

The Weekly Observer

Special Edition: Ukraine

April 22, 2022

This special edition of the weekly newsletter covers Japanese news reports on the situation in Ukraine. Special focus will go to the Government of Japan's latest information regarding sanctions targeting Russia, the G7/G20 developments, a timeline of the events related to Ukraine this week, and a summary of the statements made this week by GOJ members as well as other Japanese politicians and important figures.

By Content

I. Government Measures

II. G20 Meeting

1. G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Joint Statement
2. G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting

III. Timeline of Other Developments

IV. Statements by Japanese Lawmakers

1. Government of Japan
2. Other Notable Lawmakers

I. Government Measures

❖ Assistance

- **(NEW)** Provide **drones, bulletproof vests, helmets, winter battle dress uniform, tents, cameras, medical supply, hygiene products, emergency rations and generators**
- Provide **emergency humanitarian assistance of \$200 million** in such areas as **health and medical care, food, protection of people** in Ukraine and neighboring countries (Moldova, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Czech Republic) through 9 international organizations and Japanese NGOs
- **(NEW)** Provide **loans** to Ukraine of **\$300 million**
- Offer **visa extensions** to any Ukrainians in Japan who wish to receive one
- Promote **accepting evacuees** from Ukraine into Japan
 - **The GOJ has reserved seats on direct flights to and from Poland for Ukrainian evacuees who wish to travel to Japan.** The first flight left for Japan on April 8.
Source:
https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/101_kishida/statement/2022/0408kaiken.html
- Consider **personnel contributions in health and medical fields and cooperation in supplying materials** to support neighboring countries supporting refugees
 - So far, Japan has already dispatched a **JICA investigative team to Moldova** to identify evacuees' needs, as well as a **health and medical field team** working with the WHO. A **government PKO investigative team** has also been dispatched.
Source:
https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/101_kishida/statement/2022/0408kaiken.html

❖ Financial measures

- **Ban on new investments to Russia, effective May 12**
 - The measure **bans investments of more than 10 percent** to Russia, including additional investments that **exceed 10 percent and existing investment amounts added together**
Source:
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA120V30S2A410C2000000/>
 - It also **bans loans longer than a year** to Russian companies, as well as **investments to establish new shops and for business expansion** in Russia
Source:
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA120V30S2A410C2000000/>

- Implementation of an **approval system for imports** of METI designated Russian goods
Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_009340.html
- **Prevent financing to Russia from leading multilateral financial institutions**, including IMF, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Respond to sanctions evasion by Russia, including through **digital assets**
- Restrictions on transactions with **Russia's central bank**
- Sanctions that include **freezing of assets of 37 organizations and around 499 people related to the Government of Russia**, including **President Putin** and business oligarchs
 - The GOJ announced on April 12 that it imposed additional sanctions on **398 individuals and 28 organizations**. **Putin's two daughters** are part of the individuals sanctioned.
 - The sanctions involve an **approval system for payments and capital transactions** to the sanctioned individuals and organizations.
Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_009340.html
- **Freezing of assets of 9 Russian banks in Japan (Sberbank, Alfa-Bank, VEB. RF, Promsvyazbank, Bank Rossiya, VTB Bank, Sovcombank, Novicombank and Bank Otkritie)**
 - Asset freezes on Sberbank and Alfabank begin **May 12**
Source: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA120V30S2A410C2000000/>
- Join in efforts to isolate Russia from the international financial system and the global economy such as by **excluding the 7 Russian banks from the SWIFT messaging system**
- **Prohibit the issuance and transaction of new Russian sovereign debt** in the primary and secondary market
 - **Sanctions on securities** having a shorter fixed maturity for certain designated banks already prohibited from issuing or offering securities in Japan

❖ **Export control**

- **Revoke Russia's "most-favored nation" status**
- **Prohibit imports** of certain goods
 - METI announced on April 12 that, beginning **April 19**, Japan is banning imports of 6 **alcoholic beverages types** (beer, vodka, etc.), 4 **wood types** (woodchips, logs and single pieces of wood), and 28 items of **machinery and electronics** (engines for airplanes, bicycles, motorbikes, washing machines, etc.)
Sources:

https://www.meti.go.jp/policy/external_economy/trade_control/01_seido/04_seisai/downloadCrimea/20220412sanko.pdf;
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA120V30S2A410C2000000/>

■ **Existing contracts will not be subject to the ban for the next 3 months**

Source: <https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022041200263&g=pol>

- **Prohibit exports of luxury goods**
- **Sanctions on exports to 130 Russian military-related entities**, on exports of **controlled items** (300 items) listed on the internationally agreed list and of **other dual-use goods such as semiconductors**, on exports to Russia of equipment for refining petroleum, etc.

Source: <https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/20220405-OYT1T50280/>

- **Ban exports of oil refining equipment to Russia**

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press3_000748.html

❖ **Suspension of visa issuance**

- Suspension of the issuance of **entry visas to Japan** for designated individuals related to Russia

❖ **Belarus**

- **Suspend visa issuance to Japan** for designated individuals related to Belarus
 - Sanctions on designated individuals and entities including **President Lukashenko**
 - **Restrict payments through and limit capital transactions** (pre-vetting) through **3 Belarusian banks** (Belagroprombank, Bank Dabrabyt and the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus)
- Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_009301.html
- Impose sanctions on **exports to Belarusian military-related entities and on exports of controlled items** listed on the internationally agreed list and of **other dual-use goods** such as semiconductors

❖ **“Donetsk People’s Republic” and “Luhansk People’s Republic”**

- Suspend **entry visa issuance to Japan** for 30 individuals from the two breakaway republics and freeze assets held by these individuals in Japan
- **Prohibit imports from and exports to** the two breakaway republics

GOJ Ukraine Site: <https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/headline/ukraine2022/index.html>

II. G20 Meeting

1. G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors’ Joint Statement

- The G7 held a meeting in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday following the G20 meeting. It announced an **additional \$24 billion** in support of Ukraine.
- **Minister of Finance Suzuki Shunichi** reportedly explained the situation with the **weakening yen**, but none of the other representatives responded.
- Suzuki emphasized that Japan was “**monitoring market trends with a high sense of caution.**”
- Reports suggest the **G7 is wary about intervening in the market** especially since the weakening yen was caused by **BOJ policy differences** with other central banks.
- In the joint statement, the G7 states its “**resolve to restore peace and stability and uphold international law as well as in our unwavering commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism.**”
 - **It strongly condemns Russia’s unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine**, which is a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and international peace and security.
 - It urges Russia to **withdraw completely its military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine** within its internationally recognised borders.
 - It states that “**international organisations and multilateral fora should no longer conduct their activities with Russia in a business-as-usual manner.**”
 - It states that members “**regret participation by Russia in international fora**, including G20, International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings this week.”
 - It declares “**unwavering support for and heartfelt solidarity** with the Ukrainian people and government.”
 - It states that the members will “**sustain and increase our coordinated pressure for as long as necessary** and continue to urge other countries to support our efforts.”
 - It stresses the effectiveness of sanctions thus far, and commits to **enforcing sanctions and preventing any attempts to evade, circumvent or backfill sanctions.**
 - It states that **Putin, the Russian government and the enabling Belarusian regime** “**bear full responsibility for the social and economic consequences of the war.**”
 - It stresses that the multilateral **Russian Elites, Proxies, and Oligarchs (REPO) Task Force** has worked to coordinate and support actions to find, restrain, freeze without delay and, where appropriate and possible, seize, confiscate or forfeit assets and economic resources.

- It states that members will continue coordinating closely to enhance **energy security** and to secure a **stable and sustainable energy supply**.
- It strongly commits to “**not conducting government-to-government financial transactions with Russia**, including voluntary trading in Special Drawing Rights, and **call upon other countries to join us in further limiting Russia’s ability to finance** its unprovoked and unjustifiable war of choice against Ukraine.”
- It states commitment to **addressing the economic challenges caused by the war**.
- It declares support for the “**use of all available instruments to the benefit of vulnerable countries that suffer from a crisis not of their own making**.”
- It calls on “**international financial institutions to urgently bolster support for food security and agricultural production** and provide support to the most vulnerable countries.”
- It commits to “**addressing food insecurity, keeping markets open, and enhancing the resilience of the global economy**, notably including agricultural and energy markets in line with climate and environmental goals.”

Sources:

https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Content/EN/Downloads/G7-G20/2022-04-20-g7-statement-on-ukraine.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=6;
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA211P00R20C22A4000000/>;
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA216JW0R20C22A4000000/?type=my#AAAUgjYwMA>

2. G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors’ Meeting

- The G20 finance ministers and central bank governors met on Wednesday in Washington, D.C.
- The members **could not issue a joint statement** as the **U.S., Canadian and European delegations walked out in protest** before the Russian minister spoke.
- **Minister of Finance Suzuki** revealed at a press conference after the meeting that **he did not walk out with the U.S. and others, instead “condemning Russia with the strongest words possible.”**
- This walk out prevented officials from having a deep discussion about **critical issues such as surging energy prices, food insecurity and the pandemic**.
- Reports state that some members voiced concerns about the **economic impact sanctions imposed by the U.S., European countries and Japan would have**.

- **Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhii Marchenko** was invited to give a speech in which he called Russia “the disease of the world economy” and said the war must end.
- Speaking virtually, **Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov** urged othe members to **avoid politicizing the dialogue**, saying “The Group of 20 has always been and remains the economic format in the first instance.”

Sources: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOQN20EXR0Q2A420C2000000/>;
<https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022042100627&g=eco>;
<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20220421/p2g/00m/0bu/014000c>

III. Timeline of Other Developments

❖ Friday

- A spokesperson of the **Indian Ministry of External Affairs** says the Indian government **only approved the delivery of supplies to Ukraine via a commercial aircraft, not SDF aircraft**.
 - The spokesperson stated that the **government also received a request from the GOJ asking it allow the SDF aircraft to fly over its airspace**. He emphasized that the request was not to use India as a transit point.
 - The spokesperson stated that the **Indian government welcomes Japan to use commercial aircraft to move supplies**.

Source: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20220422/k10013593331000.html>

- The **Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry** announces that it has entered into the process of **selling 4.8 million barrels of oil from the national stockpile**.
 - The release of **6 million barrels from private stockpiles** has already begun. An additional **4 million barrels** from the national stockpile will also be released at a later date.
 - The 4.8 million barrels will be sold on **May 10**. This amounts to **around 2-3 days worth of supply**.
 - Japan is scheduled to release **15 million barrels of oil** in accordance with the **IEA decision to release 120 million barrels to stabilize oil prices**.

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA2216I0S2A420C2000000/?type=my#AAAUAgAAMA>

- **METI** decides it will **strengthen financial support** to expand the production capabilities of existing LNG projects.
 - **Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC)** will team up with domestic firms to **increase production in the U.S., Canada and Australia**.

- **Expanding investment and having JOGMEC guarantee loans is less risky** than developing new LNG production lines from scratch.
- The idea is that if Japan has enough supply, **it can sell the LNG it has acquired to South Korea, Taiwan and other Asian countries.**
- JOGMEC projections suggest that a **supply shortage is expected in 2022 if Russian supply is cut off.**

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA228KM0S2A420C2000000/?type=my#AAAUAgAAMA>

- Reports suggest **Shell has begun negotiations with a Chinese oil company to sell its rights in the Sakhalin-2 project.**
 - Currently, **Gazprom** invests approximately **60 percent** into the project; **Shell** invests **27.5 percent**; **Mitsui & Co.** invests **12.5 percent**; and **Mitsubishi Corp.** invests **10 percent.**
 - **Approximately 60 percent of LNG** (10 million tons) from the Sakhalin-2 project goes to **Japan** (long-term contracts); **20 percent** to **South Korea**; and the rest to **China and the spot market.**
 - Reuters reports that Shell is in negotiations with **CNOOC, China National Petroleum Corporation, and Sinopec Group.**
 - **Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda Koichi** said at a press conference on Friday that **Japanese withdrawal from the project will only benefit Russia and other countries, and will help Russia evade sanctions.**
 - Any bid to sell rights has to be **approved by the Russian government.** This is likely to limit buyers to Russian or Chinese companies.
 - While industry experts don't believe the long-term contract will be breached, there are **concerns about what happens after the contract expires around 2030.**
 - Sakhalin-2 provides gas at a **significantly lower price** than the spot market. Purchasing from the market will **increase the burden by the trillions, pushing domestic electricity and gas prices up.**

Source: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUC2214P0S2A420C2000000/>

- **ENEOS Holdings CEO Sugimori Tsutomu** says his company has **no intention of purchasing Russian crude oil “until the Ukraine problem is resolved.”**
 - Sugimori said at the press conference that **ENEOS will shift supply to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait and other Middle Eastern countries for the time being.**
 - Sugimori acknowledged that **overdependence on Middle Eastern oil has its risks**, and that the company will make every effort to diversify supply.

- Sugimori said that **oil is being viewed as a substitute for LNG** as its price continues to rise.

Source: <https://jp.reuters.com/article/eneos-ukraine-idJPKCN2MC0CP>

❖ Thursday

- **President Joe Biden** announces an **additional \$800 million** to support Ukraine.
 - The package includes “**heavy artillery weapons** — dozens of Howitzers — and **144,000 rounds of ammunition** to go with those Howitzers. It also includes more **tactical drones**.”

Source:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/04/21/remarks-by-president-biden-providing-an-update-on-russia-and-ukraine-3/>

- The **U.S. Department of Commerce** announces the Bureau of Industry and Security took **enforcement action against Russian cargo airline operating in violation of U.S. export controls**.
 - BIS issued an **order temporarily denying all export privileges for Russian cargo aircraft carrier Aviastar** due to ongoing violations of export controls.
 - “Actions like the issuance of today’s latest **Temporary Denial Order** are a **clear message to any country, firm, or person considering whether to provide material support to Russia’s military that they need to think again**,” said Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves.
 - BIS has issued TDOs on major Russian airlines **Aeroflot, Utair and Azur Air** too.

Source:

<https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2022/04/bis-takes-enforcement-action-against-russian-cargo-airline-operating>

- **Japan-New Zealand Summit**
 - **Prime Minister Kishida Fumio** held a summit meeting and had dinner with **Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern**.
 - The two leaders “**strongly condemned Russia’s aggression against Ukraine**, and concurred to respond in cooperation in a resolute manner with the international community in **urging an immediate withdrawal of forces from Ukraine, respecting the rule of law, respecting Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, opposing any unilateral changes to the status quo by force, and implementing strong sanctions**.”
 - In the joint statement, the leaders state that “**Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is a serious threat to the rules-based international order**, with ramifications well beyond Europe, including in the Indo-Pacific.”
 - The leaders **strongly condemned Russia’s inhumane acts including the killing of civilians**.

- The leaders affirmed their **consistent support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity** and their intention to align their **support for the Ukrainian people**.
- The leaders pledge to **continue raising the costs for Russia's illegal and unjustified aggression by applying economic and financial sanctions**, which target strategic and economic sectors of significance, as well as Russia's elite.

Sources: https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/ocn/nz/page3e_001192.html;
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100334912.pdf>

➤ **Japan-Uzbekistan Foreign Ministers Meeting and Working Dinner**

- **Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi Yoshimasa** held a meeting with **Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov**.
- Hayashi stated that **Russia's recent aggression against Ukraine is a clear violation of international law, strongly condemned this, and pointed out that this is a serious situation that shakes the foundation of international order**. He emphasized that the **international community must respond in unison**.
- Both sides confirmed that they will continue to work closely at various levels on international issues, including **Ukraine** and Afghanistan.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press3_000797.html

➤ **Japan-Oman Foreign Ministers' Telephone Talk**

- **Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi** held a phone conference with **Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi**.
- Hayashi stated that **Russia's recent aggression against Ukraine is an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force, an act that shakes the very foundations of the international order, a clear violation of international law, and that it is absolutely unacceptable**.
- Both sides confirmed that they would **continue to work closely together** to address the situation in Ukraine, including in efforts through the UN.
- The ministers exchanged views on the **soaring crude oil prices** in the wake of the situation in Ukraine.
- Hayashi expressed his **hopes for Oman to continue to play a leading role in stabilizing the international oil market**.
- The ministers confirmed to **continue coordination of their response**.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000367.html

➤ **Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi** received a courtesy call from **Global Fund Executive Director Peter Sands**.

- Director Sands expressed his **sincere gratitude** to the continuous contribution from Japan for the Fund.

- He explained the impact of COVID-19 on the three infectious diseases and on the health systems, while touching upon topics such as **health and medical care situation in Ukraine**.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press1e_000285.html

➤ **Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno Hirokazu holds a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of Thailand Supattanapong Punmeechaow.**

- Matsuno stated that **Russia's recent aggression against Ukraine is a unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force, a clear violation of international law, and violates the rule of law as well as respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity stipulated in the UN Charter.**
- Matsuno pointed out that the **soaring crude oil prices and general rise in prices caused by this aggression is not irrelevant to ASEAN countries including Thailand.**
- Both sides agreed to work together while **sharing concerns about the endangerment of civilian life.**

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/s_sa/sea1/th/page1_001141.html

➤ **LDP Policy Research Council Chair Takaichi Sanae reveals that India denied entry of SDF aircraft scheduled to pick up supplies to be delivered to Ukrainian evacuees in Ukraine's neighboring countries.**

- Takaichi said that the **GOJ clearly did not coordinate and plan sufficiently. The LDP approved the plan to deliver supplies such as blankets from India on Thursday.** The GOJ was planning to approve it on Friday, with **deliveries set to begin over the weekend.**
- The supply deliveries were requested by the UNHCR. The GOJ planned to deploy SDF aircraft based on the **PKO law permitting international humanitarian relief activities.**
- Reports suggest **India denied entry due to its historical relationship with Russia.**
- **Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno** said at a press conference that the GOJ will consider alternative ways to support Ukraine, and that **nothing has been decided yet.**

Sources:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA2120F0R20C22A4000000/?type=m>
[y#AAAUgiIwMA](https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022042100448&g=pol); <https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022042100448&g=pol>

- **Nikkei reports that Nippon Export Investment Insurance (NEXI) made trade insurance payments to a Japanese company that exported autoparts to Ukraine.**
- This is the **first case NEXI has made a payment covering most of a company's losses since Russia invaded Ukraine.**

- NEXI paid for most of the **roughly ¥27 million in autoparts the company exported to Ukraine**. The Ukrainian company could not pay.
- **More than 200 companies have called about losses** since NEXI established a hotline in late February for Japanese companies doing business in Ukraine and Russia.

Source:

https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA218SN0R20C22A4000000/?type=m_y#AAAUgiYwMA

- **Marubeni Corporation**, a major Japanese integrated trading and investment business conglomerate, announces that it will **cancel existing transactions with Russia as much as possible** following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
 - Marubeni imports and exports **chemicals, tires, rubber and fishery products** to and from Russia.

Source: <https://www.jiji.com/sp/article?k=2022042100954&g=eco>

❖ Wednesday

- The **U.S. Department of the Treasury** announces it has **designated facilitators of Russian sanctions evasion**.
 - The **Office of Foreign Assets and Control** designated entities and individuals involved in **attempts to evade sanctions imposed by the U.S. and its partners on Russia**.
 - OFAC designated **Russian commercial bank Transkapitalbank and a global network of more than 40 individuals and entities** led by U.S.-designated Russian oligarch **Konstantin Malofeyev**.
 - OFAC also designated **companies operating in Russia's virtual currency mining industry**, reportedly the third largest in the world.
 - **Transkapitalbank** has offered services to several banks in Asia, including within China, and the Middle East, and **suggested options to evade international sanctions**.

Source: <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0731>

- **Prime Minister Kishida** participates in a **summit meeting hosted by President Biden regarding the situation in Ukraine**.
 - The leaders shared the recognition that the **atrocities committed by Russian troops against civilians in Ukraine are serious violations of international humanitarian law and are absolutely unforgivable**.
 - The leaders agreed that it is a **common responsibility to continue support for the Ukrainian government and its people** promptly in various ways.
 - Kishida acknowledged that we are on the **verge of ending Russia's outrageous aggression and protecting peaceful order**.

- Kishida stated that the **aggression by Russia impacts not only Europe but East Asia too**. The prime minister explained that he has been actively reaching out to Asian countries.
- Participants: U.S., U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Poland, Romania, EU, Japan.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ep/page1_001139.html

➤ **Japan-Malaysia Summit**

- **Prime Minister Kishida** held a phone conference with **Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob**.
- Kishida stated that **Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a clear violation of international law and an act that shakes the foundations of the international order including in Asia and opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force**.
- The leaders confirmed that they would continue to closely work together.
- Kishida expressed that **maintaining and strengthening free and open international order based on the rule of law has become even more important**, and that he would like to strengthen cooperation to realize a FOIP and the AOIP.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sea2/my/page1e_000386.html

➤ **Prime Minister Kishida meets with UN WFP Association Chairman Ando Koki.**

- Chairman Ando reported to the prime minister that the **private sector has donated ¥1.4 billion**, which has been used to provide food for Ukrainian evacuees.
- The chairman requested that the **GOJ increase contributions to the WFP and other international institutions** to support Ukrainian evacuees.

Source: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20220420/k10013591251000.html>

➤ **Japan-Kuwait Foreign Ministers' Telephone Talk**

- **Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi** held a phone conference with **Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohamed Al-Sabah**.
- Hayashi stated that the recent invasion of Ukraine by Russia is a **unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force**, and is a **serious situation that undermines the foundation of not only Europe but also the entire international order**.
- The ministers confirmed to **continue their close coordination** in responding to the situation.
- The ministers exchanged views on the **soaring crude oil prices** in the wake of the situation in Ukraine.

- Hayashi expressed **his gratitude for Kuwait's stable supply of crude oil to Japan over the years, and his hopes for Kuwait to continue to play a leading role in stabilizing the international oil market.**

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press6e_000378.html

- **Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno** confirms that **eight Russian diplomats left the country** from Haneda Airport on a charter aircraft.

- The GOJ decided to **expel eight Russian diplomats** as part of its additional sanction measures.
- Matsuno explained that there are **no communications regarding retaliatory measures by Russia.**

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGKKZO60179660Q2A420C2PD0000/?type=my#AAAUgjIwMA>

- The **Ministry of Defense's Joint Staff Office** announces that it confirmed **six Russian vessels passed through the Tsushima Strait** on Tuesday, moving north from the East China Sea to the Sea of Japan.

- The Office confirmed that there was a **destroyer of the Russian Navy and a pipe laying ship associated with the government-affiliated natural gas company Gazprom.**
- There is a chance the **destroyer was accompanying the pipe laying ship** taking part in the construction of a pipeline between Russia and Germany.
- The Office also confirmed that a **Chinese information gathering vessel** passed through the **waters near Amami Oshima in Kagoshima** on Wednesday, moving from the East China Sea to the Pacific Ocean.

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA20E0K0Q2A420C2000000/?type=my#AAAUgjIwMA>

- The **Ministry of Finance's March trade statistics** shows the **trade balance with Russia was ¥136.6 billion in deficit**, increasing **5.5 times** from the same month last year.

- **Exports**, mainly auto-related exports, **decreased by 31.5 percent to ¥50.9 billion** due to disruption of supply chains resulting from the invasion of Ukraine and the GOJ's export ban.
- **Imports increased 89.6 percent to ¥187.5 billion** due to soaring resource prices, such as for LNG.

Sources: <https://www.customs.go.jp/toukei/shinbun/trade-st/2022/2022034.pdf>;
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA201CV0Q2A420C2000000/?type=my#AAAUAgAAMA>

- According to a poll released by MOFA, **65 percent of respondents believe Japan should focus particularly on improving coordination with the international community regarding the situation in Ukraine.**
 - **64 percent** of respondents believe Japan should focus on **promoting the acceptance of refugees from Ukraine to Japan.**
 - **58 percent** of respondents believe Japan should focus on **strengthening support for Ukraine.**

Source: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100333988.pdf>

- The Diet passes the **amended Act on Temporary Measures concerning Customs** and the **Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act** to bolster sanctions against Russia.
 - The bills **revoke Russia's "most-favored nation status"** and **raise tariffs on fishery products and wooden products.**
 - The GOJ will begin raising tariffs on salmon, fish eggs, crab and designated wooden items to the original rate **until April 2023.**
 - The finance ministry calculates that there will be an **additional ¥3.9 million in tariffs.**
 - For example, the **tariff on sockeye salmon will be raised from 3.5 percent to 5 percent.** Japan imports **79 percent** of its sockeye salmon from Russia.
 - The amended Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act will **restrict transfers of digital currency to individuals sanctioned by the GOJ.**

Source: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA198KC0Z10C22A4000000/>

❖ Tuesday

- The GOJ triggers an **import ban on 38 items**, including vodka and wood.
 - This is the **first time** Japan is banning imports from Russia.
 - The GOJ will **permit imports that have already been purchased until July 18.**
 - The 38 items account for **1.1 percent of Japanese imports** of Russian goods in 2021.

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA1996A0Z10C22A4000000/?type=my#AAAUgiQwMA>

- The **Ministry of Defense** announces it will be providing Ukraine with **non-lethal equipment such as bulletproof vests, as well as protective masks and protective gear for protection from chemical weapons, and drones.**

Source: <https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/news/2022/04/19d.html>

- The LDP apologizes to opposition parties for **donating Diet members' monthly allowance from October 2021 to support Ukraine (through the Japanese Red Cross Society)**, in violation of an agreement reached by the parties.

- **LDP Secretary General Motegi Toshimitsu** said Monday that he would like to ask other parties that have not taken the procedure to return the allowance to **follow the agreement and donate the money**.
- In response, the **four opposition parties' Diet affairs chairpersons** met and agreed that the **LDP went against the agreement that the parties would not touch the October allowance while they deliberated returning the allowance to the national treasury**.
- **CDP Diet Affairs Chairman Mabuchi Sumio** said Motegi was full of malicious intent, neglecting what has been agreed upon by the ruling and opposition parties, and taking a swipe at the other parties. He requested that **Motegi explain his statement and apologize**.
- The October allowance became an issue as **lawmakers elected that month received a full month's worth of allowance (¥1 million) despite only being in office for a day**.
- The law mandating the monthly allowance was **amended and passed on April 15**, imposing a **daily allowance** for such extraordinary cases.

Sources: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20220419/k10013589641000.html>;
<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA18AS70Y2A410C2000000/?type=m#AAAUgiQwMA>

❖ Monday

➤ **Japan-Switzerland Summit**

- **Prime Minister Kishida** held a meeting with **President Ignazio Cassis**.
- Kishida stated that **Russia's aggression shakes the foundations of the international order, including not only Europe but also Asia**, and that **unity within the international community is needed now more than ever**.
- Kishida stated his intention to **collaborate closely with Switzerland**, an important partner with whom Japan shares fundamental values.
- The leaders shared the view that **Russia must be held seriously accountable for the civilian killings**, and that **strong sanctions against Russia should continue so that Russia will listen to the international community and end its aggression immediately**.
- Kishida stated that **it is even more important to promote cooperation among like-minded countries to achieve a FOIP under current circumstances** when the rule-based international order is facing immense challenges.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/ch/page4e_001232.html

➤ **Japan-Switzerland Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Working Dinner**

- **Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi** held a meeting and dinner with **President and Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis**.

- Hayashi stated that he looked forward to having meaningful discussions with **Switzerland, an important partner sharing fundamental values, regarding the situation in Ukraine** as well as further strengthening the bilateral relationship, enhancing engagement in the Indo-Pacific, and deepening cooperation in the international arena.
- The ministers shared the view that **Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a clear violation of international law and a serious situation that undermines the very foundation of the entire international order, including Asia.**
- The ministers confirmed their intention to **continue the sanctions against Russia in coordination with the international community.**
- The ministers **concurred on deepening cooperation in the UN, including on Security Council reform,** taking into account that both Japan and Switzerland are candidates for the June 2022 elections for non-permanent membership in the UNSC.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_003116.html

❖ Sunday

- **President Volodymyr Zelenskyy** spoke on the phone with **IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva** and requested that the G7 and others provide **about ¥6 trillion to cover the government's budget deficit** (half-year worth).

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGKKZO60113560Z10C22A4MM8000/?type=my#AAAUgiIwMA>

- A Kyodo poll shows **74 percent of respondents believe the GOJ should continue sanctions even if it negatively impacts Japan's economy and the people's livelihoods.**
 - **69 percent of respondents** said they believe the **increase in prices on food and other items** has a “massive” or “some” impact on their lives.
- An *Asahi Shimbun* poll shows **88 percent of respondents support Prime Minister Kishida's statement that Russia's civilian killings constitute a “war crime.”**
 - **60 percent of respondents** (up 8 points) said they **approve Prime Minister Kishida's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.**
 - **68 percent of respondents** (up 1 percent from March) said **Japan should continue sanctions even if it negatively impacts the economy.**
 - **82 percent of respondents** said the **GOJ should encourage UN reform.**

Source: <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASQ4K771NQ4GUZPS009.html>

❖ Saturday (or before)

- A Teikoku Databank report published on April 15 shows that **40 percent of surveyed Japanese companies have halted business operations in Russia.**
 - This number has **nearly doubled** since a March 15 report (37 to 60/168).
 - As of April 11, **31 of the 60 companies are halting transactions; 11 are halting production; 9 are halting operations; and 3 are withdrawing completely.**
 - Of the 60 companies, **42 percent are in the manufacturing industry; 27 percent in construction, service, etc.; 26 percent in finance and insurance; 20 percent in wholesale; and 20 percent in transport and communications.**

Source: <https://www.tdb.co.jp/report/watching/press/pdf/p220407.pdf>

IV. Statements by Japanese Lawmakers

1. Government of Japan

❖ Prime Minister Kishida Fumio

- On a car rally in Niigata on Saturday, Kishida said the **GOJ is considering a new system to recognize evacuees that do not fit under the “refugee” category defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention as “semi-refugees”.**
 - Kishida revealed that the **Ministry of Justice** is considering accepting people who must be accepted from a **humanitarian point of view in a manner similar to refugees.**
 - Under Japan’s strict conditions, **Ukrainian evacuees are not considered refugees.**
 - The GOJ envisions a system that **recognizes and protects evacuees from conflict areas as “complementary protection targets”** who are “semi-refugees.”
 - It is expected that they will be **treated the same way as refugees**, being granted status as a permanent resident, being able to stay in Japan up to five years, and being able to join national health insurance.
 - The GOJ plans to submit an **amended Immigration Control Act** in the extraordinary session in the fall. The “semi-refugee” system was part of the **amended bill that was killed last year** when it was tabled after the death of a Sri Lankan woman in a detention facility.
 - As of April 13, **557 Ukrainian evacuees** have come to Japan.

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA1644E0W2A410C2000000/?type=my#AAAUgjIwMA>

❖ Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa

- At a press conference on Friday, Hayashi said that **Japan has imposed strong sanctions against Russia** with the rest of the G7 and the international community so that Russia will stop the invasion as soon as possible.
 - Hayashi said that the **GOJ will continue to work in unison with the G7 and the rest of the international community in increasing diplomatic and economic pressure on Russia.**
 - Hayashi said that the **GOJ intends to also continue supporting Ukrainians and their neighboring countries.**

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/kaiken/kaiken24_000109.html

- At a press conference on Tuesday, Hayashi said **Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force and an act that shakes the foundation of international order.**
 - Hayashi said that the **GOJ finds it unacceptable and strongly condemns the act as it clearly violates international law.**
 - Hayashi emphasized that the **Putin administration is at fault for the aggression against Ukraine.**
 - Hayashi said that **he would like to remind Japanese citizens not to verbally abuse Russian citizens in Japan just for being Russian.**
 - Hayashi said that the GOJ plans to participate in G20 meetings, coordinate with the G7 and other nations, and **urge the international community as a whole to continue pressuring Russia.**

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/kaiken/kaiken4_001065.html

❖ Minister of Defense Kishi Nobuo

- At a press conference on Tuesday, Kishi said that **Russia's aggression, a violation of international law, is an act that shakes the foundation of international order not only in Europe but also in Asia.**
 - Kishi said that it is **important from the viewpoint of Japan's security to act resolutely in unity with the international community.**
 - Kishi said that the **MOD/JSDF will continue to make every effort to support Ukraine.**

Source: <https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/kisha/2022/0419a.html>

❖ Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno Hirokazu

- At a press conference on Friday, Matsuno said that **Japan withdrawing from projects will allow Russia and third countries to take project rights and hike prices further, only helping Russia and making sanctions less effective.**
 - Matsuno was referring to the news that **Shell was entering negotiations to sell its rights in Sakhalin-2 to Chinese companies.**

Source:

<https://www.sankei.com/article/20220422-4UBZUF2FQFNAJPN154VHDCYVAM/>

- ❖ Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Isozaki Yoshihiko
 - At a press conference on Wednesday, Isozaki said **Japan’s provisions of defense equipment cannot be condemned by Russia as it was provided for Ukraine to defend itself.**
 - Isozaki was responding to news that the **deputy speaker of the State Duma** had criticized the GOJ’s decision to send protective masks and other equipment to Ukraine.
 - Isozaki also stressed that the **GOJ is deeply concerned that the humanitarian crisis will be exacerbated by further aggression.** He was responding to **Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s statement** that the military operation had entered a new phase.
 - Isozaki said that in order to **stop further escalation and realize a ceasefire as soon as possible, Japan will impose strong sanctions** in coordination with the international community.

Source: <https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022042000539&g=pol>

- ❖ Minister of Justice Furukawa Yoshihisa
 - On a TV program aired on Sunday, Furukawa said the **GOJ plans to swiftly introduce legislation to establish “semi-refugee” status for people evacuating from conflict areas.**

Source:

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA170TB0X10C22A4000000/?type=my#AAAUAgAAMA>

2. Other Notable Lawmakers

- ❖ Former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo
 - At a symposium held on Thursday, Abe said that **Putin is like a Sengoku era warlord in that he is also a “worshipper of power.”**
 - Specifically, Abe referred to **Oda Nobunaga**, saying it is **“like asking Oda Nobunaga to respect human rights knowing he won’t listen to you.”**

Source: <https://www.jiji.com/sp/article?k=2022042201034&g=pol>

- At a press conference held on Thursday, Abe said that the **situation in Ukraine has served as an opportunity for citizens to realize the Japanese Constitution has problems.**

- Abe called for a **debate on the Constitution, especially Article 9**, a central piece of the “post-war regime.”

Source: <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASQ4P7JYHQ4PUTFK02J.html>

- At an LDP meeting in Fukushima on Sunday, Abe said that Putin **“misunderstood the strength and determination of Ukrainians to defend their homeland. This is what happens when one overestimates his own power.”**

Source: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXZQOUA173L20X10C22A4000000/>

❖ CDP leader Izumi Kenta

- At a press conference on Friday, Izumi said that when using SDF aircraft, **it is the basic of the basics to obtain the consent of the other party**. He was referring to the news that **India denied the entry of SDF aircraft delivering supplies to Ukraine**.

- Izumi said that there was a **lack of communication** between the two governments. He added that this situation coming to light like this **damages Japan’s diplomatic reputation and trust in the GOJ**.

- Izumi pointed out that **he questions whether the GOJ has the capability of responding to a similar situation** in which SDF aircraft are deployed to rescue Japanese nationals in the event of a **Taiwan or Korean Peninsula contingency**.

Source: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20220422/k10013594091000.html>

- In response to Abe’s statement that Putin is like Oda Nobunaga, Izumi said on Friday that **Abe was the one who met with the “warlord” 27 times and told him that “you and I are looking at the same future.”**

- Izumi further said that **if Abe enjoys such a close relationship with Putin, he should try and stop Putin**.

Source: <https://www.jiji.com/sp/article?k=2022042201034&g=pol>

❖ Japan Innovation Party lawmaker Suzuki Muneo (father of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Takako)

- At a speech delivered in Hokkaido on Sunday, Suzuki said that **Russia is still leaving room open for peace treaty negotiations by publicly announcing negotiations are over “in the current situation.”**

- Suzuki said that the **GOJ will pay dearly** if it doesn’t read into Russia’s message properly, implying that the **government should reconsider sanctions against Russia**.

- Suzuki is known in the political world as a Russia expert/handler.

Source: [https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022041700371&g=pol](https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2022041700371&g=pol;);
<https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/93643>