Japan’s Assistance for Fragile States: Potential for U.S.-Japan Cooperation

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Tatsumi: Thank you for joining us for this thought-intriguing session. You normally don’t hear Japan and ‘fragile state’ in one sentence, so I think attendance today kind of reflects how intriguing that thought might be.

My name is Yuki Tatsumi, and I am a senior associate here at the Stimson Center. It is a great honor to welcome two friends, whom I have known for quite a long time, as speakers for today. Sitting to my left is Kazuto Tsuruga, who is an associate professor at Osaka University. He has also previously worked at the UNDP and also the Japanese permanent mission in the United Nations in New York. Sitting to my right is Mr. Kazuo Tase, who is the director of Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting, but he is also a guest professor at Osaka University. He has many formers: he was formerly with the United Nations Human Security Initiative, and he also been a career diplomat at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both of them have been involved in this related issue for quite some time.

Mr. Tsuruga will open this session by [speaking] for fifteen-to-twenty minutes or so, followed by Mr. Tase, and then after that, we will open it up for questions, answers, and comments. So without further ado, [Mr. Tsuruga].

Tsuruga: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for coming, and thank you, Yuki, for inviting me to this informative session. I am Kazuto Tsuruga. I have been working at Osaka University since 2010, and prior to that, I was in New York, serving as the first secretary for the Japanese diplomatic mission to the UN, in the political section dealing with Security Council issues and the peacebuilding commissions, and prior to that, I was in Afghanistan and Cambodia, dealing with development assistance on the ground. So with those kinds of experiences, I have learned how Japan should deal with fragile states. And before going to that topic, I think I must touch upon the current hotly-debated issues in Japan: the security bills.

To be honest, I have mixed feelings about how the discussion is going, for while I have respect for young generations who’ve been protesting against PM Abe’s initiative for this new security bill—I think they really care as a peace-loving generation, which I think is a success of the country as a peace-loving nation—at the same time, I wonder whether this is really coming from a real understanding of the issues currently surrounding Japan and the globe. As many of you have seen, this tragedy of Syrian refugees flowing into Europe now—and I’m sure many of you have seen the tragic picture of the child drowned on a Turkish beach a few days ago—but there seems to be little coverage in Japanese media. What seems to be more important to them is the scrapping of the Tokyo Olympics logic, and I think that has quite an impact on the perception of the young generations—and maybe older generations—about how current affairs are taking place, and one of my main messages is to [that we must] perceive their problem as our problem morally, and also politically.

So, going back to the fragile states, I think for the U.S., dealing with fragile states [has been] becoming more significant in recent years, and it’s backed by many statements by top-level officials in the U.S.
government in the previous administration and also in the Obama administration, including Susan Rice. So, dealing with fragile states is becoming more important. And also for Japan, now we have a new development charter, renewed in 2015, that also includes the notion of a need to address fragile states. So, it is becoming a top agenda [issue], and I think for Japan, they've been trying for almost twenty years [to deal with] these kinds of issues in [the context of] Cambodian reconstruction. But I guess what’s missing is that they tend to focus on the humanitarian development side, and I think for the U.S. and Japan to deal with fragile states, we need to address three layers of fragile states. One is development. Of course, we have to help recovering states take more responsibility [in] governance and have sound economic policies. Also security issues: to be able to protect their own populations and to have a good security relationship with others (and also [good relations] on political issues). I guess what Japan is doing is the first layer: development, and for the security layer, it has constitutional difficulties and other difficulties that might entail. But I guess what Japan can do more of is on the political level. They should be engaged in the political process of those fragile states and also policy formulation in the UN or in a bilateral environment.

In my paper, I would like to touch upon the three examples in Cambodia, which was the first initiative [taken] by Japan to deal with a complex conflict situation, and I would also like to see how Japan, and also the US, is doing in Afghanistan, and also I would like to see what’s beyond those two countries: what we can do in Syria and other countries. But I think Japan can exert its influence—it sounds quite paradoxical—but to prioritize the unattended, because in many cases, there are fragile states that get very little attention in the international community. According to some statistics from the OECD, in 2012, 22% of all aid went to Afghanistan and Iraq, and I think there are other countries that deserve more attention, which maybe could help prevent fragile states from becoming a threat to the U.S. and also Japan.

And I also would like to touch upon the importance of investing in people: [developing] Japanese expertise, because I think we need to have people who can really think about the fragile states at the policy level (the top level), and also at the midlevel (the people who help frame the debate), and also at the early level of their areas. For in many cases, Japanese development assistance experts tend to distance themselves from talking about politics in those countries, and in some ways, it’s understandable, because if you start talking about politics on the ground, it will create difficulties dealing with those governments and it might interrupt those countries also at the headquarter level. But we need to have people on the ground—both from the public sector or UN bureaucrats—to know what it means to be in those fragile states. When I was in Afghanistan, I had to deal with the daily workers, who rely upon the daily allowance for their work from the UN agencies, but we had difficulties paying them cash, because there’s no banking system in Afghanistan, so it was really difficult to transfer cash from Kabul to provinces, and if the payment was delayed, there was of course frustration among the populations. And even if it didn’t go wrong, it might have affected the situation where the UN was working. So to be able to really grasp the need on the ground, I think we need young professionals in those countries from an early stage. And also, [concerning] those at a midelevel, Japanese experts can do more to become architects for policy formulation.

Now there is a discussion about the review of UN peacekeeping operations and also the review of peacekeeping architecture in the UN, and in those reports, I don’t see any Japanese names in the acknowledgements, because I’m sure there are many American experts in the UN and outside who are deeply involved in creating those policies, and also we (Japan) need to have top-level, including politicians, and the top-ranking diplomats to be able to deal with those issues in multilateral settings in those reviews of peacekeeping operations. We don’t have any panel members from Japan, even though
we had [inaudible] ten years ago as a panel member for the high-level panel—and there was another member for the Brahimi Report—but this time, there [are] no Japanese, and I think it’s a pity, because after the U.S., Japan is the second largest contributor to peacekeeping operations, and we have much to say in the future of those operations, but we don’t have any experts in that discussion.

When I was in New York, a vacant position opened up at the high level [of the] UN system, but when we looked around, there were no candidates among the Japanese community who could fill that position at the high level. I think that’s because there’s not enough mobility among experts, because people in JICA, the Japan International Corporation Agency, remain in their organization for most of their lives, and also for Japanese diplomats, it is very rare for them to leave their job and join international organizations. Of course, there are job security issues, but I almost feel envious of the U.S. [because of its so-called] “revolving door,” with people coming in and out at the policy level and going back into academia or other institutions, but can always go back to the real world. I think that kind of exchange of experts will be needed in Japan also, to have fresh ideas in policymaking and also to have substantial discussions in Japanese society. I think that will also help raise awareness in Japan to promote better understanding of fragile states, because I think what’s happening in the discussion over the security bills is also—part of the reason is that in Japan, history and international relations are not well taught in high schools or universities.

I was raised in an international school in Bangkok, so I didn’t take courses in a high school in Japan, but I’ve learned that in Japan, high school students do not really learn modern history. They learn the long history, but they rush into modern history and only touch upon a little bit, and surprisingly, not many—very few—students know how the United Nations was created, so they have a very biased view, possibly, or a negative view, toward the UN, and that’s what I’m trying to change within my university, but it’s taking a lot of time. So, I guess those exchanges of experts at the policy level, also in academia or in other institutions, might help raise awareness so in the future we can have a better discussion of many problems. Thank you.

**Tatsumi:** So, for the record, both Mr. Tsuruga and Mr. Tase are atypical Japanese, [to have] actually switched jobs and been quite successful in all of them. And he (Mr. Tsuruga) mentioned that very few diplomats leave the Japanese Foreign Service to do something else, but here’s the [rare] example (gestures to Mr. Tase)! So that’s a nice segue into introducing Mr. Tase.

**Tase:** Thank you. Good morning, everybody. Thank you for coming, and [thank you to] Yuki-san [for] kindly introducing me. I served in the Japanese Foreign Service for about thirteen years and then in the United Nations for ten years, but after serving as a public official for twenty-three years, I got tired of it and moved on to the private sector, in part to bring private resource investment into public policies. Now that I am out of the public system I can say anything, so today I will try to be very blunt and try to be as critical as possible, but [what] I and probably Japanese diplomacy have done in the past fifteen years for the concept called human security—have you ever heard this word: human security? It came up in the UNDP Human Development Report in 1994, and Canada and Japan somehow picked it up in the late 1990s for totally different meanings. Japan has made lots of diplomatic efforts to mainstream the agenda in the United Nations and in the international community, but I would say the attempt has been half success, half failure. I want to discuss what has happened and why that happened with you this morning, especially in relation to fragile states.

For the honor of the Japanese government, I want to start with the success part. The human security concept was developed by Madame Sadako Ogata and Professor Amartya Sen in the so-called
commission mandated by Kofi Annan in the year 2000: the Commission on Human Security. I was the first secretary of that mission, and these two geniuses have offered a very distinctive added value to this concept. One is that unlike the concept of human rights, human security did not assume the existence of [inaudible] or the state, and this is—I think—particularly relevant to the issue of the fragile state. Human security wanted to find a reason to protect [in] the name of people, not the government or states. In some administrations, such as post-conflict or post-disaster situations, I tried to devise or find ways for the international community to support the people’s aspirations or the community aspirations to survive and enhance the security even without a functional government. So this is one, and this is quite different from the human rights regime.

And the other thing [about] the distinctive added value of human security was that it offered [a means of addressing] not only the physical needs of people, but also the psychological or subjective ones. And this is the core part of my argument about the definition of human security. According to Ogata-san, the definition of human security is to protect the vital core of all human lives—to find ways to enhance the fulfilment of human potential. What do you think is the vital core of human life? That is my question for you. What is the vital core for your life? Intentionally or unintentionally, the Commission on Human Security did not define the meaning of the vital core, and this has confused the international community, in fact. Academically, too, there’s lots of discussion about the meaning of vital core.

I think that if you have a vital core for your life, that does not only mean just the physical needs such as food, nutrition, health, air, and maybe safety, so on and so forth, but it also means a subjective, mental, or psychological well-being, or the state where you can find the meaning of your life, you can find bonds and ties with other people, love, or faith, or self-assurance, maybe. These are psychological values, but they are very difficult to measure. [But] they might be a very important part of the vital core that constitutes you, and the argument of human security is that the international community has not been successfully grasping these values that are not easy to measure. In the [inaudible] for example, we have education, we have [inaudible], we have gender issues, and so on and so forth. But we rarely have these psychological or subjective indicators, which I think are still very important—or critical—to protect and enhance and [better] society. So I think human security has half-successfully tried to offer new added value to the international community, which needs to be seriously considered for the well-being of all human kind for the next fifteen to twenty years. That’s the successful part.

But the failure part has been that, of course, the concepts are too vague and not clearly defined, both in that commission and in the United Nations General Assembly and [in] other forums. The commission has submitted this definition to Kofi Annan, and the word human security was recognized by the UN General Assembly in 2005. There were some outcome documents, but that was clearly distinguished from the responsibility to protect in that document, but at that moment, human security was something member states have generally supported, with doubts that it is too comprehensive and doesn’t have any specific added value. So in the 2005 document, the GA decided to continue to define the concept (in that document), and after five years, the secretary general’s report on human security was published. I was responsible for the compilation, and in the SG’s report, we said that human security does not envisage any use of force to politically distinguish that concept from the responsibility to protect. But the definition was still not clear. To date, in fact, the GA has not adopted any resolutions to clearly define the word. Resolutions say that human security entails “this, this, this, and that,” without [offering] any clear definition. So that’s one clear failure.

Another failure was that Japan wanted to mainstream this concept, but they somehow—I should be very careful—avoided the early adoption or endorsement by the official GA discussion process. Japan
agreed with the secretary general in 1999 to establish the so-called United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, and Japan initially showed its support with $100 million, and eventually Japan contributed more than $400 million to this trust fund. I was the fund manager for ten years. In the beginning, as you may know, the secretary general is vested with the [ability] to establish any trust fund in the UN Secretariat without any UN resolutions, so the SG and Japan agreed to establish this trust fund without any GA decision, and as a result, for more than ten years, there has been no institutional decision to define the mandate of the United Nations about human security. So I think this is quite a failure. I think you should first define what the definition is and also what the mandate of the organization is, [before you] push for it.

[For] background, there was a conceptual confrontation between Japan and Canada. Canada wanted to push human security as humanitarian intervention in the late 1990s, but humanitarian intervention, as you may know, was very, very unpopular for developing countries. They thought this was improper intervention into sovereignty. So Canada changed the tactics to push for the notion as “responsibility to protect,” which is contained to the limits of the United Nations Charter. They wanted to push for human security to push for the responsibility for humanitarian intervention, and based on their very bitter experience in Rwanda, they—because the Security Council is paralyzed—while they were there in Rwanda, Canadian UN forces couldn’t do anything to stop the mass killing, so they wanted to devise ways to resolve genocide, or the humanitarian crime—a crime for humanity—to somehow go beyond the limit of the UN Charter. So I don’t deny the intention of [inaudible] at that time and Canadian intentions—in fact, I think that was very much justifiable—but at that time, they wanted to go beyond the UN Charter, saying that if the UNSC does not work, then somebody should [do something]. So human security was considered to be representing humanitarian intervention, and the problem [Japan faced] was trying to push this concept as an economic assistance agenda after the 1997 Thai currency crisis. So while both [Japan and Canada] are saying human security, the concept is totally different. So at that time (of the establishment of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security), Japan wanted to avoid a GA discussion to define the concept. And also, Japan paid too much money to this trust fund. Japan alone contributed more than $400 million without—I have to be careful; on the record—without making enough effort to invite other members [to contribute]. And I was with the Foreign Ministry, so I know that Japan wanted to have human security as Japan’s initiative, not one by the United Nations as a whole, but I think maybe we should have involved, from the very early stage, like-minded nations to develop and establish the institutional regime in the UN system.

So I’ll stop here, but now I am trying to mainstream this idea; I still believe in the concept, in business and civil society. Now I think the SDGs are to be adopted this month. We need a larger alliance of not only the government and public institutions, but also civil society and especially business. My experience says that the United Nations can do very good things, but it is quite limited. We can demonstrate examples, but the United Nations is very, very, very bad at sustaining the impact and bringing in investment. So I moved to this side: from the public policies and private investment, I moved to this side and tried to mainstream SDGs and human security to invest in public policies. Thank you.

**Tatsumi:** So I should have said this at the beginning, but this is part of the project for “Japan as a Peace Enabler,” and I wanted to focus on the areas of Japanese policy in the United Nations that are not often discussed in this town. A lot of these policies are being debated and formulated in New York, but that does impact how Japanese government conducts its foreign policy toward the UN and toward the much larger concept of international norms as a whole, and my personal curiosity is that whenever I pick up a new project, I would like to learn something from it, and in this project, I’m learning a ton, so for that alone, this project is already becoming quite a success for me. It is very rare for people in this
community to hear from Japanese who have had on-the-ground experience, as well as [experience] in various agencies, whether it’s with the Japanese government or UN agencies, so I’m very glad to have you involved in this. I will now open the floor to questions and comments.

**Question:** My question has to do with how the Japanese government does its bilateral and multilateral assistance: its ODA for conflict-affected and fragile states. One of the difficulties that I’ve seen, and I think it both limits the ability of Japanese policymakers to have a more well-rounded and well-developed sense about how to engage these problems at a policy level, and it also creates problems in terms of the effectiveness of the whole exercise, because of the bias toward giving assistance only to the governments, and the lack of flexibility about being able to work with non-state actors, work with civil society directly, and engage them directly because of the bias both of the Japanese government and of the UN, frankly, which is the other big channel for Japanese ODA, toward governments. And I wanted to hear from you about how that limits that, and if that is something that there’s any discussion within the Japanese aid bureaucracy and policy bureaucracy about—loosening that and changing it, and making it more possible for Japanese ODAs to be flexible.

**Tsuruga:** According to my understanding, JICA, the information arm of ODA of the Japanese government, has many chapters, but in principle, they have to work with the government on a demand basis. They request the demands from the government, so [that] they [can] come up with wish-lists that the government would like to implement, and the Japanese government will pick and choose, but there are other channels, including funding at the grass-roots level, particularly, targeting NGOs on the ground. Of course, they need a blessing from the government but can work directly with NGOs on the ground. But I agree with you. We need to somehow find a way to work directly more with the people on the ground, but I guess that would require political discussions, because in dealing with fragile states or weak states, according to Mr. Stuart Patrick from the Council on Foreign Relations, there are two aspects: one is federal capacity or lack of capacity for the government to deal with many things, and the other aspect is the will of the regime to deal with those challenges. With the capacity gap, there can be places we can help, but in terms of will, that can be harder and would require political dialogue, and I think that is what Japan can do more on. It’s not pushing their agenda or putting pressure on the governments, but what Japan is good at is its benign approach and its persistence in persuading the government [to deal] with the issues. So, it hasn’t been successful so far, maybe, but Japan can do more in terms of working with the government in persuading them to act on challenges on the ground.

**Tase:** I fully agree with you. Too little flexibility, I think. The reason may be that there are three problems. The first is that the Japanese ODA [budget] has been decreasing very seriously. [At] the peak—1997 or 1998—it received over $10 billion; now it’s only $4 billion a year. So the government, JICA and other branches, are desperate to get money, and they are trying to continue to sustain existing operations, and they have no room for additional considerations for involving other stakeholders, maybe. That’s one thing.

The more serious element is the relationship between the public entities and civil society, especially Japanese NGOs. The basis or foundation of Japanese NGOs financial-wise and human resource-wise is not very strong. Kazuto mentioned the revolving door between industries and the types of professions in the United States and also in Europe, but there is no such thing in Japan. In fact, I am a very rare case to have moved from the government to the private sector. In Japan, many people enjoy lifetime employment, and government officials don’t want to move, and also there’s no movement between NGOs, the government, academic institutions, business, and so on and so forth. NGOs are considered [to be] self-sacrificing volunteers by the Japanese general public, so there are not enough financial
contributions, both from foundations or the public. For example, Save the Children. [If you compare staff in] Japan and Save U.S., the basic salaries are double or triple, differently. So the people working for Japanese NGOs are suffering from very low salaries and working environment, so once they find a better job, like a JPO, they just leave. So there’s no confidence in the relationship between the government and civil society so far. My proposal for the government is to accept the people, maybe on a [short-term] basis or something, from business, from NGOs, from academic institutions, so they can have a more diverse working environment. I think the government should do that. Then they [would] know how other people work, and the NGOs and businesses would know how government restrictions are. They should change.

Question: My question is about the upcoming G-7 summit that will take place Japan next year. Will the human security agenda be on the menu, and [if so,] how will Japan pursue it? And another question concerns the U.S. perception of human security [with respect] to its two strategic allies Canada and Japan. How is the U.S. navigating this issue, and what is this [approach] telling you about its view of human security?

Tsuruga: I hope the G-7 summit will pick up the concept of human security, especially in areas such as global health, disaster risk reduction, and in relation to private investment. I am now working with the Ministry of Health & Welfare (of Japan) and am also working with some government offices dealing with disaster risk reduction, so in these areas, human security can offer extremely strong added value, I believe. The thing the government should do first, is adopt the human security idea into its domestic policies. I have never heard of human security in my own country’s domestic politics. This is totally wrong. When you do not do it yourself, how can you recommend it to other people? So that is my answer to the first question.

As to the second question: the U.S. position on human security. When I was with the United Nations between 2003 and 2010, the State Department was very clever. They knew that Canadian [ideas of] human security and Japanese [ideas of] human security were different, but for the United States, both Canada and Japan are very good friends, so they kept very silent—I think intentionally. I am in constant exchange with those in charge in the State Department, and they are very, very familiar with our position and with that of Canada, and in public scenes and in public forums within the United Nations, the U.S. mission was very silent, smiling to both of us. But some offices—now the State Department has a human security office, and also the Department of Homeland Security —some people have been very interested in the idea to apply the concept into American domestic situations, such as Hurricane Katrina. At that time, their understanding was that that American law enforcement agencies and institutions somehow operated quite independently without looking at the true needs of the people they were helping. I had some discussions with people at DHS about how we can work together. But that was five or six years ago, so I don’t know the [nature of] current discussions on the American side.

Question: My first question is on the $400 million you said is being spent by the UN. Can you give an example of how it is being spent? One of the challenges is it is difficult to understand exactly what is meant by this. The second is a question on how the definition of human security within Japan is changing against the backdrop of PM Abe’s efforts to redefine Japan’s security engagement—sending coast guard ships to the Philippines, is that considered human security now? If you could elaborate on that.

Tase: So on the $400 million, we funded about 180-200 projects in both quasi-states or emerging states where people’s human security is critically and pervasively threatened. The eligible institutions are
United Nations organizations for the fund, but we set a very unique requirement: one, more than two UN organizations should apply together; two, [the project must] cover or encompass more than two different sectors—such as education and health, maybe refugee protection and reproductive health—because we thought the UN organizations are too compartmentalized, they’re silos, and they don’t talk to each other. When we say “One UN,” we mean the UN is not one; UNICEF is trying to help kids, the WHO is trying to address health issues, and FAO tries to help agricultural issues, but they don’t look at the people they are helping. We can’t cut people’s lives into those different aspects. We have many aspects in our lives: education, health, etc., but it is integrated in me; I cannot separate my education from my personality. But the United Nations doesn’t work like that. It is extremely supply-sided. So resources, this funding, the $400 million, should [be used to] totally reconsider how the UN works. We need to first determine or identify the needs of people and how these needs are interrelated, encompassing different sectors or aspects of life. One project costs $3-5 million, [over] 3-5 years, but the core uniqueness was that two or more organizations should work together to look at the people they are helping—not a stringent requirement, but I think this has made supporters in the UN consider it that way. Before this trust fund, many organizations did not work together, but at least I am proud that we founded something in which UN organizations can work together. As to Abe’s policies, I don’t want human security to be used to support this political agenda/argument at this moment. I think this is totally different.

Tsuruga: On coordination with the UN, I’ll just briefly touch on that. Obviously, the US and Japan are the main donors to those agencies, and I think those countries can do more to influence the work of those organizations, but in reality, even within Japan or within the US, they are already singing the song from the same song sheet, and what they’re saying in the Security Council, what they’re saying on the executive boards of the agencies, and what they’re saying at the embassy-level on the ground differs. I think they really need to have an integrated approach and put more pressure or exert their influence [to make] them work better and together.

Question: I want to touch on something you said about maybe Japan’s frustration contributing money to the UN but not having representation. It reminds me, as a resident of Washington, DC, of “taxation without representation.” I’ve worked in Africa as a consultant, and my now wife reminds me that one of the things in fragile states is ecological degradation giving rise to conflict, urban migration, government upheavals, and issues of that nature. So going forward, you mentioned the SDGs and the big climate conference in Paris. One of the big things for the next fifteen years is: How can Japan and the US work together to rebuild landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa? And secondly, how can the Japanese private sector utilize its expertise in farming to create model farms in Africa? I’ll give you the example of rice: Japan is a world leader and has the [most] productive rice fields in the world. Africa imports 40% of the world’s rice, and many African countries in tropical latitudes have water resources, [so] for them to import rice is as absurd as Japan importing sake. But what they lack is technology and what I call intensification of rice plots, so where do you see opportunities for the Japanese private sector—I’m not talking about the government or JICA—to come and demonstrate in some of these fragile states how to improve agriculture yields and restore landscapes.

Tase: Agriculture is very important, and now an increasing number of Japanese companies and corporations are willing to invest in Africa. For the next ten years, I think a huge increase can be [projected] in Africa. But Japanese people in general, and Japanese companies especially, are not yet very confident about the governments of some countries in Africa. Only a few nations are enjoying big investment, including Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia—a limited [number]. My experience for the past 12-15 months has been that it is quite challenging to convince these investors to make a big investment in
Africa. They are still looking at Asia, they are now looking at India and Myanmar and Bangladesh as the next destinations, but Africa seems to be a little too far, still, for Japanese companies. We need to change that mindset first by demonstrating examples of high-profit, inclusive, legitimate business in Africa. It is not only technological innovation, but also investing environment, including good human relations and also good relations between governments. The TICAD conference to be held next year in Kenya will be a very good opportunity to begin enhancing investment. I will do my best to strengthen it.

Tsuruga: On taxation without representation: I think it’s true that like in the case of Cambodia, I think it was perceived as a success of Japan being engaged in post-conflict activities, but I recently read this book by Richard Solomon, the former assistant secretary of state, and he says in this book—he’s talking about Cambodian diplomacy—that “the reason behind Japan’s second-rank status in the diplomacy was not U.S. resistance to it playing an active role, but the fact that Japan was not a permanent member of the UN Security Council.” I think this didn’t really please the Japanese authorities, and I think that is why Japan has been pushing very hard to be on the Security Council, and of course, Japan is very much in [inaudible] and also in Africa, and I think it’s paying a lot of political capital in achieving that goal, but of course it’s very challenging, and I think we’d need a whole day to discuss the Security Council report, so I’ll leave that aside.

Question: I’m a little less pessimistic than you are about the capacity of the UN to integrate on the soft security suite of issues. So, if it’s humanitarian development, et cetera, we have seen progress in how UN missions are structured in the field, how people communicate with each other, the role of the UNDP in trying to coordinate where humanitarian and development activities come together, but neither of you have really mentioned—other than the reference to Japan not being on the Security Council—the larger predicament of where soft security and hard security come together. So, you can be frustrated that the international community hasn’t embraced the concept of human security enough, but sometimes, human security issues are being addressed through traditional national-security or hard-security means. So I wanted to throw into the conversation the fact that the UN has created yet another special fund for combating violent extremism. So now you have separate money with a yet-to-be-determined decision-making process for allocating that money to countries that are vulnerable to extremism that in some cases is doing exactly what a human security strategy would include: improving the human condition to make sure young people are not recruitable, et cetera. So I wonder [if] in the time when you were working with Mrs. Orgata in the UN—that fund didn’t exist at the time, but there were other mechanisms—did you try to talk to the hard-security part of the UN? We all accept, I think, that the greater power at the UN resides in the Security Council and that ECOSOC and other pieces of the UN system are not generally perceived as having as much political clout. So, when you were working on the concept of human security, was it trying to be pure and nonmilitary?—but sometimes you still have to sort of build a bridge to the people who work on security interventions. For example, I think in the United States, NGOs have sort of overcome their discomfort, and they will take money from the Pentagon if it is to achieve a human security goal. That sometimes there’s support on the defense side of our system for things that are purely civilian in their application. So at some point we can’t assume that these two worlds can live in such pure separateness, so I wonder if you could just say something about that.

Tase: I also agree with you about the successful development in the United Nations system, especially in the decade between 2000 and 2010. The Cluster System came in, and the Resident Coordinator System was introduced, so in a sense, I think the intention of human security was achieved by the UN’s [own] efforts, so I’m not so pessimistic [either]. Still, I think the humanitarian part and development part have not been perfectly consistent. I was in Afghanistan between 2010 and 2013 to help humanitarian efforts
on the great fronts, and what I witnessed was that the cluster system was working. There was a period called “early recovery,” and then the intention was to shift into full recovery and development, but in the cluster system phase, the immediate relief phase, we collected $1.5 billion, but there’s very scarce resources for early development. The UN system was facing very big challenges to bring that humanitarian phase into the full recovery [phase]. So I think we still have that discrepancy between the humanitarian and human development phases, but I agree that it has been discussed fully—focusing more on the people and the corporations we are helping, so thank you for [saying] that. And the core aspect of human security, for me, was not easy to [discuss] with the UNSC with the language of human security, but as you said, like in Resolution 1325, the intention of human security has somehow [been] included in the resolutions and decisions by the UNSC itself. I don’t know, this is a tough question for me.

Tsuruga: In terms of discussions in Japan, I think sending—it sounded to me that the contributions to the UN—just sending Self-Defense Forces for peacekeeping missions is not enough. I think that can be part of the answer, but it’s not the only answer, and I think I would like to see more, broader discussions of how we can contribute. And as the new review says, peacekeeping cannot substitute for political solutions, and it goes beyond the Security Council. So that’s why I’ve argued that in order to address fragile states, I think we need to go beyond our security discussions and have a broader discussion. But at the same time, it’s true that many peacekeeping operations do cover many aspects of human security, but what I experienced back in Afghanistan ten years ago was the difficulty of turning policy into practice, because [being] on the ground means formulating a project for some issue, and on the ground, UN experts had difficulty understanding what was human security and what was not. On the ground, we submit proposals, but some agencies could reject it and then we wonder why, because it was very difficult to distinguish what was and was not [a human security issue]. That hopefully has been overcome over the past ten years.

I was very interested in your argument about US NGOs overcoming the difficulties in working with defense, and I think that has a lot of insights for Japanese NGOs as well, because I think one of the reasons why the new Japanese security bills are facing a lot of difficulties is precisely [because] NGOs or other people oppose working with the security sector. I think we’d like to learn more from what happened in the US.

Question: I appreciate the comments about the difficulty of changing careers between the public and private sector in Japan. I was living in Japan just last month, and when I announced to my clients that I was leaving—I’d been living there four years—there was so much shock that I was changing something, so I can really empathize with that. I am somewhat relieved to hear that it continues. Just a general question: What are some ways individuals and organizations can encourage young professionals and young people in Japan to engage with human security issues?

Tsuruga: At my university—I’ve been fortunate—through my lectures, and I am sending many students to foreign [inaudible] abroad, to Africa, to Bolivia, or to the U.S., and I think it is important for them to get a firsthand experience, even though they might take another career right after graduation, [because] they might come back [later] to work on those issues. I think for young people working in the private sector, I think we need to break down the concept of human security into components. There are many things the financial sector can do, and there are many things the traders can do. And I don’t think they have a clear understanding of the connection between what human security entails and what their own speciality can do. I think we need to bridge those differences by connecting what that entails.
Tase: Interactions between generations are critical. Both Kazuto and I teach Japanese students, and also do some demonstrations. One example: after this visit to Washington, D.C., I am going straight to Sri Lanka to lead a group of forty Japanese students and young professional to visit UN operations in the northern and eastern parts of the country where there are still IDPs and the poverty and issues from after the conflict, so Japanese young professional students don’t have many opportunities to visit and experience the actual operations on the ground, and until seeing and feeling the difficulty, for example, of access to humanitarian relief when you don’t know what the international community can do and cannot do in development or humanitarian assistance. My attempt is to bring those young people to see directly the challenges in developing countries so they start thinking. I think that’s a good start. This a very individual initiative, so to scale it up, think about collaboration between academic institutes is important.