

Thoughts on Sino–Japanese Relations

Essays reflecting an Informal Workshop on Confidence Building, Conflict Prevention, and Peacebuilding in Northeast Asia, August 2007, Sweden

Ingolf Kiesow
Martina Klimesova
Editors

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Foreword

This publication reflects part of an informal Sino-Japanese workshop arranged by ISDP between persons from different backgrounds in Japan and China, in the fields of military affairs and diplomacy as well as academia.

During the workshop, participants were invited to elaborate in written articles on their views expressed during the meetings, which were held behind closed doors according to Chatham House rules and without any notes being taken. We received three articles on our request. In the articles the differences in perceptions and standpoints are quite apparent, but this is not necessarily how the views were discussed at the workshop. On the contrary, the atmosphere was very positive and focused on constructive discussion despite, at times, the delicate problems. This reflects very much the positive development we have seen in Sino-Japanese relations since the improvement of relations began.

Neither ISDP nor the organizations of the authors are responsible for or can be associated with any of the views expressed in the articles; they reflect solely those of the individual authors. This workshop is a part of a larger project that includes a number of activities and book projects, including an edited volume by Rysoei Kokubun and Niklas Swanström. ISDP and our collaboration partners have taken great satisfaction in seeing that during our research activities Sino-Japanese relations have improved significantly, and we look forward to further activities that will be published not only in our Asia Paper Series but also as articles and academic books.

We are greatly encouraged by this outcome and firmly intend to work hard to make a continuation of this research project possible.

Niklas L. P. Swanström, ISDP director
September 2, 2008

Proceedings from the Informal Workshop on Confidence Building, Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Northeast Asia, August 27-28, 2007

Christopher Len

Stockholm, September 30 2007

Keywords: China, Japan, Sino-Japanese Relations, Confidence Building, Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Northeast Asia

Event: ISDP organized an informal Sino-Japanese workshop between August 27-28, 2007 to facilitate the exchange of views among Chinese and Japanese people from different backgrounds in Japan and China, in the fields of military affairs and diplomacy as well as academia. The visiting workshop participants consisted of 5 Chinese and 4 Japanese participants.¹

Relevance/Background: The Sino-Japanese relationship has been on the mend since Shinzo Abe assumed the post of Prime Minister in Japan in late September 2006. His visit to China in October 2006 broke the ice between the two countries while the reciprocal visit by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in April 2007 led to a further thawing of bilateral relations. However, as the workshop revealed, there are several outstanding and contentious issues that continue to pose as obstacles to bilateral relations between the two Asian giants.

Analyses

Both workshop parties acknowledge the importance of bilateral relations between the two countries. The key contentious points that emerge are as follows:

¹ The fifth Japanese participant was, at the very last minute, unable to attend due to being put on standby in Tokyo while Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reshuffled the cabinet.

History Does Matter: The Chinese continued to stress that Japan has to face up to mistakes committed during the Second World War. The Japanese, in turn, expressed frustration at the Chinese preoccupation with history. They urge the Chinese to look at post-WWII Japan's record as an active and responsible member of the international community.

The Yasukuni Shrine continues to be a contentious issue with the Chinese stressing disapproval of visits to the Shrine by Japanese Prime Ministers. The response from the Japanese participants is mixed – one felt that it is a domestic issue and the individual (and private) choice of the Prime Minister; another felt the Chinese have in recent years purposefully politicized this issue to rally Chinese nationalism (something the Chinese participants deny); another felt that such visits are not helpful in improving bilateral state relations, thus implying such visits should not continue.

Strategic Uncertainty: There are worries by both parties about the counterpart's future developments. The Chinese worry about Japan's growing strategic assertiveness in Northeast Asia and Japan's intention to become a "normal state." Meanwhile, the Japanese worry about what China's "rise" actually means for them and the rest of the Asian region. The following matters were highlighted by the participants:

- Chinese Military Build-up: The Japanese are worried about the lack of transparency in China's military build-up, especially the actual sum of China's defense spending, and the rapid build-up of the Chinese submarine fleet;
- East China Sea: The Japanese are worried about China's oil and gas exploration activities in the East China Sea, as well as the growing presence of Chinese naval activities in that area;
- Taiwan Issue: The Chinese stress to Japan that the Taiwan issue is purely domestic and the Japanese along with the United States should stay out of this matter;
- U.S.-Japan Alliance: The Chinese are suspicious about the U.S.-Japanese alliance – that it may be aimed at containing China.

It is clear that both sides are suspicious of each other's strategic intentions and are gauging how their counterpart's action may impact their own strategic and security environment. If such expressions of mutual suspicion persist, there is risk of a full-blown security dilemma developing, which would over-shadow bilateral relations.

Outcomes & Future Directions

The following observations could be made at the end of the workshop:

Obstacles Remain: Having expressed willingness to improve bilateral relationships, the attitudes and concerns presented suggest that mutual suspicions remain even if bilateral relations are on the mend. The concerns raised by both parties are weighty and complex –there are no quick fixes.

Focus on Common Interests: On the other hand, there is recognition of common interests. The real question is how both parties can overcome their mutual distrust and work together. Clearly, there is still some way to go toward this objective.

Constructive Dialogue: The two parties have put their points across to the other, although it is uncertain if participants fully accepted the line of argument put forward by their counterparts. However, it must be added that the discussions and counter-arguments have certainly left an impression on all the participants and provide points for them to contemplate and dissect.

More Similar Engagement: There was no real “resolution” of the contentious issues raised but this is to be expected as it was just a one-and-a-half day exercise. This being the inaugural workshop, the key stumbling blocs have been identified – which is an achievement. Both parties agreed on the usefulness of such dialogue as an important confidence building measure. They hope that it would continue on a regular occurrence from here on.

A New Stage in Developing China-Japan Relations

Zhang Tuosheng¹

After more than a decade of turbulence in bilateral ties and especially the continued deterioration in political and security fields from 2001 to 2006, China-Japan relations have finally shifted towards a new stage of development, marked by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ice-breaking visit to China and Premier Wen Jiabao's ice-melting journey to Japan. China-Japan relations actually witnessed remarkable growth since their normalization in 1972. However, due to profound changes in the international situation and in both countries, Sino-Japanese relations entered a prolonged period of turbulence from the mid 1990s.² During that period, frictions continued to increase and intensify. With the complete suspension of high-level contacts at the end of 2005, bilateral relations hit their lowest point. Serious deterioration of China-Japan relations not only jeopardized the two countries' strategic interests directly but also caused serious international concern.

With efforts from both sides, new Japanese Prime Minister Abe realized his visit to China in October 2006. The two sides reached important common understandings, which include: working together to overcome political barriers and to comprehensively promote bilateral relations, resuming exchanges and dialogue between leaders, correctly appraising the other's path of development, accelerating consultation concerning the East China Sea in the principle of joint development, and constructing a mutually-beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests. The visit served to break

¹ Zhang Tuosheng is the Director of the Research Department at the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies (CFISS) in Beijing, China.

² With the end of the Cold War, both China-U.S. relations and China-Japan relations were trapped in turbulence. Sino-American relations moved out of the 12-year turbulence period (1989-2001) and entered a stage of relatively stable development. The period of turbulence in Sino-Japanese relations started in 1994 and lasted also for 12 years till 2006.

the political stalemate between the two countries, thus opening the gate to further improvement and development of bilateral relations.

Premier Wen Jiabao visited Japan in April 2007, the first visit by a Chinese Premier in seven years. The two sides agreed further on properly handling major differences, and reached a consensus on the basic spirit and contents of as well as measures to be taken for strategic mutually beneficial relations. And Premier Wen's speech at the Japanese Diet was widely welcomed. The visit also marked the beginning of the 35th anniversary celebration of the normalization of relations and the China-Japan Culture and Sports Exchange Year. The successful visit by Premier Wen has consolidated the improvements in bilateral relations since October 2006, registering a solid step toward establishing strategic mutually beneficial relations.

The major turn in Sino-Japanese relations is manifested in three areas:

First, the two sides have reached consensus on removing the political obstacles in developing bilateral relations, breaking the political stalemate caused by Prime Minister Koizumi's visits to the shrine in the previous five years.³ Many people find the agreement still rather fragile. However, I believe it is a decision of careful consideration on both sides rather than an act of expediency. Given that differences over history are hard to eliminate in a short time, it serves the fundamental interests on both sides to avoid the damage to overall relations by foregrounding such differences. Furthermore, China has already demonstrated that it has no intention to play the history card, a fact which will have positive and important influence on the Japanese public.⁴ The possibility of Prime Minister Abe of resuming visits to the shrine to reverse the disadvantageous situation in the House of Councilor election in July 2007 seems low. Improved relations with China represent a

³ China dropped its insistence on Japanese leaders' public commitment of not paying tribute to the Yasukuni Shrine, while Prime Minister Abe adopted a policy of ambiguity. The Joint Press Communique issued on October 8, 2006 vowed to "properly handle issues that affect development of bilateral relations and enable strong movement of both political and economic wheels."

⁴ In Japan, there had been the opinion that China always played the history card with Japan and that even if the Yasukuni Shrine problem were resolved, China would continue its pressure with other historical issues. Influenced by such a school of thought and against the backdrop of the intense China-Japan dispute, many Japanese were either silent or supportive of Koizumi's visit to the shrine even if they held different views.

major achievement of Abe and have gained favorable comments and extensive support both domestically and internationally. Why would a leader with judgment make such a self-defeating move? The fact that only one member in Japan's cabinet visited the shrine on August 15, 2007 is a typical example of this point.

Second, the two sides have agreed to resume and strengthen high-level exchanges and remarkable progress has been made within a short term. In today's international relations, among major powers in particular, high-level exchange is a basic condition for the development of normal state-to-state relations. With the help of such interactions, certain mutual trust between major leaders may play a uniquely positive role in improving and developing bilateral relations. However, for quite some time, the worsening of China-Japan relations seriously obstructed high-level contact, which became the weakest link in bilateral ties. After Prime Minister Abe's visit at the end of 2006, the principal leaders in both countries have met several times on international occasions and realized their first exchange of visit. For the next step, the exchange of visits between Prime Minister Abe and President Hu Jintao has been placed on the agenda. Resuming and strengthening high-level contact is a substantive part of the major turn in relations and will play a substantial role in consolidating improvement and preventing any reversal.

Third, the two sides have reached common understanding on establishing a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship, which resets the baseline of bilateral relations on common interest. About two years ago, the author analyzed the reasons for the worsening of the relationship between China and Japan, and found that apart from the direct causes of disputes such as history, Taiwan, and the East China Sea there had been a more profound root: the end of the Cold War and the appearance of a relationship between two powers in Asia. Neither side was prepared or accustomed to such a situation, which led to increasing frictions and even a relationship dominated by differences.⁵ The idea of jointly establishing a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship marks a major change in mindset and a new starting

⁵ Zhang Tuosheng, "Ruhe Fazhan Zhong Ri Changqi Youhao Hezuo Guanxi" [How to develop a long-term friendly and cooperative relationship between China and Japan], *Zhongguo Pinglun* [China Review], vol. 1, 2006, p10.

point in establishing Sino-Japanese relations.⁶ It indicates that the two major powers are abandoning the old idea of “no two rival tigers in the same mountain,” and starting to work together for cooperation and a win-win situation in line with the principle of seeking common ground while shelving differences.

With these three changes, China-Japan exchanges and cooperation are warming, and are indeed growing and strengthening in many fields. The two sides have strengthened cooperation on resolving the DPRK nuclear issue and maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula. China has also expressed willingness to offer possible assistance on the kidnapping question, a stance which has been well received in Japan. The two sides have agreed to make the East China Sea “a sea of peace, cooperation, and friendship.” Negotiations on the joint development of the East China Sea have sped up and reached the stage of discussing detailed plans. Japan has expressed its understanding of China’s serious concern over the question of Taiwan, and has reaffirmed its commitment to the three political documents⁷ and its position of not supporting Taiwanese independence. A joint research program in history guided by both governments has been formally launched and two workshops have been held. Military relations have resumed and developed with the Chinese Defense Minister’s visit to Japan and exchange of visits to naval ports planned. Besides the strategic dialogue, exchanges between political parties of the two countries as well as those between the Chinese National People’s Congress and the Japanese Diet have become more active. The two sides have also agreed to establish high-level economic dialogue and energy policy dialogue mechanisms. With the 35th anniversary celebration and the events during the Year of Cultural and Sports Exchanges, there has been an upsurge in non-governmental exchanges.

Such a major turning point in China-Japan relations was inevitable rather than accidental. Firstly, the continued worsening of relations had seriously damaged the strategic interests of both countries. Over the course of five years, various disputes had surfaced, public sentiments had become

⁶ There exists long-term opposition to shaping bilateral ties as “strategic relations” in both China and Japan. This is particularly true in Japan, one of whose basic standpoints is that strategic relations can only be applied among allies.

⁷ These refer to the China-Japan Joint Statement in 1972, the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978, and the China-Japan Joint Declaration in 1998.

increasingly confrontational, and mutual strategic suspicions⁸ had escalated. With the outbreak of large-scale anti-Japan demonstrations in some Chinese cities in 2005, people began to worry that the situation of “cold politics and warm economy”⁹ between China and Japan could move toward “cold politics and cold economy.” Meanwhile, the danger of accidental firing in the East China Sea is increasing, something which would lead to unthinkable prospects for Sino-Japanese relations. Thus to break the political stalemate, to effectively control the frictions, and to guide bilateral relations toward stability and improvement gradually became a desire of both countries.

Furthermore, the worsening of China-Japan relations has caused much concern in the international community. The poor Sino-Japanese relationship not only weakened their cooperation in establishing regional multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as 10+3 and the East Asian Summit, but also increased difficulty in reforming the UN Security Council and led to a serious imbalance in the China-U.S.-Japan triangle. No country in East Asia wishes to be forced to make a choice between China and Japan. Although the U.S. has never wanted to see the Sino-Japanese relationship approach, or even exceed, the level of its own relations with China or Japan, worsened China-Japan relations embody the danger of confrontation between the U.S.-Japan alliance and China and increase the difficulty in coordination and cooperation between the U.S.-Korea alliance and the U.S.-Japan alliance, since Korea holds a historical view similar to that of China. Under such circumstances, it is hard for the U.S. to support a more important role for Japan in Asia. Moreover, although the U.S. government has long been reluctant to comment on the wrong historical view in Japan, the growing salience of the Yasukuni Shrine problem and the consequent rising criticism from the U.S. Congress and the strategic studies circle have caused the Bush administration some embarrassment. The international community including the U.S. had wished to see the stability of China-Japan relations at an early date.

⁸ In Japan, the school of thought regarding the Chinese military threat was prevalent. In China, the public was seriously concerned about the possibility of Japan pursuing a path to military power or even reviving militarism.

⁹ Since 2001, even with continued tension in the political and security fields, economic relations between China and Japan had maintained fairly good growth. This was called “cold politics and warm economy.”

Additionally, ever since 2005, the two governments, China in particular, had been attempting to break the political stalemate and improve bilateral relations. The meeting between President Hu and Prime Minister Koizumi in Indonesia in April 2005,¹⁰ the start of strategic dialogue at the vice ministerial level, and the resumption of consultation over the East China Sea in the following month had brought about hope. The Chinese government issued a positive comment on Prime Minister Koizumi's statement in commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Second World War. Even after the two sides' efforts were once again stalled by Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine,¹¹ contacts continued during the most difficult times in 2006, with exchanges between the two ruling parties, a foreign ministers' meeting, strategic dialogue,¹² East China Sea consultation, people-to-people dialogue, and second track dialogue. At the same time, China began to give positive signals¹³ targeting future Japanese leaders. The primeministerial frontrunner Abe, then Chief Cabinet Minister, began to adopt the policy of ambiguity over the Yasukuni Shrine.¹⁴ Finally, the two sides seized the opportunity of the change in Japanese leadership and agreed through arduous negotiation on overcoming political barriers and promoting the healthy development of friendly and cooperative relations, the result of which was the long-awaited turn in bilateral relations.

However, the foundation for the turn is still rather fragile. The three major friction points – Taiwan, history, and the East China Sea – still exist. The serious confrontation in public sentiments that have developed during the

¹⁰ President Hu put forward a five-point proposal on improving and developing China-Japan relations. See Xinhuanet Jakarta report on April 23.

¹¹ Koizumi visited the Shrine again on October 17, 2005 after his previous visit twenty-one months ago, which was also on the last day of the then China-Japan strategic dialogue.

¹² The three rounds of strategic dialogues in February, July, and September 2006 played an important role in the two sides' efforts to finally break the political stalemate.

¹³ In February 2006, while meeting seven friendly organizations from Japan, President Hu Jintao made it clear that "so long as Japanese leaders clearly make a decision not to visit again the Yasukuni Shrine hosting Class A War Criminals, I would like to have dialogue and meeting with Japanese leaders on improving and developing China-Japan relations." In August, he made a similar statement to the new Japanese Ambassador Yuji Miyamoto on the occasion of the presentation of credentials.

¹⁴ It was rather eye-catching that in the summer of 2006 Abe adopted an attitude of neither confirming nor denying media reports about his purported visit to the Yasukuni Shrine the previous spring.

continuous worsening of bilateral relations will be difficult to reverse in a short time. At a more profound level, the mutual strategic suspicion will not disappear overnight.¹⁵

In this situation, it should be a paramount task for China and Japan to fully consolidate and expand the fruit of improved bilateral relations and make the turn for the better irreversible. Only in such a manner can progress be made in building a strategic and mutually beneficial relationship.

Therefore, the two sides must stick unswervingly to the common understanding of jointly eliminating political barriers, and properly handling the history issue to prevent it from becoming once again a major barrier to the development of bilateral relations. At the same time, efforts should be made to maintain and further develop high-level exchange on a regular and institutionalized basis and in diversified forms, making it one of the most important mechanisms to promote bilateral relations and to control and handle bilateral differences. Besides, both sides should also properly and prudently handle other major, sensitive differences. With the 2008 “presidential” election in Taiwan drawing near, the question of Taiwan may well gain prominence due to the separatist activities on the island and should draw serious attention from both sides.

While continuing to control and narrow down differences and consolidate existing fruits, the two sides must seize the opportunity to rapidly expand cooperation in a steady way and substantially promote the development of strategic and mutually beneficial relations. This will be the key to the bright future of China-Japan relations. Through repeated discussions, China and Japan have already reached three very important points of common understanding in this regard.

First, the basic spirit of strategic, mutually beneficial relations, as agreed upon by both sides, is to make joint constructive contribution to peace, stability, and development in Asia and the whole world through bilateral, regional, and international cooperation; and to benefit each other, to expand common interests, and to push bilateral relations to a new high in that

¹⁵ An outstanding example in this regard is Prime Minister Abe’s public request during his visit to Europe in spring 2007 that the EU should not lift its arms embargo on China.

process.¹⁶ This basic spirit represents the strong desire of the two countries in expanding cooperation and going beyond differences, and will have long-term significance in guiding the construction of strategic, mutually beneficial relations.

Second, the basic contents of a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship have been jointly clarified by the two sides. They include: supporting each other's peaceful development and increasing political mutual trust; deepening mutually beneficial cooperation and realizing common development; strengthening defense dialogue and exchange and working together for regional stability; increasing culture and personnel exchanges and promoting mutual understanding and friendly sentiments between the two peoples; and enhancing coordination and cooperation in dealing with regional and global issues.¹⁷ The basic contents touch upon varying levels of China-Japan relations, and provide a blueprint for the construction of a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship.

Third, practical steps have been identified, which include comprehensively improving and strengthening various bilateral dialogue and exchange mechanisms (high-level contacts included); strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation in nine areas such as energy, environmental protection, information and communication technology (ICT) and finance; and focusing on strengthened cooperation on regional and international affairs, reform of the United Nations and Six-Party Talks in particular.¹⁸ Among all these steps, some are recovery efforts in nature. But there are also specific measures, such as the launch of high-level economic dialogue, exchange of navy ship visits, strengthened defense communication in case of emergency, increased energy and intellectual property rights (IPR) cooperation, and more dialogue on UN reform. The implementation of these measures will guarantee to a large extent the construction and development of strategic, mutually beneficial relations.

Looking into the future, constructing a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship will be an arduous task that will take time to accomplish. The two sides need to materialize their common understanding steadily and

¹⁶ Joint Press Communiqué, April 9, 2007.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

progressively. Culturally, the two countries have both similarities and differences. One of the major differences is that China values the overall situation and principles while Japan treasures details and tangible benefits; and one of their great similarities is the emphasis on honoring the commitments. The two sides should be fully aware of these cultural features, and make efforts toward adapting to and complimenting each other. They need to set their eyes on the long-term and overall interests but start with daily tasks with a flexible and pragmatic attitude, thereby promoting bilateral relations in a step-by-step manner. So long as the two sides honor their commitment, act in line with their common understanding, and prioritize common interests, the vision of a strategic, mutually beneficial relationship between China and Japan can be realized.

The above was presented at the Stockholm conference in August 2007. Since then, China-Japan relations have registered new improvement and development, which can be summarized in the following five points:

First, military-to-military relations have fully recovered and developed. At the end of last August, the Chinese Defense Minister visited Japan.¹⁹ At the end of November and early December, a PLA Navy ship visited Japan.²⁰ Both visits were very successful, and marked the full recovery of military-to-military relations between China and Japan. After that, exchanges at all levels in the military field have continued to develop, with both countries being more positive and optimistic toward such exchanges. At present, preparations for a reciprocal visit by a Japanese navy ship to China are underway.

Second, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda has adopted more positive policies toward China and also paid a successful visit to China. In September 2007, a sudden change took place in the Japanese political arena with Abe resigning and Fukuda taking over as Prime Minister.²¹ Since taking office, Fukuda has

¹⁹ Cao Gangchuan visited Japan from August 27 to 31, 2007. It was the first visit to Japan by a Chinese Defense Minister in 9 years.

²⁰ From November 28 to December 1, 2007, China Navy missile destroyer *Shenzhen* paid a friendly visit to Japan, marking a successful first step since the plan of exchange of navy vessel visit was made in 1998.

²¹ On September 12, 2007, Prime Minister Abe suddenly declared his resignation on the grounds of personal health. About two weeks later, Yasuo Fukuda, a senior LDP

stressed that the Japan-China relationship is one of the most important external relations of Japan and expressed determination to promote a strategic relationship of mutual benefit between the two countries. He made it clear that he would not visit the Yasukuni Shrine, and expressed the wish to visit China at an early date. Then, Fukuda abandoned Abe's policy of diplomacy based on values and stressed resonance between Japan's Asia policy and the U.S.-Japan alliance. Fukuda's more proactive policy toward China on the basis of Abe's effort to improve relations with China has won high appraisal and positive response from Chinese leaders. Fukuda's China visit at the end of December 2007 was remarked upon as a journey that heralds spring. During his visit, Chinese and Japanese leaders exchanged views on extensive issues and reached many new common understandings, such as properly handling major and sensitive questions, promoting comprehensive exchanges and cooperation in wide areas and at multiple levels, and expanding results of establishing and developing a strategic relationship of mutual benefit.²²

Third, the two sides undertook the first high-level economic dialogue with positive results and bilateral economic cooperation has become a highlight in bilateral relations. While continuing strategic dialogue, China and Japan held the first high-level economic dialogue with the theme of cooperation, win-win and coordinated development in December 2007. The two sides conducted fruitful discussions and reached important common understanding on strengthening cooperation in the four areas of economic policy exchanges, energy-saving and environmental protection, trade and investment, and multilateral and regional economic cooperation. The two countries will continue the dialogue in 2008. Correspondingly, China-Japan economic cooperation has registered sustained and healthy growth. In 2007, bilateral trade topped 230 billion US dollars, about 11 per cent higher than that

politician and son of former Prime Minister Takedo Fukuda, succeeded as Prime Minister.

²² Among those questions, the Taiwan Question is of utmost concern for China. Fukuda made it clear that he does not support Taiwanese independence or a referendum on UN membership. On the question of the East China Sea, the two sides believe that the two countries have conducted serious and substantive discussions and made positive progress on specific resolutions to the question by raising the level of consultation, and agree to strive for an early resolution of the issue in the process of further developing bilateral relations.

of the previous year. The two-way trade is also roughly balanced, in sharp contrast with China's huge surplus in its trade with the U.S. and Europe, showing huge complementarity between the two economies.

Fourth, after successfully organizing celebrations of the 35th anniversary of the normalization of relations and the Japan-China Culture and Sports Exchange Year, the two sides have decided to celebrate together the 30th anniversary of Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty and the Japan-China Youth Friendly Exchange Year. In March 2008, the year of friendly exchanges between youths of the two countries was launched in Beijing.²³ This is an important measure taken by the two sides to further promote the momentum of improvement and development of bilateral relations. It is also a significant exchange that focuses on promoting friendly sentiments toward each other and cultivating successors to the cause of friendship, which is therefore of far-reaching significance for promoting China-Japan friendship and cooperation in the long term.

Fifth, preparation for President Hu Jintao's visit to Japan is underway. When Prime Minister Fukuda visited China, the two sides agreed that President Hu would visit Japan in spring 2008. It is reported that during the visit, leaders of the two countries will engage in comprehensive discussion of planning the future of bilateral relations so as to benefit the two peoples and formulate the fourth important document to guide development of bilateral relations in the future. At present, the two sides are making positive, serious, and comprehensive preparations for the second meeting between leaders of the two countries with frequent exchanges of senior officials' visits. It is an ardent hope of both sides that the visit will further develop and strengthen various existing cooperation mechanisms, consolidate the foundation of bilateral relations, promote vigorous cooperation in bilateral, regional, and global issues, and create important conditions for resolution of their disputes, thereby launching a new wave of improvement and development of China-Japan relations.

²³ On March 15, 2008, 1000 young Japanese and 2000 young Chinese participated in the opening ceremony of the China-Japan Youth Friendly Exchange Year. President Hu Jintao was also present at the relevant activity. Premier Wen Jiabao and Prime Minister Fukuda sent congratulatory messages.

Nonetheless, we must be aware that although bilateral relations have been developing in the right direction in the past six months or so, it is by no means safe sailing. The recent poisoned dumplings incident²⁴ has had a fairly negative influence on bilateral relations. Furthermore, although differences on major sensitive issues have been under control, dialogues to resolve them are still in difficulty and breakthroughs have, to date, been hard to achieve. This is related to the long-term complexity of the relevant problems and to the current state of public opinion and political trust between the two countries. In any case, only a period of two years has elapsed since bilateral relations marked a turn from steady deterioration to improvement. It is simply unrealistic for the major differences to be resolved within a short period of time. However, so long as mutually beneficial cooperation between China and Japan continues to expand, national sentiments toward each other continue to improve, and political mutual trust continues to strengthen, efforts made toward resolving the major sensitive issues will, in the end, yield important progress.

Currently, China-Japan relations have entered a new stage of development and are faced with important opportunities for a brighter future. Seizing the opportunity to enrich and develop the China-Japan strategic relationship for mutual benefit, and to strive for the grand objective of peaceful coexistence, friendship from generation to generation, mutually-beneficial cooperation, and common development is conducive not only to the fundamental interests of both countries but also to peace, stability, and prosperity in the region and the world at large. China and Japan should make long-term concerted efforts to that end.

(First draft in August 2007, revised and completed in March 2008.)

²⁴ In December 2007 and January 2008, 10 Japanese consumers showed symptoms of food poisoning after eating frozen dumplings produced by a Chinese plant. Initial investigation suggested that it was not a food safety incident caused by residual pesticide but rather an isolated criminal case. The two governments and police departments conducted joint cooperation after the event and the investigation is still going on. However, hype coverage by the Japanese media has had a bad influence and damaged the image of Chinese food. This incident reflects to a certain extent the fragility of China-Japan relations.

The Japan–U.S. Alliance and Its Implications for Japan–China Relations: A Tool of Conflict Management or a Source of Hostilities?

Yasuhiro Takeda, Ph.D.¹

Introduction

How to prevent and manage potential conflicts between Japan and China holds the key to peace and stability in Asia. The focus of attention here is the Japan-U.S. alliance and its implications on Japan-China Relations. This is because Japan and China have held opposite views about the role of the Japan-U.S. alliance since the end of the Cold War. The overriding goal of this essay is to ascertain whether the Japan-U.S. alliance is a tool of conflict management or a source of hostilities between Japan and China.

From a Japanese view, the military presence of the United States, as either an outside balancer or an international policeman, continues to contribute to the regional peace and stability. Therefore, the Japan-U.S. alliance which provides a stable and steadfast U.S. military presence in Asia must be an effective tool for conflict management.

During the Cold War, China tacitly accepted a U.S. military presence in Asia as a force for regional stability and expected the Japan-U.S. alliance to prevent Japan's rearmament. However, after the end of the Cold War, Chinese views of the Japan-U.S. alliance have shifted. China has been increasingly concerned with the upgraded Japan-U.S. alliance as a means of containing China.

This essay examines four questions. First, what types of conflicts are likely to take place between Japan and China, and how do they theoretically link up with conflict management? Second, what is the changing nature of the Japan-U.S. alliance in the post-Cold War era? Third, is the Japan-U.S. alliance really changing from “the bottle cap” to “the egg shell,” and is it an

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outdated Cold War remnant as China maintains? Fourth, under what conditions can the Japan-U.S. alliance be transformed into international public goods for conflict management?

Link between Type of Conflicts and its Prescriptions

As a matter of theoretical possibility, there exist two types of potential conflicts which Japan and China, two rival powers in Asia, may face. This section discusses the appropriate link between the nature of conflicts and their prescriptions. The first link is between unintended conflicts and *conflict prevention* by non-military means to avoid the outbreak and/or the violent escalation of a dispute. The second link is between intended conflicts and *conflict management*² by military means, narrowly defined as deterring and repelling armed conflicts.

(1) Unintended Conflicts and Conflict Prevention

Unintended conflicts stem from a so-called “security dilemma.”³ The key feature of the security dilemma is the action-reaction process of insecurity which states inadvertently create when they seek security, not because of the lust for power itself. After the end of the Cold War, this tragic dynamic has

² This essay treats *conflict management* and *conflict prevention* as different concepts in accordance with the basic nature of conflicts as well as the life-cycle of them, although the two concepts are closely interrelated and intertwined in the practical implementation. While *conflict prevention* is defined as a cooperative way to lower the risks of causing or escalating the conflict through non-military measures, *conflict management* is defined as a confrontational way of reducing the incentive to escalate the conflict or handling of an already open conflict by the threat or use of force. Although it is often argued that the concepts of conflict prevention and conflict management overlap at the escalation stage, the different application of forces can make a division between two concepts. On the contrary, the broader definition that conflict management comprises “an important part of conflict prevention” is adopted in Niklas L. P. Swanstrom and Mikael S. Weissmann, “Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and Beyond: a Conceptual Exploration,” *Concept Paper*, Summer 2005, p.27.

³ In this essay, a “security dilemma” is defined as unintended consequences of “system-induced” phenomena, and is distinguished from “state-induced” security dilemmas. This is because the term “dilemma” should be “a choice between two unpleasant alternatives.” If a state seeks greater power at the expense of other’s insecurity, it is not a dilemma to try to protect its security. See Nicholas Wheeler and Ken Booth, “The Security Dilemma” in John Baylis and N. J. Rengger, eds., *Dilemmas of World Politics: International Issues in a Changing World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

been in operation between Japan and China due to unpredictable changes in the distribution of capabilities and misperceptions of security policies. Japan's recent defense white papers have clearly expressed serious concerns about the lack of transparency regarding China's military modernization. On the other hand, China recognizes Japan's active security policy as serving to check the rise of Chinese power. Such mutual distrust has already caused various chain reactions to start as follows.

For example, China began to develop multiple independently targeted reentry vehicle (MIRV) technology in response to the deployment of the ballistic missile defense (BMD) system in Japan.⁴ However, Japan's motive to introduce the BMD system was to target a small number of North Korea's No-Dong missiles rather than China's missiles which the current BMD system cannot technically deal with. Japan and the United States officially announced that the Japan-U.S. alliance would take care of the Taiwan issue after China enacted the anti-secession law in March 2005. Although this law might intend to deter the provocative actions by Taiwan to achieve independence,⁵ Japan and the United States recognized this law as a firm will of China to project unification by military means.

An unintended conflict and spirals of tensions attributed to the "security dilemma" would be preventable by confidence building measures (CBMs) such as security dialogue and improvement of transparency. This is because the security dilemma can be alleviated, but never abolished under the anarchical international system, by lessening uncertainty about the actions and intentions of each state.

Mutual visits by Chinese Minister of Defense and the head of Japan's Defense Agency were realized in 1998. In 2000, following the first visit to Japan by the Chief of General Staff of the PLA, the Chairman of Japan's SDF Joint Staff Council returned the favor with a visit to Beijing. Japanese

⁴ It is reported that China has had the technical capabilities to develop a MIRV system for 20 years, but has chosen not to do so partly because it would reduce missile's range. "China's Nuclear Forces 2003," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November/December 2003, Vol.59, No.6, pp.77-80.

⁵ Although the Anti-Secession Law repeatedly emphasizes "peaceful unification" of China and Taiwan, it never rules out employing "non-peaceful means and other necessary measures." Full Text of Anti-Secession Law, *People's Daily Online*, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200503/14/eng20050314_17674_6.html>

Defense Minister Yuriko Koike finally agreed with Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gang Chuan to carry out reciprocal visits by vessels of the Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Chinese navy, and to create a hotline between the two countries' defense authorities in August 2007. These bilateral defense exchanges would no doubt contribute to mutual confidence building, even though the root causes of conflicts are resolved.

(2) Intentional Conflicts and Conflict Management

The other is an intentional conflict derived from a power struggle over the “status quo.” This type of conflict arises between revisionist states to overthrow the status quo and status quo states to maintain the existing distribution of power or existing order. In contrast to an unintended conflict, feelings of insecurity do not create or exacerbate conflicts here.

China seems to be satisfied with the existing situation on the Korean Peninsula, but not with the status quo in Taiwan and South/East China Sea. Indeed China declared the 1992 territorial law that China has “the right to adopt all necessary measures to prevent and stop the passage of a ship which is not innocent through its territorial sea,”⁶ which includes Taiwan and the Spratly Islands. China’s State Council approved to set up a San Sha city with the jurisdiction over Spratly islands in December 2007. The East China Sea is a place of territorial disputes between Japan and China. Japan has proposed to divide its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the East China Sea on the middle line and required China not to siphon away crude oil and natural gas. However, China has continued unilateral development and exploitation of the gas fields with warships. The Taiwan issue and frictions over energy resources in South/East China Sea may develop into military conflict.

On the contrary to the unintended conflicts, intentional conflicts derived from power struggles must be restrained externally by either the balancing action of states, the aggregate power of states, or the preponderant capacities of the hegemonic state. In this regard, an appropriate means to restrain conscious competition and hostility among states is not through cooperative security measures, but through bilateral collective defense whereby the U.S.

⁶ Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone 25 February 1992, <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN_1992_Law.pdf>

military presence is backed by allies and other partners. The Japan-U.S. alliance, as a lynchpin of the “hub-and-spokes” arrangement of U.S. bilateral alliances in Asia-Pacific, is the only security scheme actually capable of effectively deterring and countering aggression.

2. Changing Nature of the Japan-U.S. Alliance in the Post-Cold War Era

The Japan-U.S. alliance was characterized as an asymmetrical partnership between a patron and a client based on the barter of goods (bases and facilities in Japan) for manpower (U.S. soldiers). After the end of the Cold War, the alliance has been transformed into a more symmetrical partnership based on the sharing of common democratic values. The changing nature of the alliance can be summed up in the following three points: (1) geographical extension, (2) functional expansion, and (3) integration.

(1) Geographical Extension

During the Cold War era, the geographical scope of Japan-U.S. defense cooperation had been strictly limited to Japan’s territories, as stipulated under Article 5 of the revised Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in 1960. Although Article 6 of the treaty sets forth “the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East” as another purpose of the alliance, the bilateral defense cooperation in the case of a situation in the Far East outside of Japan remained future subjects of consultations and studies even after the Guideline for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation in 1978.

In the joint communiqué titled “Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security-Alliance for the 21st Century” in 1996, Japan and the United States “reconfirmed” the common goal of “maintaining a stable and prosperous environment for the Asia-Pacific region.”⁷ The geographical scope of the alliance seemed to literally expand to “the Asia-Pacific” from “the Far East.” However, Japan had adopted a minimalist stance concerning the activities of the SDF, although it never placed a geographical limit upon the activities of U.S. forces stationed in Japan. Therefore, the geographical scope remained unchanged. The point is that the alliance’s rationale in the post-Cold War era shifted from the narrow role of defending Japan toward managing regional security in the Asia-Pacific.

⁷ Japan Defense Agency, *Defense of Japan 2004*, pp.490-493.

The new Guideline for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation in 1997 enlarged the activities of the SDF in “response to situations in area surrounding Japan.”⁸ The geographical scope of the new guidelines still remained unchanged relative to “the Far East” stipulation in the Treaty, so that the Japanese government explained the phrase “situations in area surrounding Japan” as a situational concept rather than a geographical term. Although China worried about the potential inclusion of Taiwan and South China Sea in this situational scope, the Far East has been originally defined as “north of the Philippines and the area around Japan including South Korea and Taiwan.

At the Japan-U.S. summit meeting in May 2003, the two nations agreed to enhance the “Japan-U.S. alliance in the global context.” The geographical scope extends to “the global context” from both “the Far East” stipulated in Article VI of the Japan-U.S. security treaty and “the Asia-Pacific” in the 1996 Declaration. Indeed, following the dispatch of Maritime SDF ships to the Indian Ocean in November 2001, the first Ground SDF unit was sent to support Iraqi reconstruction in January 2004. At the Japan-U.S. summit meeting in November 2006, the two countries finally confirmed the alliance “for the World and Asia.” However, note should be taken of the fact that Japan’s contribution to the war on terror was implemented based on UN antiterrorism resolution, not as an exercise of the right of collective self-defense like NATO members. In addition, the activities of Japan’s SDF have been limited to rear-area support to the U.S. military in spite of the geographical extension of the alliance.

(2) Functional Expansion

The Japan-U.S. alliance was originally formulated to defend Japanese territory from an armed attack. However, it is surprising that the roles and missions of the two militaries had not been clearly defined for more than a quarter of a century. It was not until the 1978 Guidelines that the United States officially committed for the first time to provide Japan with nuclear deterrence and the forward deployment of combat-ready forces. During the Cold War era, as actions in response to an armed attack against Japan, the Guidelines assigned the defensive operations to the SDF and offensive operations to the U.S. forces.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.494-501.

However, the alliance's rationale in the post-Cold War has clearly shifted from the narrow role of defending Japan in Article 5 of the treaty toward managing regional security as covered by Articles 5 and 6. In particular, the function of the SDF was expanded from the defense of Japanese home land islands to the maintenance of the regional peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. As a result, the 1996 Declaration and the new guidelines enlarged the activities of the SDF to include the provision of logistics and rear-area support to U.S. forces as well as new missions such as search-and-rescue, intelligence gathering, surveillance, and minesweeping in time of regional conflict.

(3) Integration

In May 2007, Japan and the United States finalized the force posture realignment in a document titled "the Japan-U.S. Roadmap for Realignment Implementation." As a result, in accordance with the global military posture realignment of the U.S. forces, Japan's SDF is going to be integrated with the U.S. force through close command coordination and improvement of interoperability.

U.S. Army headquarters in Japan at Camp Zama will be transformed into joint-task capable headquarters with high mobility and readiness by 2008. The headquarters of Ground SDF Central Readiness Force will relocate to Camp Zama by 2012. Japan's Air Defense Command will also relocate to Yokota Air Base, where the headquarters of U.S. 5th Air Force is located, by 2010.

Japan-U.S. joint exercises have been significantly changed in both aspects of quality and quantity. Since September 2002, GSDF has started field training and exercises for tactical and combat skills on the U.S. mainland. In November 2002, a bilateral joint exercise for field training was conducted by 11,000 personnel from the SDF and 10,550 personnel from the U.S. forces. In February 2007, a Japan-U.S. joint exercise (command post exercises,) attended by approximately 1,350 SDF personnel and 3,100 U.S. forces personnel, was held to improve the bilateral joint operations capabilities on the assumption an armed attack against Japan or a situation in areas surrounding Japan has taken place; the number of participants in the same

exercise in February 2002 accounted for 450 SDF personnel and 450 from the U.S. forces.⁹

Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) is a symbolic project to integrate the SDF with the U.S. Forces. BMD requires two armed forces to facilitate a *collaboration* type of defense cooperation through combined operations¹⁰ as opposed to a *coordination* type of security cooperation based on a vertical division of labor such as the sea lane defense for 1000 nautical miles during the Cold War and the war on terrorism after 2001.

For example, the United States and Japan shared the data obtained by a new U.S. forward based X-Band Radar System which was deployed at ASDF Shariki subbase in June 2006. In December 2007, the MSDF Aegis-equipped destroyer successfully destroyed a ballistic missile in space in cooperation with the Aegis BMD-equipped cruiser USS Lake Erie and the ground-based Terminal High Altitude Area Defense test unit on Hawaii. Although BMD is intended solely to defend Japan against missile attacks, it would be inevitably linked to the right to collective self-defense as far as it is also used to defend the United States.

3. Misperception of Japan-U.S. alliance after the end of Cold War

(1) Neither the “Bottle Cap” nor the “Egg Shell”

The functional and geographical expansions of the Japan-U.S. alliance have coincided with the changing roles and missions of the Japan’s Self-Defense Forces (SDF). Does this mean that the Japan-U.S. alliance has been transformed from the “bottle cap” to prevent Japan’s military buildup into the “egg shell” to foster the growth of Japan’s military power under U.S. protection as China fears?¹¹ The answer is no.

⁹ *Defense of Japan 2007*, p.555; *Defense of Japan 2002*, p.395.

¹⁰ The BMD is also different from co-development of the FSX aircraft and the SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) research which remain the level of technological cooperation.

¹¹ Thomas J. Christensen, “China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia.” *International Security*, Voll.23, No.4 (Spring 1999), p.62; Wu Xinbo, “The End of the Silver Lining: A Chinese View of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2005-6, pp.119-20.

On the one hand, the “bottle cap” theory consists of two wrong assumptions: (1) Japan is a brutal genie by nature which will always be a military threat unless it is deterred by an external power such as the U.S.; (2) the presence of U.S. troops plays a role of a bottle cap which prevents Japan from rearming.

First of all, postwar Japan is not identical with the militant Japan of the 1930s. Japan has not been at war with foreign states for more than a half century, since 1945. What constrained Japan’s military power was not so much the alliance with the U.S. as Japan’s own “Peace Constitution” and economics-first strategy. Article 9 prohibited Japan from acquiring offensive military capabilities and from using force to settle international disputes. Within the alliance, Japan was able to concentrate on economic development while avoiding international power politics. The motive of Japan to ally with the United States was not to balance against either the Soviet Union or China but to bandwagon with the United States.

Secondly, the Japan-U.S. alliance was not originally a “bottle cap” to contain Japan’s rearmament. It was the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement of 1954 that resulted in postwar Japan’s rearmament. Until the late 1970s, the United States provided Japan with a nuclear umbrella and deterrent power by forward deployment without requiring Japan to significantly increase its defense forces. However, in the 1980s, the United States began to put great pressure on Japan for increasing defense spending. As a result, with regard to the share of the national budget, Japan’s defense expenditures, which had declined from 21 per cent in 1952 to 5.1 per cent in 1981, began to increase to 6.5 per cent by 1989 under the fiscal restraint.¹² Upon U.S. request, Japan had around 60 destroyers, 100 P-3Cs, and 200 F-15s by 1991. Therefore, the alliance during the so-called New Cold War era served as a sort of “egg shell” to protect Japan rather than as a “bottle cap,” even though China believed that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty prevented Japan’s rise as a military power.

On the other hand, the “egg shell” concept ignores the structural constraints on Japanese defense buildup. Even though the United States tries to warm an egg, the SDF cannot be full-fledged armed forces breaking an egg as far as the constitution prohibits Japan from possessing offensive military capabilities and from using force to resolve international disputes.

¹² *Nihon no Bouei*, 1991, p.263.

Japan cannot exercise the right of collective self-defense, which the UN Charter allows all member nations and normal nations never restrain themselves. Therefore, even though the Japan-U.S. alliance has been expanded functionally as well as geographically as stated above, the alliance in the post-Cold War does not function as an “egg shell” because the United States has only limited influence to foster the growth of Japan’s military power. Instead, the alliance with the advance of integration may deserve to be called a “fried egg with two yokes” rather than an “egg shell.”

After the end of the Cold War, Japan sought to enhance its security role for international peace cooperation by ending forth-year ban on sending the SDF overseas. However, Japan has adhered to a defense-oriented policy without procuring offensive weapons such as air craft carriers, nuclear submarines, and long-range missiles. As far as the United States continues to guarantee an extended nuclear deterrence to Japan, Japan no doubt will remain to be an honest member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) regime, even though Asian neighbors including China, India, Pakistan, and North Korea have succeeded in nuclear development programs.

The “egg shell” is a Chinese-made concept¹³ based on its contradictory fears that both a breakdown and an upgrade of the Japan-U.S. alliance would be dangerous since they inevitably promote Japan’s rise as a “normal” great power. Dispatching the SDF overseas under UN authorization and exercising the right of collective self-defense show Japan’s return to normal power, but not to normal “great” power status. The Japan-U.S. alliance after the events of 9/11, neither as the “bottle cap” nor as the “egg shell,” is going to enmesh Japan into the U.S. defense network through the functional integration of two militaries.

(2) Outdated Cold War Remnant?

During the Cold War era, the Japan-U.S. alliance was a typical form of *collective defense* arrangement against a particular adversary. If so, it must be a

¹³ It is a fact that there also exist some advocators of the “bottle cap” theory in the U.S. government. For example, Henry Kissinger told Chinese Prime Minister Zhou in 1971 that the presence of U.S. troops was a deterrent to Japanese military escalation and that the U.S.-Japan alliance functioned for that purpose. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No.66, *The Beijing-Washington Back-Channel and Henry Kissinger’s Secret Trip to China, September 1970-July 1971*, Document 34.

rational choice for each partner to immediately break up the alliance after the common threat disappears in order to recover its freedom of action. However, the Japan-U.S. alliance not only continues, but has also expanded its geographical as well as functional scopes in spite of the dissolution of the Soviet threat. Is the Japan-U.S. alliance really an outdated Cold War remnant as China thinks?¹⁴ The answer is clearly no.

First, it is often argued that Japan and the United States reconfirmed the continuation of the alliance in order to deal with new threats like North Korea or China. However, neither North Korea nor China is the common adversary vis-à-vis which Japan and the United States can share threat perceptions.

On the contrary, Japan fears North Korea's middle range missiles and nuclear weapons rather than nuclear proliferation about which the United States is more concerned. Therefore, the U.S. regards North Korea's nuclear disablement under the February 13 six-party agreement as a step toward CVIE (complete, verifiable, and irreversible elimination) of its nuclear weapons program, while Japan worries about a de facto acceptance of its nuclear power status by the U.S. Indeed, the U.S. is set to remove North Korea from the U.S. List of State Sponsors of Terrorism despite Japan's opposition.

China is perceived as a strategic competitor as well as an economic partner for both Japan and the United States. Therefore, China is not a genuine threat to the alliance in terms of military capability as well as its heterogeneity of its socio-economic system like the Soviet Union in the Cold War era. In addition, the impact of China's rise on Japan and the United States also looks quite different. While China's power in terms of GDP is predicted to be on a par with Japan by 2015, it will not catch up with the United States until 2040.¹⁵ Therefore, Japan tends to be much more sensitive

¹⁴ Based on the "New Security Concept," China criticizes the establishment of military blocs and the practice of developing military alliances as "Cold War mentality." See Li Qinggong and Wei Wei, "Chinese Army Paper on 'New Security Concept,'" *Jiefangjun Bao*, December 24, 1997, p.5.

¹⁵ According to Goldman Sachs, *Global Economics Paper*, No.99, October 1, 2003, the proportion of GDP in relation to US economy would be 32 percent for China and 33 percent for Japan by 2015. It would be 97 percent in 2040 and 127 percent in 2050 for China, with 22 percent in 2040 and 19 percent in 2050 for Japan.

to a rising China than the United States. In the short term, Japan has a “fear of abandonment” – that Japan may fail to obtain U.S. security assistance in a time of Japan-China conflict. On the other hand, the United States has a “fear of entrapment,” that it may be unwillingly involved in a Japan-China conflict.

Second, it is also argued that the Japan-U.S. alliance continues under its own inertia or as a result of institutionalization. In fact, the Japan-U.S. alliance was the least institutionalized framework among the U.S. system of bilateral military alliances during the Cold War era.

There have existed multiple consultative forms such as the Security Consultative Committee (SCC), the Security Subcommittee (SSC), and Security Consultative Group (SCG). Under the process of formulating the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, the Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation (SDC) and its working panels including uniformed officials were newly set up to discuss contingency and operational planning. However, these consultations remained “superficial dialogue”¹⁶ without coordination between the U.S. and Japanese military establishments. In addition, the Japan-U.S. alliance does not have a unified command structure like the South Korea-U.S. alliance or NATO, whose relations with the United States seem to be weakening after the end of the Cold War.

The Japan-U.S. alliance is not an outdated Cold War remnant in the sense that it is no longer an institution for collective defense against a specific threat. The alliance in the post-Cold War era has been transformed into a universal alignment to deal with any unspecified threat and contingencies. In other words, the Japan-U.S. alliance is going to be a kind of “international public goods.”

4. The Japan-U.S. Alliance as International Public Goods

During the Cold War era, the Japan-U.S. alliance was so-called “club goods” which provided only limited members of the western bloc with peace and security. If the Japan-U.S. alliance in the post-Cold War has been transformed into “international public goods” with conflict management

¹⁶ Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin, *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999, pp.97-98.

functions, it should meet two criteria such as “jointness of consumption” and “non-exclusion.” “Jointness of consumption” implies that the use or employment of collective goods by one state does not lessen the value of goods when the other states want to use it. “Non-exclusion” means that any potential users cannot be denied goods or services.

(1) Jointness of Consumption

Whether or not the Japan-U.S. alliance can guarantee the provision of regional peace and security to any nation in Asia-Pacific depends on the alliance’s capabilities to deal with contingencies in any part of Asia-Pacific. If the United States is unable to act solely either as an outside balancer or as an international policeman in Asia-Pacific as well as in the Middle East, Japan as its reliable partner has a key to meet the requirement of joint consumption.

In this point, there have been significant advances made in the bilateral security relationship over the last several years. The Koizumi administration deployed Japan’s SDF to the Indian Ocean in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001 and to areas in and around Iraq to assist in the reconstruction efforts in 2003. In December 2004, Japan adopted the new National Defense Program Outline which for the first time supported the development of significant power projection capabilities for the JSDF to meet its broader missions. After the December 2004 Tsunami disaster in Southeast Asia, the United States and Japan as the “Core Group” worked together to provide humanitarian relief. In particular, recent improvements in interoperability and the integration of command and control between U.S. forces and Japan’s SDF are expected to significantly contribute to enhance the overall capabilities of the alliance.

If these recent actions mean a “normalization” of Japan’s security and defense policy in that Japan is going to “exercise the right of collective self-defense as a part of an alliance with the US,”¹⁷ the Japan-U.S. alliance would guarantee the jointness of consumption as international public goods.

¹⁷ Mike Mochizuki indicates two other kinds of normalization: “a Japan that participates in a collective security system centered on the United Nations and a Japan that is redefined primarily as an Asian Power” with a “strategy independent of the U.S.” in *Toward a True Alliance: Restructuring U.S.-Japan Security Relations*, Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1997, p.57.

However, Japan still had to justify the SDF activities in the Indian Ocean and Iraq based on relevant UN resolutions rather than on the rights of collective self-defense.¹⁸ There is still no consensus among policy-makers and members of the Diet in Japan with regard to Japan's normalization.

Under the initiative of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, a new government panel began to discuss whether Japan could legally exercise the right to participate in collective self-defense. However, after Abe's abrupt resignation, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda made clear his disapproval of the long-standing controversial right of collective self-defense. Due to rejection of the bill by the Democratic Party of Japan-led Upper House, Japan failed to renew the Anti-Terrorism Special Measure Law to allow the Maritime SDF to provide fueling services to military operations in Afghanistan. As a result, the fueling mission in the Indian Ocean was suspended for a period of about three months after the Special Measure Law expired on November 1, 2007.

As C. W. Hughes clearly points out, Japan's recent support for the U.S. in the campaign against terrorism "does not necessarily mark a divergence from Japan's previous security path over the short run."¹⁹ Therefore, in order for the Japan-U.S. alliance to guarantee the jointness of consumption, Japan should overcome its domestic restrictions to be a more reliable U.S. alliance partner.

(2) *Non-exclusion*

In order for the Japan-U.S. alliance to meet the requirements of non-exclusiveness, all Asian states should be allowed to enjoy the regional peace and security provided by the alliance. Many small states seem to acknowledge the stabilizing function of the Japan-U.S. alliance since it provides them with intrastate security and hedges against the great powers. While the 1967 ASEAN declaration affirmed that "all foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries

¹⁸ The legal justification for JSDF dispatch to the Indian Ocean were UN resolutions that identify the September 11 attacks as a threat to international peace in general and call on all UN members to take steps to counter terrorism. The case of the Iraq dispatch was on the basis of UN resolutions 1458 and 1511.

¹⁹ Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Security Policy, the US-Japan Alliance, and the 'War on Terror': Incrementalism Confirmed or Radical Leap?" *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.58, No.4, p.427.

concerned,”²⁰ most ASEAN states have actively granted the U.S. forces access to their local air bases and ports to maintain U.S. forward deployment in the region after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Philippines in 1992. Therefore, ASEAN states acknowledge that the Japan-U.S. alliance has also resulted in a benign external security environment.

However, this is unlikely to apply to China. As far as China feels insecure for the reason that the Japan-U.S. alliance may obstruct advancement of China’s relative capabilities, the alliance cannot become a fully legitimate provider of regional public goods.

In general, alliances are aimed to balance power against potential adversaries. However, it is extremely difficult to make a clear distinction between a friend and a foe after the end of the Cold War. The Japan-U.S. alliance in the post Cold War is not a tool to contain the relative capabilities of particular countries. The Japan-U.S. alliance is not so much a proper collective defense arrangement against specific common threats as a type of collective security arrangement against any potential aggressor.

In February 2005, Japan and the United States reconfirmed “welcoming China’s responsible and constructive roles and development of a cooperative relationship with China” as one of their common strategic objectives. Although the two countries request China to improve “transparency of China’s military affairs,” they do not intend to contain the rise of Chinese power. As Japan’s desire to become a “normal” country is natural, the rise of China’s power does not directly impose a threat to Japan. Moreover, Japan’s normalization does not aim to become an Asian power with a strategy independent of the U.S., but to integrate itself with the U.S. as part of the alliance.

“Peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan straits”²¹ is another common strategic objective of the Japan-U.S. alliance. The alliance serves as not only deterrent against China’s use of force against Taiwan, but also against Taiwan from declaring permanent independence from China. In March 2008, two U.S. aircraft carriers were deployed to waters near Taiwan

²⁰ The ASEAN Declaration, Bangkok 8 August, 1967, <<http://www.aseansec.org/1212.htm>>

²¹ *Defense of Japan 2006*, p.222.

just two days before Taiwan's presidential election to give the message to Beijing that the U.S. won't stand by if the voters of Taiwan are intimidated by China, and to Taiwan that the United States is opposed to the referendum for joining the UN.²² In case the Japan-U.S. alliance is militarily involved in a contingency in the Taiwan straits, this would be for the purpose of maintaining the status quo. As far as China also values the status quo in the Taiwan straits under the one China policy, China does not have to recognize the Japan-U.S. alliance as a threat.

However, as China's New Security Concept suggests, China prefers a balance of power order based on a multi-polar system to the current imperfect U.S. hegemonic order based on a uni-multi polar system. In addition, China seems to be a power-maximizer who seeks greater power for goals other than security, but not a security-maximizer who seeks the minimum power required for security.²³ While energy resources are indispensable to realize a "peaceful rise" of China, China is going to secure oil fields at the cost of friction with other countries without procuring them from markets. This means that China is not a status-quo power but a revisionist power.

As far as China seeks a balance of power order based on a multi-polar system, China, against its wishes, has to allow Japan to be a normal power independent of the U.S. rather than part of the alliance with the U.S. As far as the Japan-U.S. alliance functions for conflict management against a revisionist power, it may not be a fully-fledged international public good from a Chinese point of view. Therefore, it is up to China whether to accept the Japan-U.S. alliance as international public goods or to challenge it.

Conclusion

The functional and geographical expansions of the Japan-U.S. alliance after the end of the Cold War have coincided with the changing roles and missions of the JSDF. As far as China is concerned, the upgraded Japan-U.S.

²² Daily Press Briefing, March 19, 2008, U.S. Department of State, <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2008/mar/102382.htm>>

²³ Randall L. Schweller, "Neorealism's Status-Quo Bias: What Security Dilemma?" in Benjamin Frankel, Ed., *Realism: Restatements and Renewal*, London: Frank Cass, 1996, pp.90-121.

alliance serves to containing China and is a potential source of hostilities between Japan and China by stimulating security dilemma dynamics.

However, unintended conflicts attributed to security dilemmas would be preventable by CBMs to lessen uncertainty about actions and intentions of each state. Moreover, the Japan-U.S. alliance is fit to be neither an “egg-shell” to foster the growth of Japan’s military power, nor an outdated Cold War remnant. Japan continues to restrain itself from exercising the right of collective self-defense. The functional integration between the JSDF and U.S. forces allow Japan to move toward a normal country as part of the alliance. In addition, the Japan-U.S. alliance in the post-Cold War era is no longer club goods for collective defense arrangement against a specific threat, but rather a kind of international public goods to deal with any unspecified threat and contingencies.

It is up to Chinese strategic intentions whether or not to accept the Japan-U.S. alliance as international public goods. As far as China challenges the status quo and seeks a balance of power order based on a multi-polar system, the Japan-U.S. alliance will function as an effective tool for conflict management between Japan and China, even though China does not consider it as a legitimate provider of international public goods. In order to enhance the alliance’s capabilities to deal with contingencies in any part of Asia-Pacific, Japan should overcome its domestic restrictions.

The Present and Future Security Situation in East Asia

Zhang Tuosheng

The international security situation has on the whole moved toward relaxation since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, along with the growing trends of multi-polarization, globalization, and informatization. However, Cold War mentality dies hard, with its after-effects gradually surfacing and multiple destabilizing factors still existing in the world. The 9/11 incident in 2001 has produced a profound impact on the development of the international security situation. It represents the new and grave challenges faced by America, the only superpower in the world, demonstrates the negative impact of globalization and informatization on world security, and forecasts the increasing gravity of non-traditional security.

The security situation in East Asia since the end of the Cold War has been on the whole consistent with the general trend in the world, but with its own features. It is in the common interest of all East Asian countries to have a correct understanding of the security situation in this region and its prospects, to join hands in achieving progress, promote the active factors in combating negative and insecure elements (particularly some serious potential security threats), and to make the security environment in East Asia head toward long-term peace and stability.

The current security situation in East Asia can be observed from the following eight aspects:

1. Relationship Between Major Powers

Four major powers, China, the U.S., Japan, and Russia, are active players in East Asia. The complex relationships between them have significant influence on regional security. There have appeared several patterns of relations between the four countries since the end of the Second World War: the Soviet Union and China in confrontation with the U.S. and Japan;

China, the U.S., and Japan joining hands against the Soviet Union; and the current situation in which the four cooperate and compete with one another.

Compared to the Cold War period, relations among major powers in this region are no longer confrontational, with a marked increase of cooperation and a general pursuit of partnerships. This is a decisive factor leading to a relaxed regional situation. ASEAN, as an integral player, has developed in strength and become a rising power in regional relations, which is conducive to mitigating frictions among these powers and promoting a balanced relationship among them.

Nonetheless, in East Asia, there are still many differences, misgivings, and mistrusts among the major powers, especially between the U.S. and Japan on the one side and China and Russia on the other. Their mutual relations are not at the same distance and fluctuate on the whole. The trilateral relationship of China, the U.S., and Japan, which has the greatest influence over regional security, was once seriously imbalanced, causing major concern in East Asian countries. Increasing vigilance and precaution on the part of the U.S. and Japan against the rise of China and Russia may lead to the increase of frictions. This negative aspect of the major power relations does not serve their security cooperation and may bring about adverse effects on regional security.

At present, relations among powers in this region are still undergoing readjustments. The U.S.-Japan alliance continues to strengthen. The China-Russia strategic partnership of cooperation continues to develop. While stable on the whole, China-U.S. relations are witnessing increasing economic frictions. While China-Japan relations have seen marked improvement, frictions between Russia and Japan, and particularly between Russia and the U.S., have intensified.

Looking into the future, the non-confrontational nature of major power relations in East Asia will not easily change. All the powers will continue to cooperate as well as compete with one other, and to rely on as well as guard against one another at the same time. It will be an arduous task to establish general strategic mutual trust. In the new situation, we must be highly vigilant of a possible reappearance of the situation in which the U.S. and Japan enter into serious confrontation with China and Russia or vice versa as

a result of Cold War mentality hangovers. Durable regional peace and security can only be guaranteed on the basis of a long-term stable, cooperative, and relatively balanced relationship among major powers in the region.

2. Situation across the Taiwan Straits

Taiwan returned to China at the end of WWII. However, due to the civil war in China (1946-1949) and armed intervention by the U.S. (1950), reunification across the Taiwan Straits has not been completed, with the two sides being in a state of hostility for a long time and the Taiwan Straits becoming a regional hot spot.

Since the 1980s and the end of the Cold War in particular, cross-Straits relations registered marked improvement and development, with constantly increasing economic and cultural exchanges and positive progress in functional negotiations. However, since the mid 1990s, rampant expansion of secessionist forces in Taiwan has led to the cross-Straits situation to reverse and enter into crisis. Since 2000, the ruling DDP government has gone all out to pursue Desinification and de jure Taiwan independence policy, leading to a serious stalemate in cross-Straits relations and increasing military confrontation between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits. For quite some time, the U.S. adopted a policy partial to Taiwan, with increasing arms sales to Taiwan and making it an area encompassed by the U.S.-Japan alliance, which fueled secessionists' arrogance. The deteriorating situation across the Straits seriously and adversely affected and actually threatened East Asian security. The root cause of all this is the development of Taiwan separatist forces and the incorrect cross-Straits policies of the U.S. and Japan.

In recent years, in face of serious provocations by pro-independence forces in Taiwan that constantly serve to disrupt the status quo, China has formulated an anti-secession law, making the utmost efforts for peaceful reunification on the one hand, and firmly opposing Taiwan independence on the other (including reaffirmed determination to adopt non-peaceful or even military means against Taiwan independence when necessary).

At present, frenzied provocation by pro-independence forces, the upcoming so-called UN membership referendum in particular, has taken the cross-Straits relationship into a period of high risk. This deteriorating situation has

gone beyond even the affordability of the U.S. and Japan, who have actually readjusted their policies and strengthened cooperation with China in opposing a disruption of the status quo by the separatists and in maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits. The U.S., in particular, has clearly stated its position of not supporting Taiwanese independence and opposing a provocative referendum on the island.

Looking to the future, lasting peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits will have to be realized on the basis of peaceful reunification. Before that, there are two possible scenarios: one is to continue political and military confrontation; the other is to resume political dialogue on the basis of the 1992 Consensus, establish and develop a framework of peaceful development, and to form a situation of sound interaction and gradually accumulate conditions for ultimate peaceful reunification. In the former scenario, the Taiwan Straits will continue to be a hot spot in East Asia and the outbreak of military conflict or war is possible. In the latter, the Taiwan Straits will no longer be a flashpoint, cross-Straits relations will experience comprehensive and positive developments, and Sino-American and Sino-Japanese relations will embrace new opportunities for development. China sincerely hopes the international community could offer their support and join China's efforts toward a better future across the Taiwan Straits.

3. DPRK Nuclear Issue and Situation on the Korean Peninsula

The Korean Peninsula was divided upon international agreement at the end of the Second World War. The year 1950 saw the outbreak of the Korean War, since the end of which in 1953 the two Koreas were in heavy military confrontation for a long time. After the end of the Cold War, the strengths of the South and North became seriously imbalanced. With continued hostility and pressure of the U.S. toward the DPRK, crises have still been frequent on the Peninsula. Since the second DPRK nuclear crisis in 2002, the Korean Peninsula has once again become the most dangerous hot spot in East Asia.

The DPRK nuclear issue is rather complicated. It is a product of mutual hostility and confrontation between the DPRK and the U.S. The DPRK attempts to secure itself by possessing nuclear weapons, which could in reality lead to a possible response in the way of U.S. military strikes against

it and increased tension on the Peninsula. The DPRK nuclear issue constitutes a major challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. If unstoppable, it may lead to a chain reaction, seriously worsening the security situation in East Asia. Besides, the DPRK nuclear issue has constituted a serious setback to the South-North reconciliation process that started in 2000. The South-North dialogue is beset with obstacles and unification seems to be nowhere in sight.

In order to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue, the international community has made great efforts. The Six-Party Talks have gradually developed into the main mechanism focusing on the issue. Amidst intermittent dialogues and various difficulties, the six parties reached an important agreement on resolving the DPRK nuclear issue in early October 2007, registering a major periodic result. The crisis situation that had been caused by the DPRK nuclear issue has, on the whole, basically been placed under control. The process of disabling nuclear facilities in the DPRK has started. The DPRK nuclear issue is moving in the right direction of gradual resolution. At present, the Six-Party Talks have encountered new difficulties in implementing the nuclear declaration by the DPRK and the responsive measures by the U.S. (such as removing DPRK from the list of terrorism-sponsoring nations and lifting the economic sanctions). However, the parties concerned are continuing with their efforts so as to break the stalemate as early as possible. Moreover, with the Six-Party Talks making progress, the South-North dialogues have recaptured the momentum, as was evidenced by the second North-South Summit in 2007.

In the near future, there are both opportunities for and risks to the resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. If the difficulties in nuclear declaration can be overcome in a relatively short period of time, further progress can be made toward resolution of the nuclear issue. Otherwise, with the approaching of the presidential election in the U.S., the disablement process may come to a standstill and the situation may witness reversal.

In the long term, it will be a long and arduous historical process to realize peace and stability on the Peninsula. Only with denuclearization, South-North reconciliation, establishment of a peace mechanism and South-North reunification can the Korean Peninsula realize long-term peace and security. Denuclearization will only be the first step. Even after its achievement,

reconciliation and a peace mechanism will continue to be arduous tasks, and it is a further objective to realize reunification. All this is predetermined by the long term confrontation and entrenched distrust between the DPRK-U.S. as well as DPRK-Japan, compounded by decades of South-North isolation and their diametrical differences in terms of their social systems. Besides, major power relations also exert a complex impact on the historical process. In order to achieve lasting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, we have to be prepared to make long-term and arduous efforts.

4. Territorial and Maritime Disputes

There have been multiple disputes over territory or maritime interests among countries in East Asia for a long time. These disputes have resulted in tensions and even armed conflicts.

After the end of the Cold War, some relevant countries have made major progress in resolving territorial disputes. For example, China and Russia fundamentally resolved territorial disputes between them. China and Vietnam agreed on land border disputes and some of their maritime disputes. However, there exist still serious disputes over maritime territory and maritime interests such as those between Japan and Russia, between China and five ASEAN countries, and among China, Japan, DPRK, and ROK. Many of the disputes are hard to resolve in a short period of time. Disputes over territory and maritime interests constitute a major hidden danger to regional security.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the dispute between South Korea and Japan and that between China and Japan over the East China Sea remain outstanding and complex, involving not only sovereignty over islands but also various problems of exclusive economic zones, continental shelves, maritime prospecting, and resource exploration. Correspondingly, countries have conducted frequent military activities in the East China Sea and domestic public opinions in all relevant countries have reacted strongly on several occasions. At the same time, the relevant countries have strengthened negotiations and dialogues. For example, China and Japan have reached important common understanding on joint development over the last two years, developed confidence-building measures, and sped up negotiations. If the two countries can register actual progress in joint development, it will be

exemplary for the resolution of other territorial and maritime disputes in the region.

Compared with Northeast Asia, the disputes over the South China Sea have been relatively tranquil for quite some time, although there are occasional small conflicts. China-ASEAN relations have been developing well. All parties concerned have strictly observed The Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. China, the Philippines, and Vietnam have made some attempts in joint development. These are important reasons for the relative stable situation in the South China Sea.

In the foreseeable future, the outbreak of military conflicts between the relevant countries over territorial or maritime interests does not seem likely. Some disputes may gradually relax or be partially resolved. However, most disputes will continue to persist over the long term. Some individual disputes, if poorly handled, may intensify under certain conditions. In order that disputes in the region over territorial and maritime interests develop toward relaxation and resolution, the relevant countries need to strengthen dialogue, adopt more confidence-building measures, improve crisis management mechanisms, and promote tangible progress in joint development.

At present, while resolving territorial and maritime disputes, vigilance should be remain over the issue of external force involvement by the intention of countries concerned in this region, because this will bring nothing but complicated and negative results. The only right solution is to hold dialogues and cooperation between those countries of the dispute.

5. Religious, Ethnic and other Social Conflicts

For quite some time, fairly acute religious, ethnic, or other social conflicts have existed in some countries in East Asia, Southeast Asia in particular. After the end of the Cold War, these contradictions surfaced and have become reasons behind internal crises, chaos, or armed conflicts in some countries. If out of control, such problems will threaten not only the security of the country in question but also that of the neighboring countries. Indonesia is an apparent example in this regard. At the end of the 1990s, accelerated by the financial crisis, religious, ethnic, and social conflicts rapidly intensified, leading to serious social chaos and political crisis. Since

the beginning of the 21st century, the serious religious and ethnic contradictions have once again become the hotbed of terrorism, and Indonesia has become a disaster zone of terrorist attacks.

At present, religious and ethnic problems and even secessionist movements still exist to varying degrees in Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, and Thailand. Internal unrest in Timor-Leste failed to cease even after independence. In China, there are also ethnic secessionist forces which act intermittently such as the pro-independence forces in Tibet and Xinjiang. Nonetheless, compared with several years ago, social chaos and armed conflicts caused by religious, ethnic, and other social conflicts in East Asia are on the whole relaxing and most countries enjoy an increasingly stable political situation.

Looking to the future, it may be expected that with economic, cultural, and social development, the pressure or threat on national security caused by these religious, ethnic, and social problems will be under tighter control *if* they are properly handled. Even if internal conflict does occur in one individual country, it will hardly bring about serious effects on regional security and stability as a whole. But it will take a fairly long period of time for these problems to be fundamentally resolved, and the task of which will be principally on the specific country involved. The international community could play a positive role to a certain degree, but any attempt to interfere in another country's internal affairs under such a pretext should be firmly opposed.

6. Regional Armament Development

During the Cold War, serious military confrontation and an arms race occurred in East Asia. Before and after the end of the Cold War, with the gradual relaxation of the security situation, the pace of armament development in the region slowed down to a certain extent. Some countries including China even carried out large-scale disarmament. However, since the mid 1990s, regional armament development has again gained in pace.

There are five reasons behind this: 1) development of weapon and military technologies and influence of the revolution in military affairs; 2) rapid economic growth in East Asia, making it possible for the relevant countries to markedly increase military expenditures; 3) stimulation by international

military conflicts and rise of regional hot spots; 4) increase of non-traditional security threats such as terrorism; and 5) increased military presence of the U.S. in East Asia to guard against the rise of China and Russia (in recent years, the U.S. has in East Asia and even the whole Asia-Pacific deployed much of the latest weaponry available, including nuclear submarines and fighters, and cooperated (against the strong opposition of China and Russia) with Japan in the accelerated research and deployment of TMD. Naturally, these reasons have a varying impact on the countries in this region; and the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s markedly slowed down the armament of some East Asian countries.

The relatively fast armament development in East Asia is reasonable to some extent. With economic and technological development, the modernization of national defense is a necessary trend. Furthermore, with changes in the international security situation, the strengthening of an independent self-defense capability is a necessary choice for all countries. However, there are also some worrying factors in the armament development in East Asia. If uncontrolled, they may not only cause new tensions but also trigger a new arms race, forming a security dilemma in the region as described in international security theories.

In regard to the future, in order to prevent the possible negative influence of armament development over regional security, East Asian countries should work in the following three areas. The first is to effectively control and resolve main hot spot issues. The second is to comprehensively develop security dialogue and military exchanges. And the third is to promote military confidence building measures. Exemplary roles by China and ASEAN on these three matters will be of great significance.

7. Non-Traditional Security Issues

Since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 21st century in particular, non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, climate change, environmental pollution, energy shortage, financial crisis, transnational crime, and international infectious disease have become increasingly prominent. Although non-traditional security issues are quite different from the traditional ones in terms of forms and reasons (except terrorism and some transnational crimes, these issues usually cause severe damage to

national interests and people's lives and property in a nonmilitary manner), their threats to security have been on the rise. Non-traditional security threats have become major new challenges facing all East Asian states.

At present, non-traditional security issues have brought about varying levels of threat to East Asian countries. For example, terrorism and environmental pollution have not posed major threats to all countries in the region whereas climate change, energy shortage, financial crisis, and transnational crimes have become universal challenges. Generally speaking, in face of non-traditional security issues, countries have more shared interests than differences and cooperation in this regard has been strengthened. However, due to differences in national conditions, levels of development, and religious and cultural backgrounds, East Asian countries still exhibit many difference among one another on how to look at and deal with non-traditional security issues. If these differences cannot be resolved soon, they will not be conducive to coping with the rise of non-traditional security threats, and may even in certain conditions sharpen traditional security threats or make some of the non-traditional threats become traditional ones (namely, causing military conflicts).

Looking ahead, with the accelerated development of globalization and informatization, non-traditional security threats will become more urgent and more salient in regional security. Under these circumstances, the East Asian countries may narrow their differences in perception and strengthen their cooperation on these issues. Anyway, non-traditional security issues can in no way be resolved by just a few states and all countries have shared interests. It is our expectation that the enhanced and successful cooperation among East Asian countries in combating non-traditional security threats can become a prelude for regional multi-lateral security cooperation and lay an important groundwork for broader efforts in this respect.

8. Regional Security Mechanism

This is an important issue concerning how to realize peace and security in East Asia. During the Cold War, serious military confrontation based on military alliances existed for a long time in East Asia. Apart from military conflicts, what was brought about was at the most peace under terror rather than security in real sense.

After the end of the Cold War, the security mechanism in East Asia has undergone major changes with the disappearance of military confrontation between the two hegemons, the improvement of power relations, and the fast development of various bilateral and multilateral security dialogue mechanisms. In particular, the extensive bilateral security/military dialogues between major powers, the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN + 3, East Asian Summit, and the Six-Party Talks have all made positive contributions in forming a new regional security mechanism.

On the other hand, relations between regional powers still fluctuate. In order to maintain and strengthen its military presence in East Asia, the U.S. continues to upgrade military alliances that were established during the Cold War. And due to apparent differences in values and ideologies, major countries in the region still differ considerably over what type of multilateral regional security cooperation mechanism should be established.

In general, the current East Asian security mechanism is still in transition, showing a composite structure: balance of power, bilateral military alliances led by the U.S., multilateral and bilateral dialogues. There is still a very long way to go for East Asia to set up a uniform regional multilateral security mechanism on the basis of cooperative security.

In the future, coordination and balance between major powers will continue to play an important role for a fairly long time to come. In this regard, it is very important to maintain relative stability and balance of relations among major powers.

There are two possible scenarios for the prospects of military alliances. One is to adapt to situation changes and gradually realize their organizational transformation (from military organization to political/security organization) and functional readjustment (from mainly dealing with traditional security threats to concentrating on non-traditional security threats), thereby to a certain extent they can be helpful to maintaining regional security. The other is to strengthen the military nature of the alliances in guarding against China and Russia and to develop them into a multilateral military alliance, which will not only disrupt strategic mutual trust and increase destabilizing factors in the region but also bring about serious obstacles to the establishment of a regional multilateral security mechanism.

Compared with coordination and balance among major powers and bilateral military alliances, for some time to come the role of bilateral and multilateral dialogues will remain minor. However, since these dialogues represent the future direction of regional multilateral cooperation, conducive to maintaining regional peace and stability and therefore full of vitality, the trend will be for them to develop and gain strength.

In short, since the end of the Cold War, East Asia has enjoyed relative peace and stability. However, there are still many negative factors and potential threats in the security environment in this region, including new challenges as well as lasting problems. East Asian countries have to continue their efforts in the following aspects: encouraging healthy and steady development of power relations; successfully resolving the DPRK nuclear issue and promoting peaceful development in the Taiwan Straits; greatly enhancing their cooperation in addressing non-traditional security threats; striving toward the establishment and development of a regional multilateral security regime on the basis of a new security concept (“mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, and coordination”). Only in this way can the situation in East Asia move in a major way toward peace and stability, and only by doing so can all the countries in the region really embrace a new century characterized by peace and development.

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