

US and Japan accelerate war drive against China

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US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida held talks at the White House yesterday, capping off meetings this week between top-level US and Japanese officials all with one overriding aim: to strengthen closer military collaboration and accelerate joint preparations for war against China.

A joint statement released after the White House talks declared that cooperation between the two countries was “unprecedented” in the face of “growing challenges,” then proceeded to denounce China for “actions inconsistent with the rules-based international order,” along with Russia for the war in Ukraine and North Korea for its “provocations.”

Kishida thanked the US for its involvement in regional security in the Indo-Pacific amid “the most challenging and complex security environment in recent history.” Biden hailed what he called a “remarkable moment” in the US-Japan alliance and praised the Kishida government’s decision last month to double its military budget and boost its offensive capacity. He declared that the US was “fully, thoroughly, completely committed” to the defence of Japan using all means, including nuclear weapons.

The statement and comments are premised on a lie: that the US and its allies are simply responding to Russian and Chinese provocations and aggression. In reality, the US and Japan are basing themselves on the same modus operandi in Asia as the US and its NATO allies have carried out in Europe: goading Moscow into a war in Ukraine designed to weaken and dismember Russia.

Both Washington and Tokyo are deliberately undermining the basis for diplomatic ties with China—the One China policy under which the two countries have in the past de facto recognised Beijing as the legitimate government of all China, including

Taiwan. By boosting ties with Taipei, and thereby encouraging it to declare formal independence from China, the US and Japan are goading Beijing to reassert its control of the strategic island militarily.

The US-led war on Russia in Ukraine is the opening phase and preparation for conflict against China, which American imperialism openly declares is the greatest threat to its global domination. The accusation incessantly repeated that China undermines the “international rules-based order” refers to the post-World War II order in which the US dictated the rules. The US is aiming to shore up its global position by securing control over the vast natural resources and labour reserves of the Eurasian land mass.

Biden alluded to the global sweep of US ambitions when he declared: “We also recognize that the challenges we face transcend geography. United across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, we have stood together in firm opposition to Russia’s unjust and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine...”

The significance of the US-Japanese talks has been underscored by other top American officials. Following 2+2 meeting between top US and Japanese defence and foreign affairs officials on Wednesday, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin declared that 2023 was “an inflection point for our national security and defense strategies aligning closer than ever.”

US ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel told the *Washington Post* that Biden and Kishida were working to “shrink the distance between the trans-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific into a single strategic sphere” in what is “probably one of the biggest developments that the two leaders have produced.”

Transforming Asia, Europe and North America into “a single strategic sphere” only has one possible meaning—it is the strategic preparation for world war

and, moreover, a conflict that has already begun in Ukraine.

Details of the talks in Washington that have been released only confirm the rapid escalation of war planning in the Indo-Pacific. Biden, Austin and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken were all full of praise for Japan's aggressive remilitarisation announced last month, which blatantly breaches the so-called pacifist clause of its post-war constitution. "Japan is stepping up big time and doing so in lock step with the United States, partners in the Indo-Pacific, and in Europe," Jake Sullivan, US national security adviser, enthused.

Kishida's right-wing, ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which has been pushing for decades to remove the legal and constitutional constraints on the military, is exploiting the "threat" posed by China to undermine widespread anti-war opposition at home. Doubling the military budget ends the longstanding restriction on military spending to 1 percent of GDP. Acquiring 400 to 500 US-made Tomahawk cruise missiles worth \$US38 billion over the next five years and other nakedly offensive weaponry overturns the pretence that Japan's military might is purely defensive.

The US-Japan 2+2 talks this week opened the door for far closer military collaboration, planning and preparation. The joint statement declared that given "a severely contested environment," US forces in Japan should be strengthened with "more versatile, resilient, and mobile forces with increased intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, anti-ship, and transportation capabilities."

The build-up is focussed on Japan's southwestern islands, which are close to Taiwan and opposite the Chinese mainland. The joint statement agreed to bolster bilateral training and exercises in these islands, on which the Japanese military has already been stationing missiles.

The large US bases on Okinawa, also part of Japan's southern island chain, are to be restructured and boosted with the establishment of a Littoral Regiment of 2,000 troops, the Marine Corps' most advanced unit, by 2025. Austin declared that the regiment, which has advanced intelligence and surveillance capacities as well as being armed with anti-ship missiles, would "contribute in a major way" to the joint military build-up. Currently there are 18,000 US Marines on Okinawa

as part of the 54,000 American military personnel stationed on bases throughout Japan.

The US is to station MQ-9 Reaper drones, used for missile attacks on ground targets, at the Kanoya Air Base on the southern island of Kyushu. A US Army company of around 300 soldiers and 13 vessels will be deployed by mid-year to facilitate the rapid dispersal of US and Japanese troops and equipment in the event of conflict.

Significantly, the US has agreed to extend its security treaty to cover attacks in space. Any attack on Japanese satellites used by the military and for its global positioning system would be used as a pretext for the US to unleash the full force of its military, including nuclear weapons.

The US and Japan have also agreed to collaborate in military research, the development of critical and emerging technologies and the securing of supply chains essential to the military. At the same time, the two countries have undertaken to "sharpen our shared edge on economic security... including semiconductors." This signifies that Japan will support US efforts to choke off the supply of advanced computer chips and the machinery needed for their manufacture to China.

The talks in Washington do mark a turning point in the descent of the US, backed by Japan, into war with China. Only a unified anti-war movement of the international working class can halt a conflict between nuclear-armed powers that threatens humanity with catastrophe.



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