

## Japan-US Cooperation for Addressing State Fragility

Kazuo Tase, Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting  
Kazuto Tsuruga, Osaka University

September 3, 2015

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 3, Stimson hosted Kazuo Tase, Kazuto Tsuruga, and several Japan and UN specialists in Washington, DC to join for a discussion on Japan's efforts to address fragile states.

The speakers began by describing how addressing state fragility has been of policy concern since the September 11, 2011 attacks in both Washington, DC and Tokyo. Though it is mentioned in Japan's new development charter, however, Japan's record of assisting such developing nations has room for improvement. While the JSDF have been sent to East Timor, Cambodia, and South Sudan, Japan can do more to engage in the political process. After all, Japanese policymakers must invest lots of political capital to engage with fragile states, and yet doing so is important for Japan's stake in the Security Council, and so Japan's approach must be benign yet persistent. Japan must also invest in human resource development, engaging with political leaders to prioritize diplomacy. Japan also lacks the talent pool needed to exercise real influence over UN decision-making and must send more young diplomats overseas, including through UN systems, in order to cultivate greater understanding of the challenges confronting fragile states. Also, Japan must encourage mobility of experts among the private sector, public sector, and academia. The media must also be engaged in order to raise public awareness about the importance of dealing with the fragile states.

For example, Japan's status as a non-member of the UNSC constrained its ability to influence discussions on Cambodian reconstruction. Yet even when Japanese peacekeepers sought to affect greater change on the ground, they would avoid pressuring host governments, wanting to be perceived as a friendly nation and avoid hassling foreign governments whenever possible. Tokyo must engage more in political discussions about leaders and governing processes to ensure the safety of the population.

The DOD has an institution in Hawaii that acts as a soft-power asset in promoting democracy and good governance. The institution sends lawyers to security-sector reform sessions in Myanmar, Bangladesh, etc. to help countries create legal structures and stronger internal civilian-military relations so that governments can worry less about the risk of a coup. This bridges security and political levels, as a political-level discussion with implications for the security sphere. Japan could do more in this area in theory, however, the lack of English capacity and understanding of the international context constrains Japan's ability in this regard. Few Japanese lawyers are interested in these political conflicts or in helping fragile states develop robust legal systems. On the flip side though, becoming a Foreign Service official does not require as many qualifications (even a college degree is unnecessary), and individuals in MOFA are expected to interpret international law on a regular basis. The understanding is that government agencies will train officers in their various responsibilities.

The group then discussed "human security," a concept Japan has pushed in the UN for the past fifteen years. Because the terminology is ill-defined, its potential added value as a means of safeguarding the physical and mental/psychological security of civilians has not been widely recognized. In the 2003 Commission on Human Security report, Ogata and Sen defined human security as protecting the "vital core" of human life to enhance human potential and fulfillment. Vital core introduces human dignity.

For example, peacekeepers who oversee UN protection-of-civilian sites in South Sudan provide life-saving protection but not human dignity: people survive but have no jobs or essential hope. The vital core includes both physical (e.g. air, food, and health) and psychological (e.g. meaning of life, hope, and love) needs. The latter's inherent subjectivity makes it difficult to quantify, but Japan should encourage experts to better define the vital core of human life and develop a means of measuring both physical and psychological health, in order to apply to post-conflict/ disaster scenarios and in fragile states.

Formalizing human security in the UN has been challenging. A few states opposed its inclusion in statements and resolutions fearing that it would be used as an excuse for humanitarian intervention, whereas the Canadian government wanted the concept to represent humanitarian intervention. Canada introduced the “responsibility to protect” concept in the 2000 ICISS report and subsequently shifted its focus from human security to R2P. The GA distinguished both concepts in its 2005 outcome document, as did the Secretary-General’s 2010 report on human security, in the hopes of keeping both concepts alive in the GA. It narrowed the scope of human security to include only the soft-development humanitarian realm, though human security must logically allow for the use of force to protect those whose lives are endangered. In 2015, Japan remains one of few countries working to secure recognition for the concept. Thailand, Spain, Slovenia, and Greece are the most sympathetic.

Of the “added value” of human security, one of the most valuable benefits is the focus of development efforts on citizens instead of governments, encouraging donor governments to do so as well. The Human Security Trust Fund gave money directly to communities via UN organizations, prohibiting use of money towards conferences or international consultants, ensuring that decisions were made locally in concert with NGOs on the ground, and in a way that effectively used taxpayer money. South Sudan provides an unfortunate example: the UNSC mandate does not support capacity building for the government because of its abuses, instead focusing on protection and humanitarian assistance. The unintended consequence is that any major infrastructure project is seen as supporting the government, despite its benefits for the people. As such, Japan is constantly repaving the road between UN base and the capital city, unable to build a permanent road, even though it would benefit the UN and the people.

There are clear areas that could benefit from US-Japan cooperation, such as post-disaster relief in Asia and beyond. Operation Tomodachi built public trust in the US military and SDF, so in future disasters, Japan and the US would be able to provide assistance. Coordinating international development efforts though lack incentives. Both countries also struggle to coordinate their own agencies – USAID and State Department for the US, and JICA and MOFA for Japan. Perhaps both countries could contribute to police development in fragile states. Military engagement is limited, but Japan would not have constitutional issues with police assistance, and the US already has expertise in training police forces.

In Southeast Asia, Japan is training coastguards, which are essentially maritime police. Similarly, police training in Africa in terms of fragile states would be possible, since there aren’t any constitutional issues. However, this is completely under the radar, because the death of a Japanese policeman in Cambodia twenty years ago upset the public and discouraged the police agency from tasking personnel with similar missions. This mentality of deliberate noninvolvement would be difficult to overturn, requiring a strong political leader willing to rebuke the police agency leadership for its inactivity. Politicians without clout refuse to touch the police bureaucracy in fear of retaliation. But perhaps a well-established, respected member of the police community could urge the agency to involve officers in peacekeeping efforts.

Japanese police could play a vital role in securing a safe environment for civilians, by internationalizing the *koban* system. Strong community relations and an eye on the ground enable the system to work

effectively. At the same time, because police operate at the community level, there is little interaction across the country, so it would be difficult to organize peacekeeping missions. But if a lot of these African countries have centralized systems, the Japanese could communicate as counterparts – Japan should seek to convince police agencies to join this effort. For the US, private contractors generally train police abroad, though many are former police themselves. Japanese police retirees are independent and still very active, so a cooperative Japan-US police retiree organization could be effective. The SDF have precedent, with retirees forming an NGO for demining in Cambodia.

On whether legislative discussions in Japan could enable SDF to participate in Provisional Reconstruction Team-type projects in Afghanistan alongside the US, there is little likelihood. PRT often involves use of force, and only two conditions would allow for that: if Japan's own security was under threat, or if inaction would permit the emergence of a direct threat to the homeland. PRT doesn't constitute as either, so there would have to be an explicit UNSC mandate or a direct threat. With the new legislation for collective security, the five principles for engagement are still in effect. Then again, for Japan, the problem is expanding SDF abroad. While military action is an important component of PRT, it is only one component; Japan should consider sending non-SDF to join. The current nature of debate precludes progress, invariably returning to the same basic questions of safety and combat zones. Especially for PRT, national police could be effective in riot control training, but there is no such discussion.

On Japan-US cooperation, another possibility is to train peacekeepers. The SDF has dispatched a number of people to train peacekeepers in Southeast Asian and African PKO centers, but Tokyo now seems more focused on infrastructure investment, namely in competing with China and other countries to deliver quality over quantity. It may be possible to incorporate the concept of human security with this effort, as the ADB has shown signs of trying to promote high-quality infrastructure investment.

Japan must consider how infrastructure affects other aspects of human life. Construction plans must from the outset reflect the voices of the core beneficiaries, yet infrastructure is frequently built at the behest of government. For example, when Japan constructed an expanded road in Cambodia, the Cambodian government evicted people to acquire the requisite land. Japan did not intend that outcome, and it was within the Cambodian government's authority to do so, but Tokyo should have insisted it was unacceptable. Heeding the voices of the population is paramount to successful and ethical state building. For example, building a well may sound like a great idea, but if it's in a location that would cause two communities to fight over access to the water, the well only breeds new conflict. NGOs confer with the public as a matter of practice, and they may be able to share best practices with the Japanese business community or help conduct risk assessments for infrastructure projects.

In South Sudan, the Japanese have a noteworthy collaboration model with the Australians, with two Australians – one military specialist and one linguist – embedded within the Japanese contingent to work around restrictions on bilateral cooperation between Japan and other non-US countries. For three years now, these two Australians have worked closely with the Japanese on post-conflict reconstruction and disaster response, and they're thinking of expanding that arrangement to pre-deployment training. Both governments seem pleased with how it's working, so it's an interesting model to consider.

In July, Japan announced the rapid deployment of SDF trainers to Africa to train peacekeepers in using heavy equipment. Japan has been effective in utilizing the SDF engineering unit, with trial training to begin this September.

Once human security is defined, in order that it impacts policy, Japan must continue efforts to measure and quantify psychological well-being. Then these measurements can be incorporated into international goals to change policy, allocating more development resources toward psychological well-being. By demonstrating how human security matters from an economic perspective, then there will be more interest, because countries and companies don't want to lose money. The ultimate purpose of this framework is to establish a GLOBAL economic regime in which companies against such universal values cannot win in the market. To bring human security into business behavior, the process must become more transparent. The UN stresses the importance of monitoring and evaluation, which is often outsourced. If the whole supply chain were visible to consumers so factories and brands couldn't hide working environments, humanitarian assistance would be more accessible to the general public.

Though protection of civilians is already happening, it is defined narrowly against physical violence. Peacekeepers do not provide services for mental trauma, even though this is important for the ultimate goal of improving the well-being of those affected by conflict. The language of human security in mandates is important for directing humanitarian aid towards NGOs providing such services.