



Morning Alert - Friday, June 2, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Morning News

NHK and Fuji-TV gave prominent coverage to President Trump's announcement of his decision to pull the United States out of the Paris climate accord. President Trump stressed that the withdrawal "represents a reassertion of America's sovereignty." The broadcasters underscored that the departure of the world's second largest emitter of CO2 from the landmark agreement will deal a heavy blow to the international community's commitment to curbing global warming. They projected that many nations will react strongly to the President's decision to put American economic interests ahead of protecting the global environment.

All national dailies other than Nikkei gave top play to reports on a Lower House committee's approval of a bill concerning the Emperor's abdication. Nikkei led with a report saying that the market capitalization of global equities reached a record \$76.6 trillion at the end of May, led by Apple, Amazon, and other technology giants where new innovations are attracting investment money.

## INTERNATIONAL

### U.S., Japan to hold 2+2 meeting

Mainichi wrote that the governments of the U.S. and Japan have decided to hold a 2+2 meeting of their foreign and defense ministers in Washington in mid-July. This will be the first such meeting to be held under the Trump administration. The paper speculated that the two nations will discuss specific steps to deal with North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and a response to China's increasing activities in the South China Sea.

## **Putin expresses concern about possible deployment of U.S. military in Northern Territories**

Asahi front-paged a report on remarks made by Russian President Putin on Thursday in St. Petersburg, during which he expressed concern that in theory it would be possible for the U.S. to establish bases on the four islands of the Northern Territories if they were returned to Japan. Putin made the remarks during a joint interview with major wire service agencies around the world. This was the first time for the president to openly express concern over the possibility of U.S. military deployment on the islands. The paper wrote that the Russian leader expressed the view that it would be difficult for Moscow to return the islets to Japan under the circumstances in which the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty could be applied to the Northern Territories. Most other papers ran similar inside-page reports.

## **International conference on nuclear terrorism starts in Tokyo**

Asahi wrote that a two-day meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) opened in Tokyo on Thursday. During the meeting, which is co-chaired by the U.S. and Russia, 200 officials from 73 nations and four international organizations will discuss technology to detect nuclear material and the future activities of the initiative. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura emphasized Japan's efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism during a keynote address, and messages from President Trump and President Putin were read aloud.

## **SECURITY**

### **SDF holds joint drills with two U.S. aircraft carriers in Sea of Japan**

Yomiuri and Sankei front-paged reports on a Defense Ministry announcement on Thursday that two MSDF vessels and ASDF F-15 fighter jets held joint exercises with the USS Carl Vinson and the USS Ronald Reagan in the Sea of Japan on Thursday. This was the first time for the SDF to engage in exercises with two U.S. aircraft carriers at the same time. The papers speculated that the drills were intended to demonstrate to North Korea the close security cooperation between the U.S. and Japan. Most other papers ran similar inside-page reports.

### **GOJ rejects Okinawa's request that it obtain permit to destroy rock reefs at Henoko**

Yomiuri wrote that in response to the Okinawa Prefectural Government's request for the GOJ to obtain a permit to destroy rock reefs at Henoko for the FRF construction, the Defense Ministry's Okinawa bureau submitted to the prefecture on Thursday a document expressing its view that it is not necessary for the central government to obtain a permit. Governor Onaga is likely to file a lawsuit in July or later seeking an injunction to suspend the ongoing construction.

### **Edward Snowden warns of looming mass surveillance in Japan**

Tokyo Shimbun front-paged a [Kyodo interview](#) with Edward Snowden, the former CIA employee who exposed the NSA's collection of large volumes of personal data. During the interview, Snowden commented on the anti-conspiracy bill by saying that Japan may be moving closer to sweeping surveillance of ordinary citizens as the government eyes changing the law to enhance police powers in the name of counterterrorism.

## **POLITICS**

### **Tokyo Governor Koike becomes leader of political group**

All papers wrote that Tokyo Governor Koike on Thursday became the leader of Tomin First no Kai, a political group formed last September by Tokyo assembly members supporting her, ahead of the metropolitan assembly election on July 2. Koike submitted her resignation to the LDP ahead of a campaign kickoff meeting for Tomin First. The papers speculated that the move is intended to boost public support for the group and intensify her offensive against the LDP ahead of the election.

Although the governor enjoys high support ratings, the group's popularity is still limited. Koike has so far been active only at the metropolitan level, but there is concern within the LDP that her group may become active in national politics by fielding candidates in the next general election.

