strengthening our alliance while creating the basis for a sustainable enduring U.S. military presence in [Japan](#). We have made substantial progress also in fielding ballistic missile defenses and today, we talked more about cooperation in that important area.

As I said in Tokyo last October, the United States has the will and the capability to meet the full range of deterrents and security commitments to Japan. Our meeting today demonstrates our commitment and our resolve to ensure that this alliance doesn't just continue, but that it gets stronger. And in fact, it has gotten stronger.

I want to thank also Japan and the Japanese people for their support for democracy around the world and for the enduring values that we share. Thank you very much and now, I will turn to Minister Aso for a few comments.

**FOREIGN MINISTER ASO:** (Via interpreter.) Thank you, Secretary Rice. I will try not to repeat what she has already said. The U.S.-Japan summit meeting on April the 27th saw an agreement which enhanced cooperation in a whole range of areas such as security, economy -- economic and cultural exchange in order to strengthen the indispensable alliance between our two nations.

In turn, at today's 2+2 meeting, we had frank exchange of opinion on realignment of U.S. forces in Japan and Japan-U.S. cooperation on ballistic missile defense, among others. And I decided to issue a joint statement. This adds further weight and depth to the Japan-U.S. alliance and I think -- this is my opinion -- a major accomplishment.

Regarding the regional situation, since the last 2+2 meeting held in May of last year, North Korea has launched ballistic missile and conducted nuclear test, while [China](#) has launched ballistic missiles to destroy a satellite, thus still leaving the situation with uncertainty and instability. In this circumstance, the two nations confirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation not only between the U.S. and Japan, but with partners in the Asian-Pacific region led by Australia and India, with whom we share basic values, fundamental values, and fundamental interests.

In today's meeting, also we -- today's meeting also allowed us to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to defend Japan and also to offer deterrence given the continued uncertainty and unpredictability in the security environment in this region. And in this regard, we confirmed that Japan and the U.S. -- the United States -- will continue to work together to realize smooth switchover of aircraft carrier planned for next summer, including measures that address safety and security concerns of the local community. And four members of this group agreed to strengthen -- efforts to strengthen classified information while increasing the (inaudible) intelligence cooperation and information sharing.

Regarding the U.S. forces realignment, today's meeting, which is exactly one year after the announcement of the roadmap last year, we confirmed the progress of work so far on realignment initiatives such as Futenma and Guam. We also confirmed the importance of steadily implementing these initiatives in accordance with the Japan-U.S. agreement. We'd like to further advance realignment of the U.S. forces in Japan by giving it a push at the political level. We'd like to leverage the 2+2 meeting to implement U.S. forces -- Japan's realignment and measures for (inaudible) even more steadily and, thereby, adding more strength, greater strength to Japan-U.S. security framework and cooperation between our two nations.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you very much. Bob.

**SECRETARY GATES:** Thank you, Secretary Rice, for hosting today's meeting and I'd like to thank also Minister Aso and Minister Kyuma. It's been a pleasure meeting with both of you and I look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen this critical bilateral relationship. I would also like to congratulate Minister Kyuma, the Japanese Ministry of Defense, on their promotion from an agency to a ministry within the Government of Japan. We see this as a reflection of the strategic importance Japan places on making a positive contribution to international peace and security.

Based on our productive talks yesterday and today, I believe we're on track to move forward with alliance transformation across a range of areas of cooperation of our security -- on our security agenda. This is particularly true in the important area of missile defense.

Almost two years ago, our nations announced an aggressive agenda to review and validate the roles, missions and capabilities required to meet our shared regional and global objectives. Last year, we finalized a realignment roadmap to complete the most comprehensive set of adjustments to the American military posture in the region in more than a generation. Our Japanese partners assured us this week that they remain committed to the May 2006 realignment roadmap as well as the broader alliance transformation agenda, as are we.

North Korea's missile and nuclear tests last year were a reminder of the potential threats we face. In this context, our cooperation validated the previous investments we have made and the approaches we have taken to modernize and strengthen our alliance, while reminding us of the work that remains to be done. In our meetings today, we also discussed the importance of strengthening our ties to other countries and organizations. For example, we are committed to continued trilateral cooperation among Japan, the United States and our partner, Australia. We also look forward for ways to achieve broader Japan/NATO cooperation.

I know that Secretary Rice and Minister Aso and Minister Kyuma and I will continue to work together to develop a workable strategy that includes both diplomatic and military components. I appreciate the time and effort that went into the talks today and look forward to further cooperation. Thank you.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you. Minister Kyuma.

**MINISTER KYUMA:** (Via interpreter) The last time I attended a 2+2 SCC meeting was in 1997 in New York and this time I attended the first Minister of Defense of Japan. This attests to the fact that during the past ten years, public understanding and expectation towards defense-related offices have heightened in Japan and it is very gratifying. During the SCC meeting today, it was reaffirmed by four ministers that U.S. forces realignment agreed a year ago, including relocation and return of Futenma Air Station will be implemented steadfastly. This is one of the most significant outcomes today. Roles, mission, and capabilities constitute a pillar of alliance transformation along with U.S. forces realignment. And it was affirmed that implementation of items in SCC document of October '05 is essential for the capability of the alliance. This is another significant fruit.

Concerning BMD, enhancing bilateral cooperation in this area was confirmed. In particular, in addition to enhancing BMD capabilities of both Japan and the U.S., operational cooperation, such as information sharing, will be strengthened. I'd like to emphasize that there was full agreement of views on this matter.

All in all, during the SCC meeting this time, we reaffirmed the importance of both countries working together to raise alliance transformation for not only security of Japan but also for peace and stability of the region as a whole. Building on this momentum, we are determined to step up our efforts as far as forces realignment and other related issues. Thank you.

**SECRETARY RICE:** We'll take some questions.

**MR. MCCORMACK:** We have time for a few questions (inaudible) Japanese press (inaudible).

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice, it's now more than two weeks since North Korea failed to meet its 60-day obligation to shut down Yongbyon. At the time, U.S. officials said that while their patience wasn't infinite, they would give the North Koreans a few more days to try to get their money out of BDA. Do you see any signs that the North Koreans are making progress on finding a way to take their money out of BDA? And if not, what measures do you have at your disposal to try to motivate them to do so and then to proceed with carrying out the agreement?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, first of all, we do expect North Korea to fulfill its obligations under the initial actions agreement of February 13th. It is indeed extremely important because there are a number of steps that others would then, of course, be willing to take. I will say that the financial situation, the financial measures, did -- were considerably more complicated than perhaps we had realized, any of us had realized, and so we have been willing to step back and give some time for this to be resolved. But it needs to -- from our point of view, the United States has done what it needs to do to resolve the BDA issue.

I will note that we are in constant contact with all of the parties. We had a discussion -- Taro and I did -- of this in our bilateral yesterday and again today, of course, the Prime Minister and the President spoke about this when they were at Camp David. And we're going to continue to consult. We don't have endless patience. We do recognize that North Korea has continued to publicly affirm its obligation under the February 13th agreement and to affirm its intention to carry through. We expect them to do so.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) but if you keep China (inaudible) Taiwan, that this sends a wrong message to China just as (inaudible) back in 1950s?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I don't think there's any doubt -- shouldn't be any doubt in the minds of the Chinese leadership or of the leadership of Taiwan about our continued policy, the one China policy of the United States, our continued insistence that no one should try unilaterally to change the status quo and that there should not be conflict in the Taiwan Straits. And so there's no change in policy and perhaps therefore no need to restate that policy. But let me be very clear: There is no change in policy; we expect the parties to live up to the obligations that they have undertaken to us on numerous occasions.

**QUESTION:** Secretaries Rice and Gates, the State Department's terrorism report, Country Report issued yesterday, put a significant spike in attacks and fatalities around the world, and most of them in Iraq. Why shouldn't people conclude that we're losing the war on terrorism and that Iraq has made the problem worse?

And separately, if you have anything new on the al-Masri reports?

**SECRETARY RICE:** On?

**QUESTION:** Al-Masri.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Al-Masri. Do you want to start or do you want me to start?

**SECRETARY GATES:** First of all, we've heard the report on al-Masri. We're trying with the Iraqis to confirm whether or not it's true. I think we don't know the answer to that at this point.

I think General Petraeus has been pretty clear from the very beginning of the Baghdad security plan that he expected in the short term that the level of violence would probably rise. I think we were perhaps a little surprised that in some respects the level of violence actually declined initially on the deployment of troops into Baghdad, probably because Jaish al-Mahdi was lying low -- their leader in Iran -- perhaps for other reasons.

Clearly, al-Qaida is coming on strong in an effort to disrupt not only the Baghdad security plan but to try and thwart any progress by the Iraqi Government toward reconciliation. They are using these large vehicle-borne IEDs and trying their best to provoke the Shia into a counter -- into a response.

So I think it's a sad reality, but I think we anticipated that there would be in some respects an increase in the violence, and particularly in the belts around Baghdad as we pushed the bad guys out of some of the neighborhoods where we had not been active in a long time, or the Iraqi security forces for that matter.

Again, General Petraeus has said that he expects this to take weeks -- months, not weeks or days, and I think he has made pretty clear that he expects that it'll be September before he can make a valid -- or make an evaluation of how things are going.

**SECRETARY RICE:** I have not much to add on Iraq except to say that, of course, after the Samarra bombing of February 2006 there was a changed security situation, an uptick in sectarian violence, which of course was precisely what Zarqawi had hoped to do. And now the efforts to deal with the aftermath of that through helping the Iraqis to engage in and to begin to bring about population security, those efforts are just underway.

But as to the broader war on terror, there's no doubt that terrorists are going to try to fight back when you decide that you have to go after them. So this is a difficult struggle and it's a long struggle. There have been some real -- there's been some real progress on some fronts, and in other places the terrorists have continued to challenge democratic governments, and not just young democratic governments but democratic governments across the globe. We'll continue to fight that war. We are making considerable progress.

But perhaps the most important difference between now and 2001 is that I think we really do have a global and international community that is determined to fight terrorism and extremism, that is determined to share information, share intelligence, work together. It shows up in the work that we are doing with NATO in Afghanistan, for instance. It shows up in the work that we're doing with Japan that has been so (inaudible) better the humanitarian conditions in Iraq and has consistently continued to keep its forces there. It shows up in the fact that finally there is really an international response to terrorism and extremism. And it may take some time to defeat the terrorists, but we are in a much stronger position now because there really is an international coalition that's devoted to that cause.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Gates, what kind of cooperation (inaudible) on Japan-NATO cooperation and what do you (inaudible) policy? And also could you comment on Japan's discussion to implement the collective security right?

**SECRETARY GATES:** Well, I think (inaudible) that can take place between Japan and NATO is taking place in Afghanistan, where Japan is making a humanitarian contribution. Japan is the second-largest donor in reconstruction in Iraq in the world and the second -- and the third-largest donor for assistance in reconstruction and economic development in Afghanistan, so I think these are both areas that illustrate where Japan can work with NATO in ways that are consistent with Japan's policies.

You know, the matter of collective security and how the Prime Minister is addressing that is clearly an internal matter for the Japanese, but I think that he is trying to take account of the changes that have taken place in the world over the last several decades and Japan's appropriate place in the world. And so I applaud his courage in taking that issue on.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you very much.

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Released on May 1, 2007

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