

NATO Is Creeping Into Asia, Warns North Korea

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North Korea's Foreign Ministry has claimed NATO is seeking to increase its influence in Asia, citing growing "military collusion" with Japan, which hosted a delegation from the military alliance last month to discuss ways to step up cooperation.

In comments carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Monday, an official with the Foreign Ministry's Japan Research Center, Kim Seol-hwa, said Washington is gradually pushing NATO into Asia through partnerships with regional powers.

"It is an open secret that the United States has been trying to create a military alliance like this in the Asia-Pacific region," he [said](#), adding that the "recent unprecedented military collusion between Japan and NATO is arousing great concern and alertness in the international community."

Kim went on to cite recent [reports](#) that NATO is now in talks to open a "liaison office" in Japan, its first such facility in Asia. The office would be used to "conduct periodic consultations with Japan and key partners in the region such as South Korea, Australia and New Zealand," according to the Nikkei Asia news website.

Japan Enters A Dangerous Phase

"All facts clearly show that NATO'S attempt to advance into the Asia-Pacific region through military collusion with Japan has entered a dangerous implementation phase," the North Korean Foreign Ministry official continued, also pointing to other "confrontational alliances" such as the 'Quad' bloc – which Beijing has [decried](#) as an "Asian NATO" – and AUKUS pact between Australia, the UK and the U.S.

Japan-NATO Military Cooperation

Last month, Japan hosted a [delegation](#) from NATO's Cooperative Security Division, which met with senior military leaders to "discuss the current military cooperation and opportunities to foster a stronger partnership," as well as future joint drills with Japan's armed forces.

Further highlighting the increased cooperation, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg sat down with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi at the alliance's headquarters in Brussels on April 4, where the two officials [vowed](#) to further strengthen their partnership. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida also [met with the NATO chief](#) earlier this year, after attending an alliance summit in 2022, a first for a Japanese premier.

Kim argued that NATO's overtures to countries like Japan and South Korea were part of plans to "build a huge anti-China and anti-Russia encirclement" in the broader region, claiming the U.S.-led alliance hopes to "keep neighboring countries in check" while expanding its military footprint across the continent.

China's Reaction To Reports Of NATO Office In Japan

An earlier media report said:

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has urged its Asian neighbors to exercise "high vigilance" in response to media reports claiming that NATO is planning to open its first liaison office in the region, in Japan's capital Tokyo.

Asia is an anchor for peace and stability and a promising land for cooperation and development, not a wrestling ground for geopolitical competition," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman **Mao Ning** said when addressed on the issue during a briefing on Thursday.

NATO's Continued Eastward Foray

Mao warned that "NATO's continued eastward foray into the Asia-Pacific and interference in regional affairs will inevitably undermine regional peace and stability and stoke camp competition."

"High vigilance among regional countries" is required in view of the U.S.-led military bloc's attempts to gain presence in Asia, she added.

According to the Nikkei Asia outlet, NATO wants to establish a one-man station in Tokyo to be able to conduct periodic consultations with Japan and its other allies in the Asia-Pacific, such as Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea.

The idea of NATO establishing a liaison office was first raised by Japanese **Prime Minister Fumio Kishida** and NATO **Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg** during their meeting in Tokyo in late January. Japan must agree to fund the operations of the bloc's mission in order for it to open in the country, Nikkei Asia added.

The abbreviation 'NATO' stands for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but the bloc has recently openly admitted that it also has interests in the Indo-Pacific. Last June, the bloc's allies from the region participated in the NATO Summit for the first time ever.

NATO is “strengthening relations” with Japan, Australia, South Korea, and New Zealand because “in today’s complex security environment, relations with like-minded partners across the globe are increasingly important to address cross-cutting security issues and global challenges, as well as to defend the rule-based international order,” the bloc said in a statement last month.

Russia, which strongly opposes NATO’s expansion towards its borders, has also criticized the bloc’s attempts to spread its activities into Asia.

NATO To Open Office In Japan

Another earlier Nikkei Asia report said:

Japan and NATO are reportedly seeking to increase collaboration in cyberspace and the U.S.-led military bloc plans to open its first liaison office in Tokyo.

According to the outlet, which cited both Japanese and NATO officials, the planned one-person station would allow, the bloc conduct periodic consultations with regional ‘partners’ such as Australia, New Zealand and South Korea.

The outlet noted that similar NATO stations are usually provided by the host nation, and that if Tokyo ends up funding a Western military foothold in Japan, it would mark a new phase in defense cooperation for the country.

Tokyo also reportedly plans to sign an Individually Tailored Partnership Program with the bloc before the NATO summit in Lithuania in July. Japan and NATO are supposedly looking to deepen collaboration in tackling cyber threats, coordinate stances on emerging and disruptive technologies, and exchange notes on fighting disinformation, Nikkei reported.

The news comes after NATO openly outlined its plans to increase cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. In its 2022 Strategic Concept, the bloc explained the need to create new alliances by emphasizing “systemic challenge” to Euro-Atlantic security posed by China and Russia, with Moscow described as the “most significant and direct threat” to NATO.

China has also denounced NATO’s Strategic Concept, claiming it was filled with distorted facts and tainted with a Cold War mentality that smears Beijing’s foreign policy.

West Building WWII Axis-style Alliance, Says Putin

An earlier media report said:

Western countries are seeking to put together new global alliances reminiscent of those forged by the Axis powers prior to World War Two, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said.

Speaking in an interview with Russia 1 TV aired in March 2023, the Russian leader dismissed claims that Moscow and Beijing are forming a military bloc that could threaten the West. He described the cooperation between the two as “transparent,” adding that Russia and China make no secret about their ties in various spheres, including defense.

Meanwhile, Putin continued, the U.S. is creating new alliances, citing NATO’s new Strategic Concept as an example of such efforts. “It directly stipulates that NATO is going to develop relations with nations in the Asia-Pacific region, including New Zealand, Australia and South

Korea," he said.

Global NATO

The bloc also announced that it would endeavor to create what Putin called "global NATO," adding that the UK and Japan recently signed a reciprocal military access agreement.

"That is why Western analysts themselves – not us – are saying that the West is starting to build a new axis similar to the one that was created back in the 30s by the fascist regimes in Germany and Italy, and militaristic Japan."

The U.S.-led military bloc approved the new concept at the Madrid summit of the bloc last June, while describing Russia as the "most significant and direct threat" to NATO amid the Ukraine conflict. In a first, it also addressed the challenges stemming from China, claiming that Beijing's "hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric" target the alliance's security.

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