

# Japan rearms at U.S. urging: Targets China, North Korea, Russia

written by Gary Wilson  
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The Maritime Self-Defense Force ship JS Kurama leads a formation with U.S. guided missile destroyers during a war exercise. The Japanese Self-Defense Force flies the imperial “rising sun” flag rather than the Japanese national flag which is

only the red sun on a white field. The rising sun flag is associated with Japanese militarism and imperialism and is seen to be directed particularly at North Korea and China. Photo: U.S. Navy

The radical new defense strategy announced on Dec. 16 by Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida doubles military spending — a five-year, \$320-billion military buildup to secure offensive strike capacity, which is forbidden in Japan's 1947 U.S.-created constitution.

The constitution says that Japan renounces war as a sovereign right and declares that “land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.”

The new defense strategy, intended to counter this constitutional provision directly, was initiated at the urging of Washington. The U.S. is actively militarizing the Pacific region – especially Japan – to target China.

The [New York Times](#) praised Japan's remilitarization, saying it met the need for a “more muscular military” aimed at China.

The U.S. ambassador to Japan, Rahm Emanuel, said in a statement that “the Prime Minister is making a clear, unambiguous strategic statement about Japan's role as a security provider in the Indo-Pacific.”

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said, “We welcome the release of Japan's updated strategy documents ... which reflect Japan's staunch commitment to upholding the international rules-based order and a free and open Indo-Pacific,” adding that “we support Japan's decision to acquire new capabilities that strengthen regional deterrence, including counterstrike capabilities.”

Japan's Minister of Defense Nobuo Kishi, younger brother of the late [Prime Minister Shinzo Abe](#), declared last year that Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) should have

the right and capability to launch a “preemptive strike” against areas of some neighboring countries.

[Salman Rafi Sheikh](#), a professor of politics at Lahore University in Pakistan, noted that the U.S. empire has instructed both of its two former World War II enemies, Germany and Japan, to rearm:

“Japan’s drive to arm itself has an interesting parallel in Europe, where Germany, too, has decided to massively increase its total defense spending to 100 billion euros. With Washington actively supporting these critical changes to establish powerful militaries around its core rival states – Russia and China in Europe and Asia – new forms of conflict are likely to emerge, with prospects of major counter alliances on the horizon, too.”

Salman Rafi Sheikh continues: “Japan’s increasing defense budget comes on top of the full possibility of ‘interoperability’ between the U.S. and Japanese units, allowing the latter to ‘practice its forward-deployed attack capabilities.’ What is extremely important to note here is that the core purpose of the ‘interoperability’ is not defensive; it is offensive, which means that Japan’s so-called ‘pacifism’ is nothing more than a rhetoric that Tokyo uses – and will continue to use – to mask its rapidly growing military preparedness against Russia and China.

“That this process is being actively supported by the U.S. is evident from Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida’s announcement, on the sidelines of Biden’s Tokyo visit, to ‘drastically strengthen’ its military capabilities.

“According to a new economic policy draft released by the Kishida administration, the decision is a response to ‘attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by forces in East Asia, making regional security increasingly severe.’ If this assessment sounds vague, it is by design to camouflage Japan’s rise as a new military power that can rival Russia and China as a U.S. ally.

“In fact, it is already acting as a U.S. ally against Russia in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In April, Japanese officials announced that they will send defense equipment – drones and protective gear – to Ukraine to help the Ukrainian military fight the Russian forces.

“While Japan’s Self-Defense Forces rules prohibit the transfer of defense products to other countries, Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi justified this transfer as ‘commercial’ and ‘disused items.’ More self-serving justifications will be invented to mask Japan’s so-called ‘pacifist militarization.’”

