

April 18, 1991

Japanese-Soviet Joint Communique

Citation:

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<https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/territory/edition92/index.html>

<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/300656>

Summary:

Gorbachev visited Japan in April 1991, engaging in discussions with Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu on resolving territorial issues and concluding a peace treaty to foster long-term bilateral relations. The communique of their talks emphasizes mutual efforts to strengthen cooperation in various fields and proposed measures to improve ties, including territorial exchanges and economic collaboration. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

Original Language:

Russian, Japanese

Contents:

Transcript - Russian, Japanese

Translation - English

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1. President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics paid an Official Visit to Japan from April 16 through April 19, 1991, at the invitation of the Government of Japan. President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was accompanied by Minister for Foreign Affairs A.A. Bessmertnykh of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other government officials.

2. President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Mrs. Gorbachev had an audience with Their Imperial Highnesses The Emperor and The Empress of Japan in the Imperial Palace on April 16.

3. President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had frank and constructive discussions with Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu of Japan on issues between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, including the negotiations for the conclusion of a peace treaty, and on major international issues of mutual interest. President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics invited Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu of Japan to pay an Official Visit to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This invitation was gratefully accepted. The details of the visit are to be arranged through diplomatic channels.

4. Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu of Japan and President M.S. Gorbachev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics held an in-depth and thorough negotiations on a whole range of issues relating to the preparation and conclusion of a peace treaty between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, including the issue of territorial demarcation, taking into consideration the positions of both sides on the attribution of the islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri, and Etorofu.

The joint work done previously - particularly the negotiations at the highest level - has made it possible to confirm a series of conceptual understandings: that the peace treaty should be the document marking the final resolution of war-related issues, including the territorial issue that it should pave the way for long-term Japan-USSR relations on the basis of friendship, and that it should not infringe upon either side's security.

The Soviet side proposed that measures be taken in the near future to expand exchanges between residents of Japan and residents of the aforementioned islands, to establish a simplified visa-free framework for visits by the Japanese to these islands, to initiate joint, mutually beneficial economic activities in that region, and to reduce the Soviet military forces stationed on these islands. The Japanese side stated its intention to consult on these questions in the future.

As well as emphasizing the primary importance of accelerating work to conclude the preparations for a peace treaty, the Prime Minister and the President expressed their firm resolve to make constructive and vigorous efforts to this end taking advantage of all positive elements that have been built up in bilateral negotiations in the years since Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics jointly proclaimed an end to the state of war and the restoration of diplomatic relations in 1956.

At the same time, they recognized that the development of constructive cooperation between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, including the adjacent Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic, is advisable in an atmosphere of good-neighborliness, mutual benefit, and trust. Cooperation should take place in trade-economic, scientific-technological, and political spheres as well as in social, cultural, educational, tourism, and sports realms through free and wide-ranging exchanges between the citizens of the two countries.