



STRATEGIC YET STRAINED

**US FORCE REALIGNMENT IN JAPAN
AND ITS EFFECTS ON OKINAWA**

Yuki Tatsumi, Editor

September 2008

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The Henry L. Stimson Center

ISBN: 0-9770023-8-1
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ACRONYMS

III MEF	Third Marine Expeditionary Force
(J)ASDF	(Japan) Air Self-Defense Force
(J)GSDF	(Japan) Ground Self-Defense Force
(J)MSDF	(Japan) Maritime Self-Defense Force
(J)SDF	(Japan) Self-Defense Force
AB	Air Base
ADC	Air Defense Command
AFB	Air Force Base
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASAT	Anti-Satellite Test
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
AWAC	Airborne Warning and Control
BJOCC	Bilateral Joint Operations Coordination Center
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
BRAC	Basic Realignment and Closure
CAFTA	Central America Free Trade Agreement
CFC	Combined Forces Command
CINC	Commander in Chief
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
CRF	Central Readiness Force
DFAA	Defense Facilities Administration Agency
DMZ	De-Militarized Zone
DOD	United States Department of Defense
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DPRI	Defense Posture Review Initiative
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EASI	East Asian Strategic Initiative
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOTA	Future of the Alliance Initiative
FRF	Futenma Replacement Facility
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GAO	Governmental Accountability Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIMDP	Guam Integrated Military Development Plan
GOJ	Government of Japan
GPR	Global Posture Review
HQ	Headquarters
ICBM	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
JDA	Japan Defense Agency (now MOD)
JSA	Joint Security Area
JTF	Joint Task Force
KORUS FTA	Korea-US Free Trade Agreement
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)

MCAS	Marine Corps Air Station
MEB	Marine Expeditionary Brigade
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MOB	Main Operating Base
MOD	Japan Ministry of Defense
MOFA	Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MRBM	Medium Range Ballistic Missile
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAS	Naval Air Station
NDA	Northern Development Assistance
NDPG	National Defense Program Guideline
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NEO	Non-combat Evacuation Operation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIDS	National Institute for Defense Studies (Japan)
NLP	Night Landing Practice
NM	Nautical Mile
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OPG	Okinawa Prefectural Government
PACOM	United States Pacific Command
PLA	People's Liberation Army (China)
PLAN	PLA Navy
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RADM	Rear Admiral
RBP	Relocation Basic Plan
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RMC	Roles, Missions, and Capabilities
ROK	Republic of Korea
SACO	Special Action Committee on Okinawa
SCAP	Security Consultation for Alliance Partnership
SCC	Security Consultative Committee
SCM	Security Consultative Meeting
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SLBM	Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SPI	Strategic Policy Initiative
SS	Ship Submersible (Submarine)
SSN	Ship Submersible Nuclear Powered Submarine
SSBN	Ballistic Missile Submarine (Nuclear Powered)
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

US	United States
USFJ	United States Forces in Japan
USFK	United States Forces in Korea
USG	United States Government
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

PREFACE

Dear Colleague,

It is a pleasure to present to you *Strategic Yet Strained: US Force Realignment in Japan and its Effects on Okinawa*. This edited volume is the newest addition to Stimson's work on the US-Japan security relationship, ably led by Senior Associate Yuki Tatsumi in partnership with the Okinawa Peace Assistance Center (OPAC). This edited volume focuses on the critical case of Okinawa, the site of the largest US military facility in Japan and historic source of controversy and tension in the US-Japan alliance. The volume also weaves a larger tapestry around the Okinawa story, addressing a rich set of Asian security issues. The volume provides an original and provocative context for considering related topics such as the US presence in Korea, and how China factors into the US force realignment in Japan.

Ms. Tatsumi assembled an outstanding group of scholars in Japan and the United States, who worked collaboratively to assess these issues, then wrote chapters on distinct topics, some strategic and some deeply detailed about the US decision to realign its forces and the effects of those choices on Okinawa.

We hope you find this new book, and our earlier work on Japan and other East Asian topics, of value. We hope that this work will help educate interested citizens in the US and Asia, and provide more depth to policy deliberations in Washington and Tokyo about this key relationship.

Sincerely,



Ellen Laipson
President and CEO

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, my deep gratitude goes to Yuji Uesugi, who headed the Okinawa Peace Assistance Center (OPAC) when this project was initially conceptualized and launched. Yuji provided the Stimson Center the opportunity to collaborate with OPAC on this important project, and without his initiative, I could not have dreamed of nor would have had the wherewithal to gather the team of twelve talented scholars of whom we had to ask much. Special thanks go to Mao Shimizu and Kazue Nakadomari of OPAC for their efforts in coordinating all Japan-based meetings as well.

I also cannot sufficiently thank my US-based teammates—L. Gordon Flake, Eric Heginbotham, Derek J. Mitchell, Scott A. Snyder, and Weston S. Konishi—for their constant encouragement and support throughout the process. There were a number of occasions when I almost gave up on following through with this project, but their commitment to the project was a constant inspiration and at times the biggest motivation in pressing ahead despite occasional setbacks. Japan-based contributors—Robert E. Eldridge, Takashi Kawakami, Koji Murata, Sugio Takahashi, and Tsuneo Watanabe—also deserve my gratitude for their patience when I peppered them with comments on their drafts.

My appreciation also goes to the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) for providing generous support to OPAC which proved essential in carrying out a number of the core project activities. I would also like to thank the Toshiba International Foundation for its generous support in making the June 2007 public symposium in Washington DC a success. Ms. Stella Colucci of the Yamada International Corporation, who was also critical in successfully hosting the symposium in June 2007, also has my deep gratitude for her interest and support.

Publication of a book is not a one-person effort. There are a number of colleagues at the Stimson Center who were essential in completing this publication. I would like to thank Jane Dorsey, Christine Harris and Alison Yost for their support throughout the publication process. East Asia/Japan project interns—Kristin Melia, Kendra Patterson, Aaron Young, Arthur Lord, Brian Clampitt, and Leslie Forgach—were also an essential part of the publication. In particular, Arthur, Brian, and Leslie deserve a special thank you for being particularly instrumental in bringing this project to a completion. Also, I am extremely grateful to Ellen Laipson, Cheryl Ramp, and Alan D. Romberg for their support.

Finally, my deep personal gratitude goes to Hideaki for his support of my work. It is not easy to be around an analyst who is frustrated with numerous writer's blocks, yet Hideaki has done a magnificent job in helping me keep my sanity and good spirits during the hardest of times.

Yuki Tatsumi
Senior Associate, East Asia Program
September 2008

— INTRODUCTION —

Yuki Tatsumi and Arthur Lord

This publication, *Strategic Yet Strained*, aims to analyze the broad set of issues that the US–Japan alliance faces as it tries to adjust to the post-9/11 strategic environment—and thereby maintain its relevance as the foundation of peace and stability in the Asia–Pacific region and beyond—through examining the ongoing bilateral efforts in realigning the US military presence in Okinawa. Throughout the history of the US–Japan alliance, “the Okinawa problem”—the issues related to US military presence in Okinawa—has presented one of the greatest challenges for the alliance managers both in Tokyo and Washington. Of course, in the context of the bilateral security relationship between Japan and the United States, the realignment of the US military presence in Okinawa was critical for the ultimate sustainability of a long-term US military presence in Japan—one of the pillars of the US–Japan alliance. Moreover, the strategic importance for the US to maintain a certain level of military capability in Okinawa required that such discussion take place in the context of the shift in the strategic environment in the post-Cold War Asia-Pacific region.

In December 2002, Japan and the United States launched the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) with the intent to have exactly such discussion. The purpose of this bilateral negotiation process was to reexamine the US–Japan alliance, identify areas in which the two governments needed to transform their respective functions, and explore how the US military facilities in Japan could be realigned in order to maintain the current level of deterrence while reducing their footprint, thus enhancing the sustainability of a long-term US military presence on Japanese territory. The negotiations resulted in the release of three documents, all of which were announced during meetings of the US–Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC, more commonly known as “two-plus-two”): the February 2005 *Joint Statement*, the October 2005 *US–Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the 21st Century*, and the May 2006 *US–Japan Alliance: Roadmap for Implementing the Realignment*.

From the very outset of the DPRI negotiations, a considerable perception gap existed between the US and Japanese alliance managers who were involved. For US negotiators, the DPRI was viewed as a sub-component of the US Global Posture Review (GPR), an effort to review the US military presence worldwide, initiated by then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Defined as “changing

the way we think about challenges and opportunities, adapting the defense establishment to that new perspective, and refocusing capabilities to meet future challenges, not those we are already most prepared to meet,”¹ the transformation of the US national defense establishment, and particularly its military, was one of the highest priorities for Rumsfeld throughout his tenure.² The 9-11 terrorist attacks in 2001 only intensified transformation efforts, with the GPR being a central component in the endeavor.

For many Japanese negotiators, in contrast, the DPRI was placed in a more bilateral context. While the negotiators spoke about the global context within which the US–Japan alliance existed, they were not necessarily interested in globalizing the operational capabilities that US forces and Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) offered within the framework of the US–Japan alliance. Even though Japanese negotiators stressed the importance of both maintaining deterrence capabilities and reducing burdens throughout the DPRI negotiations, it became more obvious as the negotiations unfolded that Japan was much more interested in discussing the latter (i.e., realigning US forces in Japan) than the former. Japan’s greater emphasis on reducing the burdens of US forces in Japan can be seen in the terminology that Japan alliance managers used to describe the DPRI, *beigun saihen kyogi* (“US force realignment talks”) rather than *bouei seisaku minaoshi kyogi* (“defense policy review talks,” a more literal and accurate translation of the DPRI). The DPRI negotiations turned out to be three and one-half years from start to finish (December 2002 - May 2006), much longer than the redefinition of the US-Japan alliance during the 1990s. One may argue that given the complexity of the negotiations, this was not surprising. After all, the two countries tried to tackle two major long-term alliance management challenges—redefining the US-Japan alliance and negotiating further realignment of US military facilities in Japan—almost simultaneously. Nevertheless, the perception gap between the US and Japan certainly contributed to feelings of bitterness and resentment on both sides.

The US force realignment negotiations were further complicated by the unique relationships between the Japanese government and the prefectural and local governments affected by the realignment plan. In particular, Tokyo’s relationship with the prefectural government of Okinawa, lukewarm at best since Okinawa was returned to Japanese sovereignty in 1972, continued to make the realignment of US forces in Okinawa extremely challenging. Multifaceted and complicated relationships between the citizens of Okinawa and US forces stationed in Okinawa only added to the complexity. As a result, among all the components of the agreed plan for US force realignment in Japan, those involving Okinawa remain the most complicated and contentious today.

There are many reasons why tension continues to exist between Tokyo and Washington on the one hand and Okinawa on the other. One is the unambiguously disproportionate burden that Okinawa continues to shoulder in hosting US forces in Japan—Okinawa, only occupying 0.6 percent of Japan's land mass, hosts approximately seventy-five percent of US forces stationed in Japan. While Tokyo and Washington had agreed on a large-scale return of the land occupied by US forces in Okinawa in a series of Security Consultative Committee (SCC) agreements between 1973 and 1976, the implementation of the land return has been slow. Indeed, the issue of Okinawa's disproportionate burden in hosting US forces did not catch the attention of top political leaders in Tokyo and Washington until the 1995 rape of a schoolgirl in Okinawa by three US service members.³ When this incident finally got the attention of the leaders of the two countries, the US and Japanese governments began to seriously explore ways to accelerate reductions of Okinawa's burden by establishing the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO).

Another reason for this tension is Okinawa's fundamental lack of confidence in the central government of Japan. Okinawans still remember their parents' and grandparents' tragic experience in World War II, when a great number of civilians were killed during one of the most brutal wartime battles and the only one on Japanese soil. Whether the Japanese Imperial Army forced civilians to commit suicide in Okinawa during this period remains a very politically and emotionally sensitive issue between Okinawa and Tokyo. But Okinawa's woes did not end in World War II. After reverting to Japanese sovereignty in 1972, as the rest of Japan steadily began moving toward economic development and prosperity, Okinawa remained the poorest prefecture in Japan. Furthermore, even after the increased attention of the political leadership of the necessity to lower the US military presence in Okinawa, it appeared to Okinawa that Tokyo still was not sincerely considering their views. Officials in the Okinawan prefectural government, as well as the general public, often complain that when the Japanese government discusses base realignment issues with the United States, it almost never consults with Okinawa beforehand and instead ends up imposing bilateral decisions made between the two parties on Okinawa after the fact.

The decades-long history of strained relationships with Okinawa has contributed to the inability of Tokyo and Washington to implement the US force realignment agreed upon between the two governments. The relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma, the largest component of the 1996 SACO Final Report, remained unimplemented nearly a decade after its agreement due to the considerable resistance from Okinawa (who had insisted that the MCAS Futenma had to be relocated outside Okinawa) in identifying the

relocation site for the MCAS Futenma within Okinawa prefecture. Many worry that the Okinawa component of the current bilateral agreement on US force realignment in Japan, to which Okinawans have expressed opposition, may face the same fate.

On the part of Tokyo and Washington, neither US nor Japanese policymakers seem to genuinely believe in the notion that the US military presence in Okinawa can be drastically reduced from its current level without compromising its current deterrence capability. They have argued that Okinawa's proximity to potential hotspots in Northeast Asia, such as the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan, makes a significant reduction in the US military presence a non-starter. Policymakers cite the US decision to deploy the highly advanced F-22 airplanes to Kadena Air Force Base in response to North Korea's missile and nuclear tests in 2006 as an example of Okinawa's relevance to US defense strategy in East Asia. Further, given that the current bilateral agreement on US force realignment in Japan, if fully implemented, would considerably reduce the burdens associated with US bases in Okinawa, some policymakers perceive ulterior motives in Okinawa's opposition to the current US force realignment plan, such as "raising the price tag" of the relocation effort to gain more financial compensation from the Japanese government.

In short, the relationship among Tokyo, Washington and Okinawa has been plagued with the sense of mistrust as well as the mismatch of priorities. This has long prevented constructive discussions on ways to implement the US force realignment in Okinawa in a timely manner while advancing US-Japan security cooperation. Realizing that nothing productive would come from the ongoing "blame game," the Stimson Center and the Okinawa Peace Assistance Center (OPAC) cooperatively launched the project, US-Japan Security Relations Beyond The Global Posture Review: The Role of Okinawa in the US-Japan Alliance in the 21st Century in January 2005. During the following two years, twelve Asian security experts (six Japan-based and six US-based) met and discussed the strategic and tactical importance of Okinawa for the US military posture in East Asia in the post-9/11 global security environment. Anticipated changes in Japanese security policy after the term of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, as well as the implications of the DPRI, were also discussed. While these discussion took place mostly in private sessions, the project participants also convened five public events to share their views and invite additional input—two in Washington (November 2006 and June 2007), two in Okinawa (June 2006 and November 2007), and one in Tokyo (November 2007).

This publication aims to capture the discussions that took place among the project participants, framing one of the most difficult challenges for both

American and Japanese alliance managers—the Okinawa Problem—in a broader context and addressing how US security policy, Japanese security policy, and the US-Japan alliance have evolved in the post Cold-War world and subsequent implications for US Forces stationed in Okinawa. The authors examine the changes stemming from the GPR, the DPRI, and the ongoing restructuring in the US force posture in the Asia Pacific region to provide a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics that characterize the strategic dimensions of Okinawa’s role both regionally and globally.

The publication is composed of three parts. Section One (chapters one through three) provides an overarching context from which to approach issues relating to the US–Japan relationship and Okinawa in particular by addressing changes in US security and foreign policy since the Cold War, with special focus on the US role in East Asia. In chapter one, Derek J. Mitchell sets the stage by linking developments in US force posture in Okinawa to developments in global US force posture, as outlined in the GPR. The GPR, Mitchell explains, attempts to shape American military presence abroad by integrating regional forces into a global strategy emphasizing capabilities, rather than numbers, and based on a network of Main Operating Bases (MOB), Forward Operating Sites (FOS), and Cooperative Security Locations (CSL). Mitchell highlights US defense planners’ increasing strategic focus on the “arc of instability” running from North Africa to South East Asia. Turning to Asia, Mitchell argues that consolidating forces in Japan and South Korea into regional MOBs is intended as a step towards enhancing US military presence in the region, given the uncertainty emanating from possible China/Taiwan and North Korea contingencies. In charting US defense transformation and the history of the GPR, Mitchell offers a big picture context from which to view regional developments.

In chapter two, Tsuneo Watanabe further illuminates the dynamic shifts within the US post-Cold War strategy and policies by analyzing the foreign policies of the past three US presidents, noting that the Okinawa question can only be understood in the context of evolving political dynamics. Watanabe notes the dynamic tension between pragmatism and idealism in American defense policy over the last two decades, with the Bush (41) administration promoting a New World Order, the Clinton administration promoting humanitarian intervention, and the Bush (43) administration promoting preventive warfare, with American defense policy vacillating between engagement and withdrawal but steadily moving towards a realist approach to regional security significantly influenced by China. Watanabe highlights the lack of coherence in the approaches of all three presidents to both foreign and security policy, while recognizing the uncertain and complex international and domestic contexts in which they have governed. Watanabe emphasizes the interconnectedness of US policy towards

East Asia and the Middle East, for better or worse, and distills four elements to post-Cold War US strategic thinking, leading to the conclusion that the US military presence in Japan remains critical and will continue for the foreseeable future. Watanabe's unique perspective as a Japanese scholar observing Washington adds to Mitchell's efforts to frame the preceding chapters.

In chapter three, Koji Murata assesses Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, comparing his successful relationship with the United States to his failed relationship with China, his leadership style with Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's, and his foreign policy with that of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Murata identifies Koizumi's strong personal relationship with President Bush, influenced largely by his political vulnerability within the Liberal Democratic Party, as both an asset and liability. In addition to Koizumi's poor handling of issues related to imperial Japan's historical legacy, Murata points to the decline of pro-China voices in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a factor in the deterioration of Sino-Japan relations during Koizumi's tenure. In comparing Koizumi and Nakasone, Murata notes how different domestic and international political contexts gave Koizumi more freedom of action than Nakasone. Murata further observes that, although Koizumi and Abe enjoyed initially high approval ratings that declined during their respective tenures, Abe took greater strides to repair Sino-Japan and Japan-Republic of Korea ties by de-emphasizing history issues and not visiting the controversial Yasukuni Shrine. Murata extends his analysis by looking at current domestic and international challenges looming in the US-Japan relationship and offers suggestions for the current Fukuda cabinet on how to manage the delicate challenges in the future.

Section Two (chapters four through six) discusses a number of regional factors affecting the debate over the US military presence in Okinawa in more detail, focusing on the US and Japanese role in East Asia given the complex interplay between Chinese, Japanese, American, and Korean identities and interests. In chapter four, L. Gordon Flake focuses the discussion by outlining America's post-Cold War vision for Northeast Asia, which he argues has been heavily influenced by Washington's global orientation and stresses that Washington's policy initiatives often impact Asia even though they are not necessarily driven by Asian priorities. Flake notes that although Washington's emphasis on the "war on terror" may be declining, given the extent of attention devoted to the Middle East in the last decade, it is widely perceived that Washington has largely become reactive, rather than strategic, in its dealings with Northeast Asia. Flake points out that while China's emergence as a regional player may not be the sole concern of US security planners, every American (and Japanese) security interest is in some way influenced by China. Flake extends his analysis of how bilateral security relations are influenced by China to consider evolving

economic regional dynamics and increasingly controversial trade issues in particular. Flake completes his chapter by discussing problems arising from historical legacies and how nationalism is also shaping regional interactions; he concludes by urging Tokyo to consider Okinawa issues through a broader regional vision.

Because of the proximity in timing, the DPRI and the negotiations under the Future of the Alliance (FOTA) initiative between the US and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are often compared. In chapter five, Scott A. Snyder discusses the background and implications of recent US troop realignment in South Korea as the result of the FOTA, linking changes on the Korean peninsula to overall US strategy, as well as to the US presence in Okinawa. In examining changes in the missions, roles, capabilities, and physical presence of US forces in Korea, Snyder illuminates how force posture on the Korean peninsula has always been closely tied to both US regional and global security strategies, as well as the political ties linking the US and South Korea. Snyder describes the context for the 2006 Strategic Policy Initiative preliminary agreements, which drastically altered the US force structure in Korea, by assessing the implications of the GPR and its emphasis on strategic flexibility over tripwire deterrent forces, increasing post-Cold War divergence between Washington and Seoul, and Seoul's rising desire to retain war-time operational control of combat forces. Snyder also considers the implications of this change for US forces in Okinawa, noting both the similarities and differences between the respective strategic and political contexts underpinning US forces in Korea and Japan. Snyder concludes that Washington should maintain its bilateral alliances with both Korea and Japan in order to provide a foundation for a dynamic and inclusive future regional cooperative security mechanism.

Many argue that the biggest challenge for the US–Japan alliance in the long term will be responding to the emergence of China as an economically, politically and militarily powerful player in East Asia and beyond. In chapter six, Eric Heginbotham outlines trends in the policies of Washington and Tokyo towards China, assessing how the three bilateral relationships are intertwined. Although both Tokyo and Washington share common interests in the region, Heginbotham points out, they also share complex bilateral relations with Beijing that often lead to independent Sino–US and Sino–Japanese relations. Heginbotham contends that China is “an important but secondary issue” for Beltway politicians, with stability based on engagement as well as deterrence becoming Washington's overarching goal. Heginbotham highlights that as uncertainty regarding Taiwan contingencies rise, the role of Okinawa, in particular, plays an increasingly critical role. In evaluating the base structure in Okinawa, Heginbotham argues that an increasing presence of Japan's Self-

Defense Forces (SDF) in Okinawa, the continuing move towards co-locating and joint training of US and Japanese forces, and developments in China's air and missile capabilities will frame the realignment of US forces in Japan in the years ahead. Heginbotham concludes that redeploying US forces from Okinawa to other bases in the region may add flexibility to the American presence but does not permanently solve the Okinawa Problem. Washington and Tokyo, Heginbotham argues, should therefore invest resources in creating a process that will enable them to effectively respond to ongoing changes in the region.

Section Three (chapters seven to nine) continues to discuss the US-Japan relationship, focusing primarily on the DPRI and its implications for Washington and Tokyo. In chapter seven, Takashi Kawakami opens with an assessment of the DPRI. In outlining the provisions and timeline of the DPRI, Kawakami suggests that the lack of Japanese government interagency coordination played a large role in the initial deadlock, with talks resuming in 2004 only after top leaders in Tokyo and Washington exerted pressure on the bureaucracy to move forward. Kawakami assesses the provisions of the DPRI recommendations and analyzes the difficulty in balancing between reducing the burden placed on local communities and maintaining a credible deterrence against possible threats.

Sugio Takahashi follows in chapter eight with an analysis of the DPRI from a Japanese perspective, focusing primarily on the roles, missions and capabilities outlined under the DPRI. Pointing to the coherence of the DPRI with Tokyo's 2004 National Defense Program Guidelines as well as with Washington's 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, Takahashi highlights the convergence between Tokyo's and Washington's expectations for each other. Takahashi extends his analysis to consider how shifts caused by China's growing influence and North Korea's increasingly destabilizing provocations may be outpacing efforts to strengthen Japan-US bilateral ties, suggesting that Tokyo and Washington should adjust their framework for cooperation. Takahashi makes a specific case for Japan to focus more on ensuring national defense and to focus less on improving the global security environment, reinforcing its tactical-level capabilities while credibly emphasizing the possibility of tactical conflicts escalating into strategic ones.

In chapter nine, Yuki Tatsumi follows Takahashi's overview of the DPRI by assessing the initiative from a US perspective. She focuses on the actual perceptions of US principals throughout the DPRI negotiations, tracing the process of how the initial high hopes of US defense planners quickly turned to disappointment after the talks began as a result of Japan's unresponsiveness to engage in meaningful dialogue on reshaping the alliance beyond a regional

focus. She then assesses post-2004 Bush–Koizumi summit developments, outlining how the DPRI process resumed when defense planners stepped back and agreed on a common vision for the future of the alliance before moving on to discuss restructuring US forces in Japan and its roles, missions and capabilities in parallel but distinct tracks. Since restructuring proposals were announced in May 2006, the DPRI process continues today as it enters the critical phase of implementation. Tatsumi highlights that, although the DPRI has been heralded as an important evolution in the bilateral alliance, the talks have also caused noticeable frustration on the American side, which still questions the Japanese government’s willingness and ability to implement the agreements. Given the consequences of rising uncertainties characterizing East Asia, Tatsumi concludes that American and Japanese defense planners must maintain their commitment to the realignment throughout the implementation phase while focusing on rebuilding mutual trust.

Finally, Section Four (chapters ten to twelve) links the global and bilateral discussions in previous chapters to local ones, focusing on the implications of the GPR and changes to the US–Japan alliance on US forces in Japan, particularly in Okinawa. In chapter ten, Weston S. Konishi addresses how Okinawa plays into US policy toward Japan under the GPR. First outlining the history of base relocation discussions throughout the 1990s, Konishi highlights the SACO process as the first institutionalized effort to respond to local communities’ concerns. Konishi extends his analysis to the shifting priorities under the Bush 43 administration and points out that US forces in Okinawa serve as a model of the mobile, flexible, and rapid forces advocated by the GPR. Konishi also addresses changes in strategic doctrine on the Japanese side and its implications for the alliance, as well as for Okinawa’s base structure. Konishi contends that, notwithstanding the dynamic nature of domestic politics in Washington, transformation and the tenets of force restructuring appear to remain on course. Konishi concludes by noting that Washington’s primary concern is still on maintaining the strategic importance of US forces in Japan in Okinawa, with restructuring aimed at easing the footprint but not diminishing the overall capabilities of US forces.

In chapter eleven, Yuji Uesugi supplements and builds on Konishi’s analysis by evaluating how the SCC’s DPRI recommendations will affect US forces in Okinawa. Uesugi argues that although there is a marked divergence between prefectural and local interests in Okinawa, defense planners in Washington and Tokyo were careful to make reduction of burdens on local communities a goal of the DPRI agreements. Uesugi assesses how relevant, effective, and sustainable the core aspects of the DPRI agreements are in reducing burdens on local communities in Okinawa, and contends that while new burdens may arise

following the return of Futenma in conjunction with building a replacement facility, the agreements are a net gain for Okinawa and should be supported because they effectively maintain Marine Corps deterrence in East Asia while limiting the US military footprint on the island's economic center. Uesugi stresses the importance of maintaining local support for the realignment and argues that returning bases south of Kadena before Futenma is relocated would be wise. Uesugi also underscores that the decision to sequence burden-reducing land returns after a controversial replacement facility for Futenma is constructed and Tokyo contributes to the construction of facilities for housing command elements of Marine forces being relocated to Guam is risky, given the upcoming prefectural elections and possible resurgence of political opposition to the force restructure plan. Uesugi concludes that if alliance managers want to maintain the support necessary to move forward with the agreed restructuring, they will have to respond to the fact that, given co-location of US and Japanese forces inside Japan, increased burdens on local communities occur before any significant reductions in burdens following the land returns.

In chapter twelve, Robert Eldridge adds to the compilation by tracing the contours of the Okinawa Problem and linking it to the ongoing US force structure realignment. Eldridge highlights how Okinawa's complex past and present connections to mainland Japan continue to have a noticeable impact on local politics, with voters often torn between issues of identity and pocketbook politics. Eldridge examines the interconnectedness among base issues, leadership, economic dependency, and historical legacy, while surveying the background of the Okinawa Problem and how it relates to contemporary local politics, post-reversion public opinion, and the 2006 gubernatorial election. Eldridge stresses that the Okinawa Problem is dynamic and features multiple and often competing interests within Okinawa, which tends to complicate a thorough understanding of the "Okinawan" position.

Lastly and in conclusion, Arthur Lord and Yuki Tatsumi examine the status of the US force realignment in Okinawa today, identify the challenges that the realignment efforts are facing, and contemplate the path ahead. They reiterate the significance of completing the US force realignment in Japan, but also identify some unanswered questions that may present themselves to the alliance managers in Tokyo and Washington in the future.

The intent of this project—and we are sure we speak for all of the distinguished contributors when expressing this sentiment—is to contribute to deepening the understanding of complex issues that are all too often described off-handedly by the term "the Okinawa problem" when discussing the challenges of US force realignment in Japan.

As an editorial note, because the political situation in Tokyo has changed at a pace far exceeding expectations—few could have imagined in September 2006 that Shinzo Abe would step down after serving only a year as a prime minister—there are parts of this volume that do not reflect some of the most current developments. Given the timeless nature of the central themes, however, this book will hopefully still provide a useful compass for scholars, policymakers, and students. Also, readers will note that there is overlap in many of the chapters, with each author adding his or her own unique perspective. This overlap should serve to make this work both a useful reference, as well as an insightful comparative study. Finally, the views expressed in the following chapters are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the organizations that they are affiliated with.

**THE GLOBAL POSTURE REVIEW OF THE
UNITED STATES:
“REDUCE, MAINTAIN, AND ENHANCE”**

Derek J. Mitchell

Attempts during the past decade to restructure the military presence of the United States (US) on Okinawa through the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) and the Defense Posture Review Initiative (DPRI) processes have not occurred in a vacuum. Rather, they have occurred in response both to developments on the ground in Okinawa and to broader changes in the international security environment and military technology that have allowed policymakers to reassess whether the Cold War assumptions about the US military footprint on the island are still relevant to modern conditions.

Indeed, the Global Posture Review (GPR) seemed to dispense with the notion of self-contained strategic “regions” in which the dynamics of balance and psychology of the US presence were maintained through careful calibration of US basing and activities throughout the area. Instead, the US force structure was viewed as a single integrated global entity. The initiative also helped to reinforce inter-service coordination, or “jointness,” in its emphasis on capabilities rather than numbers. The GPR further served a corollary purpose of reasserting civilian control by curbing the growing role of regional “commanders in chief (CINCs)—who were renamed “combatant commanders”—that had become virtual viceroys in their respective areas of responsibility, even to the extent of sometimes conducting their own foreign policy.

Therefore, to understand fully the reasons for the US to pursue force posture changes on Okinawa, one must understand both the global and domestic contexts in which these decisions have been made—contexts that in fact transcend national (i.e., Japanese) or regional (i.e., Asian–Pacific) affairs as the US considered the new post-Cold War and post-9/11 security environment. This paper aims to provide a broader context for why and how the US posture has shifted internationally, within which the change on Okinawa constitutes only one, albeit essential, element.

US DEFENSE TRANSFORMATION

One of the primary missions taken up by US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld when he assumed this role in 2001 was to pursue defense “transformation,” that is, to change the way in which the US military organized, equipped, deployed, and engaged its forces in the face of new technologies, techniques, operational concepts of warfare, and strategic challenges. During the Clinton Administration, this effort was described simply as the “Revolution in Military Affairs.” Secretary Rumsfeld elevated the concept to a higher level of implementation by placing the process of transformation at the center of virtually everything he sought to achieve during his tenure. He challenged every military service to conform to transformational tenets and even to pursue military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq with transformational concepts in mind.

At the heart of this concept, particularly after September 11 2001, was the assumption that uncertainty characterizes the current strategic environment. With the end of the Cold War, challenges to the interests of the United States and its allies, and to the international security environment as a whole, may arise from a multitude of sources around the world, thus requiring a different approach than one that assumes the presence of a clearly defined state enemy, such as during the bi-polar years of the Cold War. Transformation thus focused on the tactical and strategic advantages of lighter, faster, and more mobile and lethal power projection capabilities. Transformation sought to connect these new capabilities to a more flexible organization of smaller, quicker, and more “joint” (interoperable army, navy, and air force) expeditionary units. Military doctrine also changed to raise the level of US battlefield dominance to a new level at less cost. These capabilities were made possible by the development in recent years of new modern technologies, including: longer-range and more precise munitions; unmanned aerial vehicles that could be used for cheaper and safer surveillance, reconnaissance, and even munitions delivery; and advanced communications and satellite technologies, offering what the US military calls “information dominance.”

Given the need in an uncertain environment to react and move swiftly to address emerging global challenges, transformation emphasized “lift” capability, e.g., sealift, airlift, etc., within and across theaters, and even across oceans. Global challenges may not only consist of combat operations, but also humanitarian challenges such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004.

At the same time, with the end of the Cold War and the emergence of terrorism, failed and failing states, and non-traditional transnational issues such as global pandemics, piracy, and drug-trafficking posing new challenges to international security, the US began to consider changing how, where, and why US forces are deployed around the world. As one US official has stated, “The thing we know from our experience of the last fifteen years is that when we've been challenged, we've had to move to the fight. [So we've asked ourselves], if we have to move to different parts of the world, what would be the kind of arrangements we'd want to have in place?”⁴ For that reason, the United States concurrently began to think about how to make its military posture and structure around the world more efficient and sensible given the new strategic environment.

GLOBAL POSTURE REVIEW

In August 2001, Secretary Rumsfeld authorized a comprehensive reexamination of the US defense posture worldwide, including base infrastructure, personnel, and equipment. The review was based on the notion that the US force posture remained a reflection of a Cold War-era situation that no longer existed—forces were deployed to locations where they were expected to meet specific and fairly predictable challenges. Secretary Rumsfeld also took office believing that US forces were overstretched around the globe and were doing tasks that did not maximize efficiency with allied forces. Rumsfeld sought to turn over more responsibility to allies and partners for their own defense and to have them assist with peacekeeping and other non-warfighting tasks that he believed were not appropriate to the US military. The review also looked beyond alliances to encourage the United States to develop new partnerships with nations that were willing to support US security goals. Although the review began before the September 11 terrorist attacks, they only reaffirmed Rumsfeld's sensibility on all accounts, i.e., of US overstretch and of a world marked by unpredictability where the enemy and origin of future threats were uncertain. The post-September 11 strategic environment thus reinforced within the Department of Defense (DOD) the need for new thinking on US basing, deployments, and ultimately, missions overseas.

Given the expectation of the reduction in deployments abroad, defense planners integrated the GPR into the ongoing Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process that considered changes in the US base structure at home. The US has 230 major military bases located around the world, 202 of which are in the United States and its territories. The logic was that any global review necessarily must integrate changes to the deployment of forces overseas with the reorganization of the force structure at home.

In its 2005 National Defense Strategy (NDS),ⁱ the DOD outlined the overall strategic goals behind the deployment of US forces worldwide that continued to drive the GPR. The document encapsulated the DOD strategy in a four-part slogan—“*assure, dissuade, deter, defeat*”: *assure* friends and allies by demonstrating continued commitment; *dissuade* potential adversaries by demonstrating predominant capabilities; *deter* aggression and coercion by demonstrating decisive, rapid response capability; and, *defeat* adversaries should conflict occur. The NDS also emphasized that a transformed and more agile force relevant to the new global challenges facing the United States and its allies will need to operate well from four forward regions: Northeast Asia, the East Asian Littoral, the Middle East/Southwest Asia, and Europe.⁵

At the same time, through the GPR process, the Pentagon sought to account for political realities on the ground in base communities that also threatened the effectiveness of US global defense strategy and security commitments. Growing resentment within host populations about the inconveniences and dangers of living near US military bases and the increasing constraints that resulted accordingly on US exercise, training, and operational requirements overseas, affected the calculations of Secretary Rumsfeld’s team. Developments in Okinawa were but one example. The Republic of Korea (ROK) also witnessed growing protests regarding environmental and noise hazards, and in 2002, massive street demonstrations in reaction (in part) to the death of two Korean schoolgirls caused by a US military vehicle contributed to concerns about the sustainability and benefits of the current outline of US force posture on the peninsula and elsewhere overseas.⁶

Likewise, the Pentagon sought to integrate US overseas forces with host nation bases to put a local face on the US presence and create closer personal and operational connections with local allied forces. As a result, the Pentagon added a principle to its global review— indeed consistent with the “smaller, lighter, faster, and more flexible” values of defense transformation—that sought to

ⁱ The National Defense Strategy is one of several public documents produced by the US government to define and implement the nation’s strategic objectives. The National Security Strategy (NSS) is produced periodically by the White House to provide overall strategic guidance to the US government. The Office of the Secretary of Defense uses the NSS to develop the NDS, which defines the DOD’s particular strategic objectives. The NDS provides the basis for the National Military Strategy (NMS), which is produced by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and updated every two years. The NMS provides guidance to the armed forces on how to support NDS objectives. All of these documents then provide the strategic context for the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which is the only one of the documents mandated by Congressional statute. The QDR is meant to consider US defense strategy looking forward twenty years in the future, although it outlines contemporary force structure, modernization, infrastructure, and defense budget plans across a full range of missions as outlined in the NDS. The first QDR was released in 1996. The Global Posture Review is intended to be consistent with the strategic outlines of the NDS and the QDR.

reduce the US footprint and associated burden on overseas communities. Secretary Rumsfeld required that the United States find new locations that would welcome the US military presence, where the United States would be more confident of sustaining its presence over the longer term, and from which the United States may operate flexibly and relatively unconstrained, as necessary.⁷

Results of Review

President Bush announced the results of the Global Posture Review in August 2004,⁸ although the details of the ongoing internal deliberations—and external consultations with allies—had been leaked some time before.⁹ In keeping with the transformational principle of de-emphasizing numbers of forces in favor of highlighting capabilities, the plan called for the withdrawal during the following decade of as many as 70,000 troops in Europe and Asia and up to 100,000 additional DOD civilian employees and family members from the field. The US announced that it would reduce its overseas facilities by about 35 percent. At the same time, the DOD planned to increase its military presence in certain regions, for example, in the Asia–Pacific region (reduction in East Asia specifically will be addressed later in this chapter).

The operational doctrine outlined in support of the new plan called for US forces to be able to deploy anywhere in the world in ten days, defeat an enemy in thirty days, and be ready to fight again in another thirty days. The United States would place greater attention on the dispersal of pre-positioned materials and equipment worldwide. More US personnel would be stationed and deployed from the United States to reduce the stress on both local communities overseas and on US troops and their families: such redeployments to the United States were intended to provide more “predictability” and therefore an improved quality of life for military families.¹⁰

The following three categories of deployment locations represent a critical new operational component of the US military posture worldwide:

- *Main Operating Bases*: traditional basing where US forces are permanently deployed and where troops bring their families. These bases will feature more “jointness” to help facilitate inter-service cooperation and provide more economy on overseas deployments;
- *Forward Operating Sites*: so-called “warm facilities” with a small permanent presence and pre-positioned equipment that can be increased quickly (surged) during a crisis and that may facilitate the transit of US forces to other locations; and,

- *Cooperative Security Locations*: host nation-operated facilities with little or no permanent US presence, but that may be accessed with confidence for training, exercises, military-to-military interaction with local forces, or during a crisis. Cooperative Security Locations may have pre-positioned equipment, logistical support capacity, and other facilitative functions to assist a mobile—and global—US presence.¹¹

The combination of relatively large, permanent and strategically located Main Operating Bases with the facilitative, non-permanent (and equally strategic) nature of Forward Operating Sites and Cooperative Security Locations has led some to refer to a US “lily pad” strategy, where US forces will move with agility and regularity among different access points around the globe to assist in maintaining an effective and efficient US power projection capability, while leaving behind a relatively unobtrusive footprint. Increased attention to access agreements, complete with new flexible legal and support arrangements rather than formal basing rights, reflected US sensitivity to local resentment over the perceived loss of sovereignty involved in hosting permanent US bases.

The geographical focus of US strategic attention as reflected in the posture review, particularly in the wake of September 11, was on a so-called “arc of instability” that runs from northern Africa through the Middle East to South, Central, and Southeast Asia, and perhaps up to North Korea. The new deployment outline was intended to focus on being able to move quickly to, and operate effectively in, this area, reflecting the NDS’s attention to relevance in the “four forward regions” of Northeast Asia, the East Asian littoral, the Middle East/Southwest Asia, and Europe.

Concerning the posture review, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, commented in an interview that, “Everything is going to move everywhere. . . . There is not going to be a place in the world where it's going to be the same as it used to be. . . . We're going to rationalize our posture everywhere—in Korea, in Japan, everywhere.”¹² The review affects US deployment in Europe perhaps the most dramatically. This is not surprising given the posture left over from the Cold War focused on a massive land-based threat through Germany from a country (the Soviet Union) that no longer exists. The plan is for US presence to shift south and east. Two heavy divisions, the 1st Armored Division and 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), will return from Germany to the United States. A substantial ground force will remain, however, including a lighter, faster (Army) Stryker brigade. The intention is to close many smaller sites, consolidating them into larger locations such as Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany.

Meanwhile, a battalion will be added further south in Italy: the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vicenza will be transformed and the Commander of US Naval Forces Europe will consolidate itself in Naples. Most combat forces will come out of Turkey. US planners hope to deploy ground and air forces in smaller numbers and shorter rotational assignments to new bases in Eastern Europe. The United States has signed agreements with the Governments of Romania and Bulgaria that will allow the US to access facilities and training sites as part of a new Eastern European Task Force. These posture changes will allow for more rapid and flexible deployment to the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere.¹³ The constraint in Eastern Europe, however, is cost, specifically for building and maintaining appropriate new facilities as necessary.ⁱⁱ

In Africa, the United States will focus on developing Cooperative Security Locations, rather than new bases or a permanent military presence, and working to strengthen the capacities of regional forces to combat terrorist threats. For example, the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA) includes about 1,300 US forces training more than 1,000 local members of regional security forces to take on security tasks. US contractual access to bases in Dakar, Senegal also allowed US forces to engage in peacekeeping operations in Liberia. In the Middle East, the US will maintain the 5th Navy in Bahrain, but focus on achieving access rather than maintaining a heavy regional footprint in the region, building on the cooperation provided to US forces for operations in Iraq over the past 15 years. Virtually all combat forces will be withdrawn from Saudi Arabia. Africa Command (AFRICOM) will also be established.

In south and central Asia, the United States established a base presence in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and access to Pakistan, to support counter-terrorism operations in the region, particularly in Afghanistan. Throughout 2006, Washington has withdrawn its forces from Uzbekistan at the demand of the Uzbek government, although US forces in Kyrgyzstan remain. The United States will move carefully to make sure that its footprint remains relatively light to reduce resentment and undue attention, and to enable at least continuing access to the critical region in coming years.

EAST ASIA

Prospective changes to the US force structure in East Asia conform to the spirit and tenets of the GPR. After the Cold War, the United States affirmed maintenance of approximately 100,000 troops in East Asia, mostly in South Korea and Japan, but also in assorted facilities in Australia, Diego Garcia,

ⁱⁱ The Pentagon has estimated the cost to the United States of implementing the global defense posture at \$9–12 billion overall, which includes not only known posture changes, but also other changes resulting from ongoing negotiations.

Guam, Indonesia, the Mariana Islands, the Philippines, and Singapore. As part of the review, commitment to the number “100,000”—or numbers in general—was discarded, with attention to heightening capabilities in the region. As elsewhere, the United States has sought to reorient forces and consolidate, reduce, and restructure basing in established sites such as Japan and South Korea, which will remain the sites of the most important regional Main Operating Bases. At the same time, Washington seeks greater access and the ability to make the needed logistical and training arrangements in those areas listed above, as well as in new places such as India and Vietnam.

The United States will also boost its maritime expeditionary and long-range strike (air) capability through increased deployments in Alaska and Hawaii. The 2001 and 2006 Quadrennial Defense Reviews have called for increased naval presence in the Western Pacific, including aircraft carriers, and more home-porting of surface and subsurface combatants. Guam has become a preferred forward location for sustained presence and heightened capability to enable maintenance of deterrence and rapid response to deal with challenges over a great distance in the Asia–Pacific region and beyond.ⁱⁱⁱ

Overall, the United States is enhancing its military presence in the Asia–Pacific region even as Washington considers ways to reduce its presence virtually everywhere else. Reductions in traditional East Asian locations, such as Japan and Korea, reflect the growing sense in the United States that the Asia–Pacific region will be the most critical locus of US and international political, economic, and security interests in the future—interests that will need to be protected with concentrated diplomacy and enhanced military capabilities to hedge against potential challenges to peace and stability. The United States remembers that it fought three major wars in the region during the 20th century. US trade with East Asia totaled nearly 600 billion dollars in 2005, while US businesses invest hundreds of billions of dollars more. Although the US has been distracted in recent years by immediate challenges coming from the Middle East, it does not forget that the future likely belongs to East Asia.

Indeed, US strategists have recognized the importance of continuing and emerging security challenges in the region, including the presence of radical jihadism, North Korea’s nuclear weapons development, and most importantly, the uncertain implications of the rise of China, particularly as a military power. China’s rise has shaped long-term thinking in the US Department of Defense concerning force posture because the Pentagon considers China to be the most likely challenge to US regional dominance and the overall balance of power in

ⁱⁱⁱ The specific details of what US forces are moving where in the region are addressed more extensively in the other papers of this volume.

the Asia–Pacific region over the next century. While the United States clearly does not want to prevent China from becoming a major power, it does want to ensure that the emergence of a nation of 1.3 billion people into regional affairs, and the international system more broadly, occurs in a fashion that enhances overall peace and stability.

Indeed, East Asia is home to two immediate threats to international peace that could plunge the United States into major conventional conflict: the China/Taiwan impasse and North Korea. The United States is therefore orienting forces to ensure that its military has maximum flexibility to meet these challenges, the appropriate array and number of air and naval capabilities that are forward-deployed to maintain deterrence, and less vulnerability to missiles and other capabilities of potential opponents that could negate the US military advantage. Should the US military seem vulnerable or unable to fulfill its traditional regional commitments, the result would have profound political consequences as nations consider whether they need alternative sources of security to US power and presence. This could result in arms races, resumption of historical frictions, and new balance of power calculations that could divide the region.

Indeed, the Pentagon has been careful to ensure that the psychology of US presence and commitment is maintained even as forward-deployed forces in East Asia may be withdrawn to Guam and elsewhere. The United States has sought to deal with this delicate psychology by accentuating the increase in overall capabilities, and engaging in close dialogue with allies and friends in East Asia about the nature and purpose of the force structure changes to reassure them that these plans are not the makings of a withdrawal, but rather a reaffirmation of US presence and commitment for the long term. So far, it seems that the region has accepted the Pentagon’s reassurances in this regard, although the full implementation and impact of future force structure changes on regional calculations has yet to be seen.

Even as it modifies its force structure, the United States has also sought to transform its military alliances overall with Japan and South Korea: with Japan to expand the scope of international security cooperation in the wake of Japan’s transition to becoming a more “normal” nation more than sixty years after World War II; and, with South Korea, to turn over more responsibility to the Republic of Korea (ROK) for its own defense, while altering the command structure to end the Combined Forces Command and transfer wartime operational control of South Korean forces to the ROK. In this way, the United States hopes to economize its security commitments by sharing the burden of defense with the advanced militaries of its allies so that it may focus on the more

complex challenges of maintaining overall peace and stability in East Asia and around the world. Whether, in this process, the alliances themselves are weakened as allies find themselves more able to take care of their own interests and thus be less intertwined with the United States in strategic terms over time is an open question, although not a foregone conclusion.

OVERSEAS BASING COMMISSION

It should be noted that, in parallel to the DOD's process, the US Congress established the Overseas Basing Commission in 2004 to independently assess the department's ongoing base relocation plans and make recommendations for how to ensure that the US overseas basing structure remains adequate to execute necessary current and future missions.^{iv} The commission offered its final report in August 2005, in which it demurred that the process of relocation was too swift and uncoordinated in the face of apparent budgetary, infrastructure, and capability constraints, particularly during the transition from the present to the future structure. The commission took issue with several specific recommendations, including the elimination of all heavy forces in Central Europe and planned reductions in US forces on Okinawa. It urged greater inter-agency coordination within the US government and with specialists outside government on the base relocation process to ensure that the nation's best minds were considering the full range of security implications involved in the effort, and it chided the US Congress for its poor oversight of the process to date. Perhaps ironically, the commission's report received little attention in the media or in Congress and led to no apparent change in the DOD's pursuit of its plan and single-handed dominance of the overall process.

CONCLUSION

As indicated, the US Global Posture Review reflects changes in US defense strategy, organization, technology, and doctrine, as well as recognition of changes in the international security environment. The review also took into account new political dynamics concerning the ability and desire of traditional host countries to support US basing. In the end, the Pentagon's GPR and transformation strategy apparently conforms to a slogan that might read: "enhance, maintain, reduce," in which the United States seeks to *enhance* capabilities, *maintain* its deterrence and defense commitments, while *reducing* its footprint, including overall numbers of US forces, to lessen the burden on local communities.

^{iv} The commission's formal title is the Commission on the Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States. It was established under FY2004 Military Construction Appropriations Act (H.R. 2559/P.L. 108-132, as amended in 108-324).

Even with Rumsfeld's departure, his replacement, Robert Gates, has demonstrated no intention to reassess the fundamental strategic decision to reorient US forces around the world given the new security environment. A new US administration in 2009 is likely to again revisit the individual realignment decisions around the world, but the essential focus on capabilities and creating more flexible, mobile forces will likely not change. Completion of this process is expected to continue through the next decade.

Okinawa has been, and will continue to be, an essential element of US and Japanese security strategy to maintain peace and stability not only in a regional context, but globally as well. As a critical expeditionary location, the island in fact will likely become even more important in the 21st century than it was in the 20th century, a situation that Tokyo, Washington, and Okinawa itself will need to consider and perhaps accommodate through close consultation and careful coordination in coming years.

THE US STRATEGY BEYOND THE GLOBAL POSTURE REVIEW

Tsuneo Watanabe

The US–Japan alliance, including Okinawa marine base relocation issues, cannot be managed in isolation from the evolution in overall US strategy and the political dynamics behind it. At both the domestic and international levels, such dynamics are affecting the development of US strategy in regard to the alliance and are key to finding solutions to the complex political-military issues surrounding the alliance. These include the Okinawa marine base relocation issue that has been drawn out over a considerable period of time. Thus, this paper attempts to predict the direction of both US security and US military strategy as characterized in the Global Posture Review (GPR) and military transformation process by examining US policy development in three post-Cold War administrations (George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush) and identifying common elements among them. Identifying these trends will be important when attempting to predict the future course of US national security strategy and the security policy that emanates from the GPR.

FROM BUSH “41” TO CLINTON: DILEMMA BETWEEN STRATEGY AND REALITY AT THE END OF THE COLD WAR

When the Clinton administration inherited the legacy of the George H.W. Bush administration (Bush 41 hereafter), the world was enjoying the safest security environment in US history.¹⁴ Bush 41 created the concept of a New World Order based on the new realities of the post-Cold War world and used it as a foundation for US security and foreign policy. The concept, refined during the 1990–91 Persian Gulf War, was based on an optimistic view of a strong and functional United Nations (UN) as well as the belief that the United States could intervene in various conflicts around the world without worrying about entering into a proxy conflict with the Soviet Union.

At the same time, the new reality posed a difficult set of questions for the US: How should the United States, as the only remaining super power, wield its

power, and what should be the conditions for US intervention? Bush 41's answer was moderate and realistic:

We need not respond by ourselves to each and every outrage of violence. . . . A nation's sense of idealism need not be at odds with its interests.¹⁵

Interestingly, while Bill Clinton's campaign rhetoric in the run-up to the 1992 presidential election lambasted Bush 41's New World Order concept, his criticism was mostly political in nature, as opposed to being more policy-based. Having clearly learned a powerful lesson from George McGovern's 1972 presidential campaign, Clinton was cautious in not presenting ideas that could be viewed as being "too liberal" in terms of national security policy.¹⁶ Some neoconservatives even endorsed some of Clinton's criticisms of Bush 41.¹⁷ His campaign rhetoric also criticized Bush 41's closer positioning and pragmatic attitude toward China, particularly after the Tiananmen Square incidents in 1989, declaring that the Bush administration was ignoring human rights issues by coddling Chinese dictators.

William Hyland, Deputy National Security Advisor from 1975 to 1977, points out that a common aversion to the "cynical calculus" of pure power politics linked the members of Clinton's first security and foreign policy team. As a result, they felt that in the post-Cold War era, US troops in foreign lands were no longer necessary. Moreover, Clinton's staff believed that American policy should pursue noble humanitarian goals aimed at attempting to expand the realm of democracy. Therefore, they maintained that the use of force should not be limited to only the defense of national interests, but should extend as well to intervention in the name of moral principles.¹⁸ It is not surprising that the early Clinton administration attracted some neoconservative thinkers. In contrast, Bush 41 clearly showed restraint in using military intervention by stating that idealism cannot be promoted without regard for national interests.¹⁹

In retrospect, Bush 41 needed to use his power politics national interest approach in the face of declining US economic advantages, given the twin deficits in its budgetary and international accounts. Bush 41's approach also reflects his propensity toward traditional realist thinking. During the Bush 41 administration, Americans worried that the US was losing its economic advantage by wasting its national resources in trying to be the world's policeman, while formidable economic rivals such as Japan and Germany were concentrating on their own growth and sharing little of the international burden for global security.²⁰

Although Bush 41 himself was a traditional realist, the neoconservatives in Bush 41's administration—many of whom like Paul Wolfowitz who later became key

figures in Bush 43's administration—had tried to adopt a bold new concept of the national strategy in 1992, arguing that the US could prevent the emergence of powers challenging US hegemony by “convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests.”²¹ When such ideas were leaked to *The New York Times*, however, there was an American outcry against open-ended US commitment to competition and intervention, and these ideas were temporarily abandoned. Much later, this same set of ideas surfaced in Bush 43's 2002 *National Security Strategy* in the midst of extensive anger and anxiety among Americans after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

In 1992, the neoconservative philosophy was not appealing to the American public. After America's ultimate victory against the Soviet Union in the long Cold War, the American public preferred to enjoy peace and prosperity. Moreover, the American public was more concerned about the health of its domestic economy than national security because they were worried that the economic giants of Japan and Germany could challenge US supremacy. Some were even concerned about the prospect of these two countries turning their economic wealth into military strength. Indeed, the Clinton campaign seized the moment and defeated Bush 41 by focusing on the recovery of the US economy as a top priority, coining the famous slogan, “It's the economy, stupid.”

After Clinton's election in 1992, his campaign rhetoric and its focus on humanitarian intervention and reviving the US economy faced serious tests. Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Haiti forced the Clinton administration to use military force in humanitarian intervention operations, thereby requiring the Clinton administration to take a more realistic approach to its foreign policy. The historic defeat of the Democratic Party in the 1994 congressional mid-term elections, in combination with the growing unpopularity of its foreign policy agenda, also contributed to the shift in the Clinton administration's foreign policy approach. By the time of his re-election in 1996, President Clinton's foreign policy agenda had become much more realistic and pragmatic. In particular, Clinton aimed to address the unresolved legacy of the Cold War, which involved both North Korea and China, and also to deal with emerging threats such as civil war and massacres in Europe and Africa. The Clinton administration also promoted a better-functioning United Nations, positive multilateralism, and democracy.²²

As defined by the 1993 Bottom-Up Review, the Clinton administration's primary goal for its defense strategy was to prepare the US military for warfare in two major theaters.²³ While it pursued overall downsizing of its overseas presence, the US military's commitment to keep 100,000 troops in East Asia

demonstrated US commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the region. This was confirmed by the East Asian Strategy Report in 1995.²⁴ The presence of these troops was a realistic reflection of the North Korea nuclear crisis and the fluid situation both in Iraq and Iran. While President Clinton's shift was generally welcomed, it still attracted a great deal of criticism from his political rivals as being ad-hoc and lacking a strategic foundation.

This criticism was appropriate at least in two respects. First, although it was rhetorically important to show US willingness to commit to potential major conflicts, the two-pronged approach was not strategically or fiscally feasible. As the current situation in Iraq suggests, the deployment of large ground forces in the Middle East does not give the US enough mobility to act in other areas, such as East Asia. Second, the gap between the requirements and available resources for a US military presence began to grow. The Clinton administration introduced new military initiatives such as the revolution in military affairs (RMA) and theater missile defense (TMD). However, as the administration's policy became more pragmatic, the scope of military missions increased and the budget was unable to keep pace. In response, there was growing criticism among defense experts in Washington that the US military was on its way toward a "train wreck." They saw a clear imbalance between the missions being expected of the US military and the resources needed to properly equip them for these missions.²⁵ In its policy toward East Asia, particularly China, the Clinton administration also shifted away from its initial approach of stressing human rights and toward greater economic and political engagement.

This approach seemed to be based on the balancing of US–Japan and US–China relationships, which at one time was advocated by traditional realists like Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski who believed that the United States should play the role of balancer between China and Japan.²⁶ Clinton attempted to similarly upgrade the Sino–US relationship, claiming that the two countries were "strategic partners," while also redefining security cooperation with Japan through the 1996 *US–Japan Joint Declaration on Security* and the revised 1997 *Guidelines for US–Japan Defense Cooperation*.

The Clinton administration's approach to East Asia, however, became an object of criticism by the Bush 43 administration. Bush 43 developed its ally-oriented attitude toward East Asia by promoting deeper security cooperation with Japan. However, Bush 43 certainly owed some measure of gratitude to Clinton for constructing the foundation for redefining the US–Japan alliance from a strictly bilateral alliance to a relationship that functions as a regional stabilizer.

POLITICAL FACTORS IN THE INITIAL THINKING OF BUSH 43

Criticism of the Clinton administration and an atmosphere of strong political partisanship defined the first-term strategy of the Bush 43 administration. The Bush team had criticized Clinton's foreign and security policy as being ad-hoc and inconsistent, representing a mix of both constructive advice and politically motivated partisan attacks. Considering the Republican Party's deep resentment of Clinton (which was compounded by intense partisan politics), it would not be incorrect to state that the Bush administration carried out its policy based on the principle of "Anything But Clinton," or ABC, as it became known. For example, Condoleezza Rice, as the principal foreign policy advisor for then-Governor Bush during the 2000 presidential election, criticized Clinton's foreign policy as lacking discipline, coherence, and a clear sense of priority: "The Clinton administration has assiduously avoided implementing such an agenda. Instead, every issue has been taken on its own terms—crisis by crisis, day by day."²⁷ In particular, she criticized Clinton's engagement with China at the cost of Japan, an important ally. Rice re-defined China as a strategic competitor in direct contrast to the Clinton administration's view of China as a strategic partner.²⁸ Views reflected in Rice's argument would be central to the US strategic agenda in Asia. Given China's rapidly growing economy and military capability, US strategists have begun to seriously focus on exploring the meaning of a rising China in the world.

Ironically, US policy toward China under the Bush 43 administration would not be shaped by a coherent or straightforward set of priorities either. Instead, the US attitude toward China has also been characterized by an ad-hoc approach. James Mann, who covered Asia for the *Los Angeles Times*, points out that US policy toward China has experienced many "about face" turns from the time of the Nixon administration and extending through the Bush 41 administration.²⁹

The Bush 43 team also criticized the Clinton administration for engaging in military interventions in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti without setting clear priorities or defining an exit strategy. During a debate with Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore on 11 October 2000 in North Carolina, then-Republican candidate George W. Bush stressed that, if elected, he did not intend to use US troops for nation-building:

I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation-building. . . . I think what we need to do is convince people who live in the lands they live in to build the nations. Maybe I'm missing something here. I mean, we're going to have a kind of nation-building corps from America? Absolutely not.³⁰

As evidenced by the current US struggle of nation-building in Iraq, the danger of deploying the US military for national building efforts, a warning that George W. Bush and his advisors issued during their first presidential campaign in 2000, turned out to be correct.^v The irony is that it has been the Bush 43 team that has ensnared the United States in such an enterprise. The shock of the 9/11 attacks caused a realist group, including Rice, to react in an urgent and emotionally charged way. In 2008, the US remains heavily mired in very difficult nation-building processes in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with the ultimate results still unclear.

Finally, Bush 43's "ABC" approach was demonstrated in his dealings with North Korea. The Bush 43 administration abandoned the Clinton administration approach toward North Korea, claiming that it was too soft. Instead, the Bush administration chose not to negotiate with North Korea unless it gave up its nuclear program. Now bogged down in Iraq, Bush 43 has been compelled to try a new approach and engage in the Six-Party Talks aimed at resolving this issue. However, the administration's early and inflexible attitude has backfired, allowing North Korea to conduct the missile and nuclear tests that Clinton's engagement managed to prevent. Furthermore, the Bush 43 administration has become more dependent on China to contain and control North Korea.

CHALLENGES POSED BY THE 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS

To be fair, the Bush 43 administration has faced a much greater security challenge than either the Bush 41 or Clinton administrations. The impact of 9/11 has changed many of the previous assumptions and approaches held regarding international security. Critical threats from non-state actors, demonstrated so vividly by al-Qaeda, caused the Bush 43 administration to reconsider its national security strategy. The Bush administration tried to focus on the worst-case scenario—the possibility that terrorists would acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and use them to attack the United States and its citizens. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* advocates the concept of preventive warfare to keep rogue states and non-state actors from acquiring WMD:

Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means. They know such attacks would fail. Instead, they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction—weapons that can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning.... To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.³¹

^v Condoleezza Rice, then-Governor Bush's National Security Advisor, also argued a similar point in her article in *Foreign Affairs* in 2000. Rice, *op.cit.*

Some experts, including Henry Kissinger, point out that this strategy was revolutionary because it denied the sacrosanct nature of state sovereignty, which had been valid dating back to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.³² In other words, the Bush Doctrine essentially refuted the general agreement that “nations are open to attack only when they do something that threatens or harms others.”³³ However, it is possible that key members of the Bush 43 administration, such as Secretary of State Rice, Vice President Cheney, and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, did not envision or intend to apply the concept of “preventive warfare” very often; in fact, they may have intended just to use it solely as justification for invading Iraq because success in that country would likely set a precedent for pressuring other rogue states (like Iran and North Korea) to give up their WMD development programs.³⁴ President Bush’s reference to the “axis of evil” in his 2002 State of the Union address before Congress would make sense only in this context, although some argue that it was actually the result of imprecise speech-writing. In any case, it has worked imperfectly, with Libya abandoning its nuclear aspirations while Iran and North Korea remain undeterred.

The preventative warfare strategy had a critical shortcoming; it did not consider the possibility of either failure in the initial invasion or the prolonged and complicated post-conflict reconstruction period in Iraq that is still underway. The narrow focus on WMD ignored the complex realities of Iraq’s ethnic makeup and lack of history with self-governance, thus landing the US military in a quagmire. International organizations, as well as other countries, realize that the US strategy is valid only as long as the American public and domestic political atmosphere continue to support military action. Currently, with more than 130,000 troops remaining in Iraq and declining support from the American public, this strategy is at an impasse.

As for global security, one critical mistake of the Bush administration has been its inability to consider a military failure in Iraq. At a policy-planning level, the failure of winning the peace in Iraq could be identified with the enormous difficulty of managing the post-conflict situation without well-trained peace-keeping forces and police, as well as a soundly executed reconstruction plan. The Bush administration’s Iraq reconstruction team, headed by the Department of Defense, failed to see the importance of both of these factors.

Unfortunately, Bush 43’s failure in Iraq could constrain the future principles of US security policy because it may have the unintended effect of raising the political threshold for military intervention abroad, even if it may be necessary. This may have serious implications for East Asian security in the future.

CHINA AND RUSSIA —PARTNERS IN THE SHORT-TERM, BUT POTENTIAL THREATS IN THE LONG-TERM?

It is clear that there will be no easy way for the United States to extract itself from Iraq. Some US experts on the Middle East even suggest that in the worst-case scenario, the civil war in Iraq—despite the administration’s denial of this term to describe the situation on the ground—could continue for at least five to fifteen years if US policy fails.³⁵ The 2006 Iraq Study Group report concisely describes the heavy burden being placed on the US military with major missions still underway in Iraq as well as Afghanistan:

The US military forces, especially ground forces, have been stretched nearly to the breaking point by repeated deployment in Iraq, with attendant casualties (almost 3,000 dead and more than 21,000 wounded), greater difficulty in recruiting, and accelerated wear on equipment.³⁶

At this point, it is reasonable to speculate that even if US troops were to withdraw from Iraq, the US domestic political atmosphere would not allow any administration to mobilize US troops for preventive warfare anywhere as long as the psychological trauma from Iraq remains. By extension, it would also appear that Bush 43’s preventive warfare concept will be rather short-lived. This new reality seems to have emboldened North Korea to pursue its nuclear ambitions without concern for possible US military intervention, unlike in 1993 and 1994. For the near term anyway, with both military resources and domestic political support stretched to the breaking point, the US hopes to avoid any new military engagements.

Ironically, the Bush administration, which once re-defined China as a strategic competitor and regarded it as a state at a strategic crossroad, now depends on it considerably in managing the North Korea problem within the framework of the Six-Party Talks. For Japan, this is one of the most grave and complicated consequences of the US failure in Iraq. In the short term, China is an indispensable security partner in East Asia, but in the long term, China may become a hegemonic challenger if it is successful in converting its economic strength into military and technological advantages. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* defined US strategic goals as preventing the emergence of regional sources of instability. Furthermore, the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) describes China as a potential military competitor that may become capable of inventing disruptive devices to neutralize the US military advantage:

Of the major and emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional U.S. military advantages absent U.S. counter strategy.³⁷

Statements like this point to the current dilemma of the US policy community about having to rely on China in the short term, while still regarding China as a potential threat in the long term. One way to resolve this dilemma is to use a hedging policy, which is often diplomatically referred to as naming China as a “responsible stakeholder.” In the 2006 QDR as well, the stakeholder concept can be detected:

U.S. policy remains focused on encouraging China to play a constructive, peaceful role in the Asia-Pacific region. . . . The United States’ goal is for China to continue as an economic partner and emerge as a responsible stakeholder and force for good in the world.³⁸

A close alliance with Japan is another important hedge against China. In the near future, flexible regional allies will be more important than ever for Washington, given the extensive uncertainty in the long-term trajectory of states at a “strategic crossroad” such as China. Indeed, the “China factor” will continue to be a critical consideration affecting the US–Japan alliance and the extent of the US military presence in Japan, especially Okinawa.

However, one should be mindful that the nature of the Chinese threat is different from what it was during the Cold War. Economic interdependence between China and the United States is deepening. While it warns against China, the 2006 QDR does not hesitate to state that, “US policy seeks to encourage China to choose a path of peaceful economic growth and political liberation. . . .”³⁹

FOUR ELEMENTS IN US STRATEGIC TRENDS AFTER THE COLD WAR

There are four significant elements in US strategic thinking that have emerged since the end of the Cold War. The first element is that US strategists, including non-neoconservative thinkers, generally tend to be optimistic about the US military advantage and the benign nature of US power (in the sense that the US does not seek territorial conquest of other nations) to stabilize the world and promote democracy. As for Bush 43’s neoconservative and conservative strategists, their experience in witnessing the collapse of the former Soviet Union has been said to be the basis of their optimism, suggesting a departure in the approach of the traditional balance-of-power strategists like Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Brent Scowcroft. Condoleezza Rice, the former National Security Advisor and current Secretary of State to Bush 43, seems to apply a philosophy that is more optimistic, power-oriented, and alliance-oriented than her predecessors. In East Asia, the Bush 43 team tends to seek a stronger bilateral alliance with Japan, instead of China, rather than maintaining a subtle balance between the two. This is also a major difference from previous generations such as Kissinger, Brzezinski or Scowcroft. Even

Brent Scowcroft, a strong supporter of the US–Japan alliance, opposed addressing China as an objective of the US–Japan alliance.⁴⁰

Some may ask whether this trend is even valid after the neoconservatives in the Bush 43 administration, such as former Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz or former Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith, have lost credibility following the failure in Iraq. It is very likely that the trend will continue no matter which party wins the 2008 presidential election, however, given that optimistic, power-oriented views are shared even among younger generations of strategists in the Democratic Party. For example, Kurt Campbell, who engaged in the Special Action Committee on Okinawa as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, and Michael O’Hanlon of The Brookings Institution, argue that the Democratic Party needs to become comfortable with the idea of American strength and to reconnect it with the Party’s values.⁴¹ They also suggest that a stronger alliance system will make the global security environment more desirable for the United States to pursue its national interests because, despite the internationally unpopular war in Iraq, “never before has a great power elicited such support from the world’s other powers and provoked so little direct oppositions.”⁴²

The second element is the elasticity of the threshold used for determining US military intervention. The Bush 41 administration involved the US in the 1991 Persian Gulf War in an effective and prudent manner. Although the Bush 43 administration severely criticized the Clinton administration’s frequent humanitarian interventions, Bush 43’s decision to commit the US military in Iraq has resulted in an even greater expansion of US influence. That said, the experience in Iraq may raise the psychological threshold of the American public in regard to US military intervention for some time, and as a result, the international community may experience difficulty in acquiring support from the US military, even when necessary. In fact, one security expert warns that the negative legacy of the Iraq war may result in American reluctance to mobilize militarily even in the case of an Islamic extremist regime change in Pakistan or an escalation in North Korea’s nuclear activity.⁴³

The third element is the continuation of a constrained US defense budget. In the past, the international status of the United States as the sole superpower—with the US military providing quasi-public goods in global security—required the United States to have an enormous defense budget, which the American people generally accepted.^{vi} However, there is no guarantee that the American public

^{vi} As 1972 presidential candidate George McGovern proposed a 30 percent cut in the defense budget. McGovern was defeated by Richard Nixon. Since then, presidential candidates labeled “doves” have had difficulty getting elected president and defense budget have expanded. According

will continue to support heavy government spending on defense at current levels. In addition, there is still ambiguity about the future process of military transformation, started by former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Some defense experts in the United States criticize the 2006 QDR as offering “old remedies for new evils.”⁴⁴ The challenge now is how to respond to future threats while still maintaining sufficient capability to respond to conventional threats.

The fourth element is that of US domestic politics. Some experts predict a slowdown in the US military transformation process because of the lack of momentum for continuing it following the resignation of its chief architect, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, in November 2006. Others argue that the change in DOD leadership will affect military transformation very little, even if a Democratic administration comes into power.⁴⁵ Still, political factors cannot be underestimated. Campbell and O’Hanlon warn that “just as President George W. Bush was wrong to adopt an “ABC” (anything but Clinton) foreign policy on several key matters early in his tenure, it would be equally wrong to fall into an ABR (anything but Rumsfeld) mentality.”⁴⁶ This underscores the strong resentment felt toward Rumsfeld and his policy choices among security experts on the Democratic side. Contrary to the warning, it is quite possible that such emotionally charged reactions will determine the speed and extent of military transformation or the Global Posture Review in subsequent administrations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE US–JAPAN ALLIANCE

Considering the difficult balancing of the US strategic position in East Asia, the US military presence in Japan continues to be crucial. In general, the US is expecting more from Japan in terms of its contribution to maintaining regional and global security. In particular, Japan’s financial ability to help offset an even heavier burden on the US military budget is attractive to the United States.

In the foreseeable future, anxiety about China may continue in the American consciousness even though there seems to be some consensus regarding the “stakeholder” approach. The American public’s fear of Japan during the 1980s as an economic challenger to the United States, on the other hand, has dissipated. Strategists of the younger generation are now tending to rely on the US alliance with Japan, rather than trying to balance between Japan and China. This tendency will serve as a strong rationale for the US–Japan alliance.

to Lawrence Korb, former Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration, even in the first Clinton administration when the Cold War had ended, the defense budget was \$30 billion higher than it was in 1975 after adjusting for inflation. See Lawrence J. Korb, “Peace Without Dividend; Why We Can’t Seem to Cut the Defense Budget,” *The Washington Post*, 9 July 1995.

Constraints on the US military budget also continue to present serious challenges even without the Iraq situation. Currently, Japan is the most generous host nation to the US military among all US allies. In addition, Japan seems to have more flexibility in spending more on defense in the future: after all, Tokyo has politically tried to cap its defense spending to one percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while US allies in Europe spend at least two percent of their GDP on defense. To sustain the US military transformation, Japan could be indispensable as both an economic and technological partner if this cap were to be lifted.

Considering the long-term strategic goals of the US in East Asia and mid-term challenges in the Middle East, the geopolitical and strategic value of Japan as an ally will not decrease in the foreseeable future. In the longer term, Japan will be expected to play a central role in creating a NATO-like regional security architecture.⁴⁷ At the same time, a solid alliance between the US and Japan does not necessarily require the permanent presence of US forces in Japan, including Okinawa. The political nature of alliance management and the perceptions of the alliance by US and Japanese policy-makers suggest a high degree of flexibility. Due to the long-term nature of the US–Japan alliance, a reduction in Okinawa’s heavy burden (in regard to hosting US Marine forces) continues to be a high priority issue on the alliance agenda.

In sum, the Global Posture Review and military transformation have a few key aspects: the effective integration of US military forces and operations, an adjustment in the US military forces deployed overseas, a continuation of the revolution of military affairs, and an attempt to deal with the new asymmetrical threat of terrorism. The first item, integration, has its origin in the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which aimed to promote streamlining and combining respective operations in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The RMA concept and post-Cold War adjustments started under the Clinton administration. Due to budget constraints, these objectives were not attained until the 9/11 attacks provided the rationale needed to hasten the military transformation process and adapt to a new enemy. For example, the 1998 report by RAND, *Transforming the Force*, described the difficulty in transforming the force and identified several critical factors, such as budgetary constraints and the lack of a clear and present danger to serve as an incentive.⁴⁸ In this context, one could argue that the 9/11 terrorist attacks removed such budgetary and political constraints for proceeding with the military transformation and GPR. At the same time, the progress and details of the transformation are dependent on several factors, including both fiscal reality and the prevailing political atmosphere.

A review of the post-Cold War history of US strategy illustrates the dynamics shaping policy options relating to the US military presence overseas. Political leadership, accurate recognition of the US military strategy, and domestic as well as international political environments could influence the whole process of the GPR while the US policy community continues to assess and refine its policy options.

Kurt Campbell recommended the following basic stance on the Global Posture Review in 2003. The message should be shared with officials and planners in Washington, Tokyo, and Okinawa:

It makes no sense to gain marginal benefits for possible future operations at the cost of undermining close existing alliances or causing important countries to question their security ties to the United States—or, even worse, to consider other options, such as new military expenditures, new regional relationships, or the development of nuclear weapons. Borrowing from Clausewitz, military basing often involves politics by other means. The failure by Washington to understand that truth or to take it into account would be a grave mistake and could have lasting repercussions for the United States and the world.⁴⁹

For Okinawa, a reduction in its burdens is more likely to occur as the value of the US–Japan alliance increases and the US begins to more broadly realize the geo-strategic value of Okinawa. For Tokyo, it will be more critical to influence the US body politic toward the concept of East Asian regional stability. Tokyo also needs to realize that its effective coordination with Okinawa in dealing with a host of issues is becoming more essential to future alliance management. Washington should understand that the political relationship between Tokyo and Okinawa is complex and critical in regard to the future regional and global security posture of the United States.

THE LEGACY OF PRIME MINISTER KOIZUMI'S JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY: AN ASSESSMENT

Koji Murata

This paper examines the foreign policy of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi from three perspectives. First, it summarizes Koizumi's policy towards the United States, which is considered generally as a success, and then his policy toward China, which is generally considered a severe failure. Second, the paper compares Koizumi's leadership style with that of former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone; both Koizumi and Nakasone lacked strong political support in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) but still tried to exert strong leadership. Third, the paper compares Koizumi's foreign policy with that of his successor, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Koizumi was an extraordinary politician from both a Japanese standard and in a larger historical context. Reviewing Koizumi's foreign policy from these three perspectives should result in a better understanding of his successes and failures. In addition, these perspectives will also illuminate the potential assets and challenges facing the foreign policy of current Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda.

KOIZUMI'S US POLICY

Prime Minister Koizumi maintained a close relationship with US President George W. Bush throughout his term, which proved to be both a disadvantage and an asset. Soon after the hostilities began in Iraq in March 2003, the approval rating of the Koizumi cabinet decreased slightly from 44 percent in February 2003 to 42 percent. Only 31 percent of Japanese citizens supported the war in Iraq, while 51 percent were opposed to it. Meanwhile, 39 percent supported Prime Minister Koizumi's position of supporting the United States, while 51 percent opposed it.⁵⁰ Interestingly, although Japanese public opinion showed strong opposition to the Iraq War, it also indicated some understanding of Prime Minister Koizumi's decision. While resenting the US unilateral approach, the Japanese public understood, either consciously or unconsciously, that East Asia was, unlike Europe, still a region in which a traditional balance of power existed and a multilateral security framework was not yet established. The Japanese

public intuitively understood that Japan needs the United States ultimately to protect it from external threats, and thus, its prime minister cannot afford not to demonstrate support for US foreign policy goals.

In the November 2003 general election of the House of Representatives, the ruling LDP–Komeito coalition maintained a stable majority, although it had lost seats. After his visit to the United States in May of 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi repeated his promise that Japan would dispatch its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq. In July 2004, the ruling coalition won the House of Councillors (Upper House of the Japanese Diet) election again by a slim margin, and Koizumi was re-elected as LDP president and prime minister. After President Bush’s re-election in November 2004, the Koizumi cabinet extended the deployment of the SDF in Iraq for up to one year.

The question arises as to why Koizumi continued to support Bush’s Iraq policy despite domestic opposition. First, Koizumi was consistently supportive of the Bush administration. He did not have much political support in the LDP, but the close relationship with Washington, as risky as it was at times, was one of the few political resources on which he could depend. By maximizing this resource, he was able to win both the lower and upper house elections. In this sense, Koizumi’s political vulnerability at home was a source of stability within the US–Japan relationship.

Second, the Japanese public, if reluctant, also understood the volatile strategic environment surrounding Japan. In particular, they were very aware of the North Korea military threat to Japan. Even some key members of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), including its leader Seiji Maehara, were cautious not to damage the alliance relationship with the United States by criticizing Koizumi’s policy toward Iraq. To use Michael Green’s term, Japan tends towards “reluctant realism.”⁵¹

Third, the US–Japan alliance was not institutionalized well during the Cold War era. Japan was concerned about the implications of being pulled into the US global strategy due to its constitutional restraints and anti-war public sentiment. Now faced with new security threats in the post-Cold War era, the Japanese government viewed the close alignment with the US as a way to add new security functions by expanding the legal framework for the alliance. Examples of steps in this direction were the two laws passed that approved the special measures of enabling Japan to support counter-terrorism activities and help rebuild Iraq. It is important to remember that the US–Japan alliance differed from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the US–South Korea alliance, each of which faced “clear and present dangers”—the Soviet Union and

North Korea—during the Cold War era. The less institutionalized character of the US–Japan alliance allowed for a certain flexibility to meet new security challenges in the new era. This is not to say, however, that the US–Japan alliance will continue to function in the same way in the future.

While Koizumi's policy towards the United States was considered successful in general, it was most successful during the first two years of his term, a crisis period marked by terrorism and war. During this time, when rapid decisions were being required of top leaders, Koizumi demonstrated a prompt and strong response to events. However, as the sense of crisis waned, other important qualities such as political accountability and careful management of policy became more important. Koizumi did not demonstrate these qualities in dealing with issues such as the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE; also known as mad cow disease) and the US force realignment in Japan.

KOIZUMI'S ROLE IN JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS

Prime Minister Koizumi failed to improve relations with China. He did not handle the controversy over the history textbooks effectively and insisted on visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. In regard to his visits, Koizumi presumably had expected to obtain and maintain support from the Association of War Bereaved Families, which played a critical role in his victory over political rival, Hashimoto Ryutaro, in the LDP presidential election in 2001. With his visit to the Yasukuni Shrine being the central issue in the bilateral relationship, Japanese relations with China were aggravated during Koizumi's tenure. But he dismissed the criticism, saying that, "I would like to express my deep reflection and mourn for all war casualties" and "I never intend to beautify the war."⁵² While in office, Koizumi visited the Yasukuni Shrine six times. The Japanese public took a negative view of Beijing's shrill criticisms of Koizumi's visits to the shrine. To many Japanese, Chinese leaders appeared to mobilize popular support and seek legitimacy for their regime by appealing to Chinese nationalism against "Japanese militarism" and American hegemony and unilateralism.

Against the backdrop of negative Japanese public opinion toward China (according to a 15 December 2005 *Yomiuri Shimbun* report, 73 percent of respondents considered the Sino-Japanese relations as poor), it is not surprising that Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China also came under fire. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) decided to reduce ODA to China in October 2001 in response to mounting criticism, with the amount of Japanese ODA to China dropping from 214.4 billion yen in 2000 to 46.3 billion yen in 2007 and ending in 2008, before the Beijing Olympics.⁵³ These developments were in part the result of electoral reform and centralization of LDP leadership, which lessened the influence of the pro-China Hashimoto

faction on Japan's China policy-making process. The declining role of pro-China MOFA hands likely played a role in deteriorating Sino-Japan relations.

In January 2002, Koizumi fired pro-China Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka, who was extremely popular among females, in a move to restore political balance to MOFA. Consequently, Koizumi's approval rating drastically plunged.^{vii} The fiasco over Chinese police seizing North Koreans seeking asylum in the Japanese consulate in Shenyang in May 2002 further damaged the prestige and credibility of MOFA. Critics fiercely attacked the so-called "China school" in MOFA for its compromising attitudes toward China. The knowledge and experiences of regional specialists are essential for consistent foreign policy. Like the decline of the US State Department and its "China Hands" due to McCarthyism in the 1950s, the decline of MOFA, especially its China school, may well have had a negative impact on Japan's decision-making process towards China.

At critical junctures, the Japanese public, politicians and bureaucrats are often sharply divided over issues concerning China. In this increasingly divided environment, China could not find reliable allies in Japanese society, and Prime Minister Koizumi could not pragmatically change his policy of visiting the Yasukuni Shrine—which became the symbol of deadlocked Sino-Japanese relations. In sum, Koizumi sacrificed the Sino-Japanese relationship to demonstrate his decisiveness to his domestic constituents.

A COMPARISON OF NAKASONE AND KOIZUMI

This section compares the foreign policy of Junichiro Koizumi with that of former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, the prime minister who also enjoyed a long tenure in the 1980s, from two aspects: international affairs and domestic institutional changes. Both leaders enjoyed long five-year terms as prime minister and had strong ties with the United States, which they achieved despite the absence of strong political support in the LDP.

Overall, Koizumi enjoyed more freedom of action than Nakasone, caused partly by the fact that the two leaders faced a very different international environment during their tenure. Nakasone served as prime minister during the new Cold War, from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to the first Reagan administration, amid a revived US-Soviet confrontation. Consequently, the non-nuclear Japan had no other pragmatic course available than to try and strengthen its alliance with the United States. In addition, Japan's economy continued to grow and US-

^{vii} For instance, one online poll conducted in January 2002 showed that the approval rating for the Koizumi cabinet plunged to approximately 34 percent, <http://www.election.co.jp/news/2002/news0131.html>.

Japan trade frictions were extremely tenuous in this era, making it necessary for Japan to try and ease economic tensions with the United States. However, the problem for Nakasone was that the US–Soviet military rivalry was only an indirect driver of Japan's foreign policy because the Japanese people did not view the Soviet military as a direct threat to their national security. Thus, the idea of strengthening the alliance relationship with the United States played into Japan's fear of becoming entrapped in US global military strategy. This fear was evidenced by the sharp decline in Nakasone's approval rating following his mention of the US-Japan alliance relationship in his joint communiqué with President Reagan in January 1983.

Twenty years later, during Koizumi's tenure, Japan was still reluctant to get too involved in the US global war on terror, but because of the rise of China and the provocative military rhetoric of North Korea, it also feared abandonment by the United States. Koizumi stressed on March 20, 2003, that the United States was the only country that recognized that an attack on Japan would be considered an attack against the US itself. This made it easier for Koizumi, rather than Nakasone, to mobilize the Japanese public to endorse his government's support for the United States. Furthermore, in the Koizumi era, Japan's economy no longer posed a threat to the United States. In a public opinion survey among fifteen European countries in October 2003, 53 percent of respondents answered that the United States, as well as Iran and North Korea, were the threats to the world.⁵⁴ Given the declining global perceptions of the United States, Koizumi was in a prime position to attach a higher "price tag" to his country's cooperation with Washington.

Secondly, while both leaders struggled with their weak domestic political standing, Koizumi was eventually able to exercise more influence within his government than Nakasone. Serious factional politics within the LDP stymied Nakasone when he tried to exercise his leadership in policy matters, and, although he sought to strengthen his political influence by pursuing a presidential-style premiership, his power base as prime minister was not well institutionalized. The Security Council (*anzen hoshō kaigi*), for example, which was created under the Nakasone cabinet, was poorly staffed and weak. Koizumi, on the other hand, succeeded in considerably reducing the influence of the various factions in the LDP by concentrating decision-making authority within LDP leadership positions and the cabinet. In addition, the structural changes in the government triggered by the administrative reform set forth by Prime Minister Hashimoto in 2000 finally began to take root. As a result, the decision-making process was more centralized than it had been during Nakasone's term, strengthening the Prime Minister's power considerably.

In the area of Japan's policy toward China, Nakasone did not enjoy the freedom that Koizumi did on both the international and domestic fronts for the same reasons. First, due to the US–Soviet rivalry, Washington considered Beijing to be a “strategic asset,” not a “strategic competitor.”⁵⁵ In addition, the Chinese economy was not yet a challenge to the US economy in the 1980s and therefore Tokyo could not pressure Beijing too much without considering the implications on US–China relations. Second, pro-China factions in the LDP and other political parties in Japan were much more influential in Nakasone's era than during Koizumi's term. In sum, Koizumi benefited from both an international environment that called for expanded involvement in Japan's relationship with the US as well as a stronger domestic power base.

FROM KOIZUMI TO ABE TO...?

This section examines the similarities and differences between Koizumi and his successor, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, neither of whom were thought to fit the mold of the conventional image of a Japanese prime minister.

In terms of similarities, both Koizumi and Abe were initially very popular among the public in Japan. While Abe appears to lack the strong personality of Koizumi, he still enjoyed a very high approval rating at the beginning of his term of roughly 70 percent, ranking only third after Koizumi and Hosokawa Morihiro in postwar Japanese political history.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, such image-based popularity often proves to be shallow. Even Koizumi lost his popularity among females after he fired Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka in February 2002. In fact, his approval rating dropped to less than 40 percent at one point.⁵⁷

Second, similar to Koizumi, Abe enjoyed the benefit of a prime minister role that was well institutionalized within the bureaucratic structure. Abe hired several special assistants to serve as policy advisors, and their rank was equal to the cabinet ministers. He also tried to establish a Japanese-style National Security Council (NSC) modeled after the NSC of the United States. Japan has a strong bureaucracy that is similar to France and a relationship between the cabinet and legislative body that is similar to that of Great Britain. Thus, the attempt to establish a US-style body like the NSC within an already inflexible political bureaucracy continues to be a major challenge, not to mention making such a body effective as well. The question of who will assume the position of Secretary General of Japan's NSC, which is set to be established in April 2008, is already the topic of major political debate.

Finally, and most importantly, Abe sought to maintain close security ties with the United States. Given North Korea's nuclear test in October 2006, close security ties with Washington have become even more essential for Japan. Abe

also strongly believed that Japan should revise its constitution, especially Article Nine, which bans the right of collective self-defense. In light of Abe's resignation in September 2007 and Prime Minister Fukuda's unexpected resignation in September 2008, it is uncertain how the future Japanese prime minister will set his/her foreign policy priorities in the months and years ahead.

As for differences between Koizumi and Abe, against people's expectations, Prime Minister Abe visited Beijing and Seoul soon after coming to power, demonstrating a strong desire to repair bilateral relations with both China and South Korea. Distancing himself from Koizumi—and even personal stances taken earlier in his own political career—Abe maintained a vague position as to whether he would visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine. Many Japanese citizens had supported Koizumi's visits to the shrine because they believed that Chinese opposition to the visits constituted an intervention in Japan's domestic affairs. If China chooses to remain silent over this issue, then the Japanese public's interest and support for the prime minister's visit to the shrine may wane, which could open up new possibilities for repairing Sino-Japanese relations. In addition, the Yasukuni issue has become less important in light of North Korea's recent provocations, including its missile test in July 2006 and nuclear test in October 2006. The North Korea nuclear problem has served to bring Japan and China closer together as they try to proactively address this threat.

However, the problem that the Yasukuni Shrine presents is not just a diplomatic one, but also has religious and historical overtones. Abe's ambiguity did not fundamentally solve this issue, and some Japanese citizens may have felt betrayed by him over this issue. The most effective way to address frustrated nationalism within Japan will remain a serious problem in the future. Because of a *de facto* compromise over the Yasukuni Shrine visit, it may not leave enough room for the prime minister to show flexibility on the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by the North Koreans.

For several reasons, the US-Japan relationship was be far more challenging for Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda than it was for Koizumi or Abe, and it will remain so for some time. First, the Republican Party lost its majority status in the US Congress in the mid-term elections in November 2006, which has contributed to the increased focus of President George W. Bush on domestic issues. The ongoing violence in Iraq, furthermore, continues to be a major problem for and focus of the Bush administration. In particular, now in the waning months of the Bush presidency, Washington may not be able to pay enough attention to affairs in Asia, including Japan.

Thus far, Japan and the United States have cooperated very closely on the North Korea issue, but the perception gap is widening. For the United States, containing North Korea may be enough, at least for a while, but for Japan, it is still extremely dangerous if a “contained” North Korea continues to develop nuclear weapons and missiles inside its borders. On the other hand, in the wake of progress in the Six-Party talks, Japan continues to run the risk of being isolated over the abduction issue. Closer and more careful policy coordination with Washington is now required for the Fukuda cabinet. This will be critical, as Japan certainly felt a sense of betrayal when the United States quickly decided to lift its so-called financial sanctions against North Korea. While Abe’s visit to Washington in April 2007 was successful, Tokyo still needs to provide a realistic and pragmatic solution to the abduction issue.

Given local politics in Okinawa and the resignation of US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the implementation of the US military transformation may be further delayed. On one hand, the Japanese government passed a bill in the National Diet that will facilitate the US force realignment in Japan. However, the Okinawa Prefectural Government and the City of Nago have asked for a slight revision in the agreement that was proposed between Japan and the US. In other words, Tokyo still needs to persuade the local communities in Okinawa that will be impacted by the realignment.

In the Upper House election in July 2007, the LDP lost the majority, leading to the emergence of a divided government in which opposition parties can prevent almost every bill from being passed in the Upper House. According to Article 59 of the Japanese constitution, while the governing parties can theoretically override a block in the Upper House with a majority two-thirds vote in the Lower House, it is extremely difficult to do so in practice. Prime Minister Fukuda is therefore in a critical situation. On the one hand, it is uncertain whether the Japanese government will be able to pass a new bill on the Maritime Self-Defense Forces’ anti-terrorism operations in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, it is almost certain that in the near future the US government will stop including North Korea on its list of terrorist-supporting countries. Also, due to the opposition from Okinawa prefecture and Nago City, the US military realignment in Japan is not progressing. The Ministry of Defense, furthermore, is suffering from a serious scandal concerning former Vice Minister Moriya Takemasa. While Fukuda tries to expand Japan’s diplomatic capabilities in East Asia, it is essential for his cabinet to revitalize US-Japan security relations and to stabilize Japanese domestic politics.

CONCLUSION: JAPAN'S SECURITY POLICY IN POST-ABE JAPAN

Koizumi's foreign policy was the product of three factors: his personality, the domestic political situation, and the international environment. There is no doubt that Koizumi had a very decisive personality. Nakasone, with whom many compare Koizumi, also had a decisive personality, but he was constrained both by domestic political dynamics and by the international security environment. In the context of domestic politics, Nakasone's maneuverability was greatly constrained by factional politics within the LDP. At the international level, he was confronted by severe US–Japan trade frictions and US rivalry with the former Soviet Union. In such a climate, Japan's influence as a non-nuclear power was limited.

In contrast to Nakasone, Koizumi benefited from the absence of this super-power rivalry and considerably less tense economic relations between Japan and the United States. In domestic politics, Koizumi enjoyed the advantages of past efforts to institutionalize and strengthen the prime minister's office, many of which were led by Nakasone and Hashimoto. The decline of MOFA also helped to strengthen the prime minister's leadership in diplomatic areas. Furthermore, electoral reform reinforced the authority vested in the LDP's leadership positions. The introduction of small, single-seat electoral districts to replace medium, multi-seat districts required each political party to consolidate its candidates and forced political leaders to respond better to the needs of their constituents.

At a systemic level, as mentioned earlier, Koizumi's approach was very suitable for an era of great uncertainty. During his time in office, the Japanese public was afraid of being abandoned in terms of regional security and the Bush administration was eager to obtain support from Tokyo for the US War on Terror and the war in Iraq. The Japanese public did not consider either of these wars as necessarily affecting the security of Japan. Koizumi could therefore charge a higher price for mobilizing, even if passive, public support for cooperation with Washington. His successors, Abe and Fukuda, have faced a legitimate crisis for Japan's own national security stemming from the North Korea threat, and in the near future, the prospects of a more dominant China. Thus, any future Japanese prime minister must be able to display the decisiveness of Koizumi, but at the same time, has to have a more deliberate and nuanced approach to foreign and security policy than Koizumi or Abe. Otherwise, the fate of his cabinet will resemble that of Abe.

US PERSPECTIVES ON THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN EAST ASIA

L. Gordon Flake

When regional or global issues are viewed from the perspective of individual countries or regions, a common criticism of US policy is the failure of the United States to fully take into account the various local perspectives on a given issue. The reverse is also true: local or regional officials frequently fail to understand the broader global considerations that drive US policy decisions. Furthermore, in the messy world of US democracy, a deeper understanding of domestic political factors and perspectives is essential to fully explain the US approach to any particular region. It is in this context that this paper attempts to examine the breadth of US perspectives on regional developments in Asia and how, while not directly related to the US military's Global Posture Review (GPR), the tensions between global and regional interests are likely affecting the US approach to the GPR as it is applied in Asia, and more specifically, in Okinawa.

US VISION (OR LACK THEREOF) FOR THE REGION

One of the most common indictments of the US role in Northeast Asia in the post-Cold War era has been the failure of the United States to articulate a comprehensive vision for the future of the East Asian region. This criticism has become particularly pronounced in the years following the events of September 11, 2001. Even prior to the Iraq war, the US was justly criticized for having a one-dimensional policy toward the region that emphasized the war on terror above all else, and that viewed the region mostly through the prism of the willingness of individual states to clearly articulate their support for US objectives in a struggle that was frequently cast in stark “with us or against us” terms. During this initial period, any high-level attention that was given by the United States to Northeast Asia was almost singularly focused on global terror and, as a result, many regional issues were arguably given short shrift. It is difficult to make the case that the United States has played a recent leadership role in regional trade liberalization in support for regional institutions, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), in smoothing intra-regional

tensions, or in a number of other issues of interest to regional players. The US decision to invade Iraq and the all-consuming nature of the ongoing conflict there have further sapped the time and resources of US political leaders that might have been otherwise allocated during what was heralded to be the “Asian Century.”

There is a risk, however, of overstating the impact of September 11, 2001, and the war on terror. Even absent such new priorities and threats, it is unlikely that the US would ever be as fully engaged in the Asia-Pacific region as it was during the Cold War, or to the degree that some of the regional players would apparently prefer. One of the fundamental asymmetries that persists due to the United States’ status as the world’s sole superpower is the tendency for individual countries and even regions to expect from the United States the same degree of interest, attention, and priority that they apply to the US. Given its status as a truly global player, it is often the case that the United States does not have a single specific regional or subregional vision, but rather a global perspective that influences and is influenced by regional and bilateral issues. The GPR debate itself is a prime example of this. Countries in Northeast Asia will understandably focus primarily upon the impact of the GPR on the region. However, by its very nature, the GPR is an initiative that can only be understood from a fully global perspective.

Another prime example of this regional and global asymmetry and tension, while its relevance has been muted by the ongoing struggle in Iraq, is the strong emphasis given to the promotion of freedom and democracy in President Bush’s 2005 State of the Union Address and later re-emphasized in the 2006 National Security Strategy. For broad goals and objectives such as these, the approach is not defined by the US strategy for Asia, but instead by how such global goals and objectives will be applied in the Asia-Pacific region. From the doctrine of preemption to the de-emphasis on traditional bilateral alliances in favor of coalitions of the willing, new policy directions in Washington both apply to and impact Asia. This new policy direction is, however, not necessarily driven by or tailored to Asian priorities to the extent that they might be.

An understanding of the United States’ global perspective and approach does not necessarily absolve the United States of its failure to develop a comprehensive post-Cold War vision for Northeast Asia. The growing perception in the world of a decline in US leadership in the region is perhaps more important than any particular policy or vision. While the Cold War was also global in nature, for better or for worse, it did prompt the United States to be proactive in Asia. In the current environment, particularly with the bulk of US attention focused on the Middle East, the US approach towards the East Asia

region appears to be more reactive than strategic, and is again most immediately focused on concerns about global terrorism as the “arch of instability” reaches into Asia. Given this lack of US political investment or initiative, a case can be made that the only nations in the region that enjoy observably strong relations with the United States are those that have, based on an internal assessment of their own national interest, actively courted the United States.

Many in Washington, with some justification, congratulate themselves for the decades-long investment that is in part due credit for what is considered to be the best period of US–Japan relations in history. Still, it remains worth questioning whether recent stronger alliance relationships are primarily the result of US initiatives, or of policy shifts in Japan and other allies, such as Singapore and Australia.

Two telling questions that go to the heart of the question of US leadership in the region are, “What are the ‘drivers’ of US policy in the region?” and perhaps more tellingly, “What is the public rationale made in the United States for continued engagement in Asia?” In an era of developments such as the Dubai Ports World case,^{viii} the ongoing national debate on immigration, and the shift in politics evidenced by the results of the 2006 mid-term congressional elections, these questions are not merely academic. In recent years, the most commonly used political justification for US interests in Asia has too often been the one-size-fits-all “war on terror.” However, this rationale is losing its saliency in the United States, not to mention in East Asia.

One other prism through which US leadership in the region should be measured is its response to, involvement in, and support of East Asian regionalism. The tendency to dismiss efforts at regional community-building as somehow antithetical to US interests, as they were in the 1990s when championed by Malaysia’s former prime minister Mahathir bin Mohammad, does not reflect the continued development of initiatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ Regional Forum (ARF) to the recent East Asian Summit. While the US is likely justified in its skepticism about such efforts, particularly in light of tensions in China–Japan relations and their apparent competition for leadership in these forums, the fact that they continue without US leadership, or in some cases, in spite of US concerns, is yet another indication of the growing questions regarding the US role in and commitment to the region.

^{viii} In February 2006, the proposed sale of port management business in six major US seaports to the company of Dubai Ports World based in the United Arab Emirates sparked controversy and a national security debate in the US that led the company to retract its bid. For many, this episode came to symbolize growing xenophobia in the United States.

CHINA'S EMERGENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON US PERSPECTIVES OF THE REGION

While there are many trends in the Asia–Pacific region that demand the United States' attention and that will ultimately affect US–Japan cooperation on the GPR and other issues, the most dominant factor is the emergence of China as a major regional player. Because there has been so much hyperbole regarding China's rise, there is a natural countervailing tendency to discount its impact, or at a minimum, to move beyond the hype. It is an overstatement to say that US security concerns in Asia are “all about China,” just as it was an overstatement during the Cold War to assume that all US concerns during that period were about the Soviet Union. However, it would be reasonable to say that every US and Japanese security interest in the region is, in one way or another, impacted by the emergence of China.

Exactly how China will impact the US policy focus toward the Asia-Pacific region remains an open question. There is an emerging debate between those who think that the US needs to get its relationship with China right in order to have a cogent Asia policy, and those who think that if the US has its policy towards the rest of Asia right, primarily in the form of strong bilateral alliances, then its policy towards China will naturally follow. Either way, a key question for the US and Japan is whether the emergence of China is the focal point of US policy in the region, and thus of US–Japan cooperation, or rather just one of many factors that should inform their decision making.

The Contest for Korea:

Rising Chinese Influence on the Peninsula

A common perception in Washington during the past several years has been that as US–Republic of Korea (ROK) bilateral relations have suffered, and as Korea–Japan relations have declined even more sharply, Korea is somehow drifting back into a more traditional Chinese orbit. Indeed, Korea's hesitance to take positions that might be offensive to the Chinese, such as visits by the Dalai Lama or closer relations with Taiwan, its hesitance over the issue of strategic flexibility on the grounds that Korea might be dragged into a US–China conflict over Taiwan, and statements by President Roh Moo-Hyun calling for Korea to assume a “balancing” role in the region, have all seemed to indicate a shift towards China. Such concerns have been exacerbated by opinion polls⁵⁸ that show relatively favorable views, particularly among younger generations in South Korea, toward China, in contrast to the more skeptical, if not hostile views toward the US and particularly Japan. Finally, US concerns have been heightened by what has appeared to be periodic South Korean and Chinese

cooperation in the Six-Party talks process to blunt attempts by the US to leverage greater pressure upon North Korea.

In contrast to this view is a growing, if not as openly expressed, South Korean concern about a growing Chinese role in North Korea and anxiety over China's role on the peninsula. The controversy over the Chinese claim that the ancient kingdom of Kokuryo, which Koreans claim as their own, was a Chinese kingdom has raised alarm throughout Korea. Of equal concern has been the stark incongruity of attention paid to the issue in Beijing and Seoul, highlighting not only a relatively restricted press in China, but also an asymmetry in perspectives. In short, Korea appears to be coming to appreciate China's size and the potential realities of Chinese power. The more immediate concern regarding China has been what Seoul perceives as a growing Chinese presence in and influence over North Korea. Blocking or competing with such Chinese influence is an unspoken justification for the aggressive nature of South Korea's attempts to promote South Korean economic assistance to and investment in North Korea, despite what may be unfavorable terms and a lack of progress on security issues of concern to the United States.

The challenge for the United States and Japan is to avoid the predilection of some to abandon Korea or even push it into the China camp. It is important here to recognize that there is a core group of analysts and opinion leaders in Washington who, either for ideological reasons or concern about Beijing's recent rapid military modernization, believe that a new Cold War with China is likely, if not inevitable. Understandably, such individuals are likely to be very supportive of ever-closer US–Japan relations as they foresee a region divided down the middle with the US–Japan alliance as the foundation of a contest with China for influence in the region. Not only is such a division deeply antithetical to Korea's national interests, but also to those of the US, Japan, and the region as a whole. Such trends ought to be of particular concern to Okinawa, which sits at the literal crossroads of the region and would appear to have the most to lose from an increase in tensions and the faltering of efforts to promote further regional integration.

Containment, Counterbalancing, and Competition in Context

Without attempting a treatise on the broader issue of US–China relations, it is worthwhile to make a distinction between the notion that US policy in Asia is intended to somehow “contain” China and the reality that most US policy decisions in Asia are made in the context of China's rise. For example, the recent dramatic improvement in US–India relations and US efforts to cultivate Indonesia are best understood as attempts to cultivate large and democratic

centers of power in reaction to increasing Chinese influence. In some respects, just as China and some in Europe claim to be seeking a multi-polar world, the US seems to be seeking to ensure that Asia also remains multi-polar, if not to check China's rise, then at least to counterbalance its influence.

The emergence of China likely impacts the US–Japan relationship more directly than any other bilateral relationship. This is particularly significant because US perceptions of Japan, and particularly US perceptions of Okinawa, were not formed primarily in the context of China, but first in the context of conflict between the US and Japan during World War II and later in the context of the Cold War and a perceived threat from the Soviet Union. On one level, the emergence of China has led to some shifting in the initiative or driving forces behind US–Japan bilateral relations. The rapid onset of the Cold War not only facilitated the relatively rapid transformation of Japan from enemy to ally, but sustained US interest for the next five decades. Just as concerns regarding Soviet influence were not unique to the US, concerns about the emergence of China are not unique to Japan. Still, Japan's recent proactive approach toward the US–Japan alliance can be best understood in the context of the emergence of China. The more interesting question is whether the US reciprocal support for strengthening US–Japan ties is primarily driven by the question of China, or rather primarily is a reaction to Japanese initiative. These are not mutually exclusive, yet the answer to this question is key to understanding the prospects for a future “values-based” relationship between the US and Japan, as well as the role of Okinawa in any future relationship.

One final issue that should be noted is how the relative robustness of the US commitment to Japan impacts Japan's perception of and interaction with China. Again, without necessarily imputing any intent to the United States, expressions of strong and perhaps growing US support for Japan, particularly in the face of the emergence of China, have been blamed by some for encouraging Japan to be more inflexible on historical legacy issues and more aggressive in its moves toward “normal nation” status than it might be otherwise without US backing. There are also some signs of the opposite trend, where concern about US disinterest and disinvestment in the region is thought to be encouraging Japanese hedging strategy vis-à-vis the emergence of China.^{ix}

Okinawa has the potential to influence the perceptions of Japan and the US toward the rise of China; and, it also has the potential to influence how Tokyo and Washington perceive its role in the alliance and in the region. How such

^{ix} For instance, some Asian security analysts in the United States argue that US disinterest has contributed to the exacerbation of Japan-China relations, particularly after Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine.

influence should be exercised, however, is not clear, even when strictly viewed from the vantage point of Okinawa's interests.

TRADE AND POCKETBOOK POLITICS

The slogan used by President Clinton's campaign in 1992, "It's the economy, stupid!" has been much used and abused in the past decade. However, the underlying message of the primacy of pocketbook politics remains very salient. After nearly a half-century of the Cold War when the focus on Asia was largely on security issues, the focus has been gradually shifting to economic issues for the past several decades. While Japan is the economic powerhouse in the region and will remain so for decades to come, the attention of the US is now undeniably focused on the emergence of China and India. Given the largely negative focus on trade and current account deficits, currency rates, and outsourcing, perhaps this is an era in which "Japan passing" is not necessarily a bad thing.

China as the Next Japan: Trade Bogeyman

Those who were active in trade policies and politics in the late 1980s will recognize much of the politics surrounding China today. The growing US trade deficit with China is garnering increasing congressional and political attention in the United States. The efforts of trade experts to broaden the focus on US trade with Asia as a whole and to explain the shift of Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese manufacturing to China as a primary cause of the Chinese deficit have largely fallen on deaf ears, and China remains the most likely target of trade angst in the United States. A key difference from the Japan-bashing of the late 1980s, however, is that the alliance relationship and democratic values that bound the US to Japan and helped to restrain anti-Japanese sentiment are not present in the current wave of concern over China. One might justifiably worry about the lack of a safety net should the US economy sour and trade friction with China accelerate even further. In some respects, having gone through a similar experience and having its own concerns about the emergence of China as a competitor in the region, Japan might take some degree of pleasure in China's discomfiture. However, given the implications of a soured economic relationship on broader US-China relations and the resulting potential for a destabilization of the regional security situation, Japan would do well to recognize that it benefits little from rising protectionism and rising anti-China sentiment in the US.

US–ROK FREE TRADE AGREEMENT: THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET FOR JAPAN?

Due to the considerable effort of negotiators on both sides and with strong support from both the White House and Blue House, the US and South Korea concluded Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations on 1 April 2007, literally seconds before the deadline to submit such an agreement to the US Congress under Trade Promotion Authority rules that would allow the agreement to have a crucial up-or-down vote without any amendments. Despite considerable skepticism in both Seoul and Washington, the agreement, if ratified and implemented, would represent Korea's largest-ever free trade deal and the largest such deal for the US since NAFTA was enacted nearly 15 years ago. However, it is too early to declare victory because there remains considerable opposition to the agreement in the now-Democratically controlled US Congress and in the South Korean National Assembly.

The initial announcement that the United States and South Korea were entering into formal negotiations for a FTA took many in Seoul and Washington by surprise. The difficulties experienced by the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and a generally souring mood toward free trade in Washington made the effort to launch the largest such negotiation since NAFTA a particular challenge. Likewise in Seoul, the body politic had expected their government to pursue Korea–China, Korea–Japan, and Korea–US FTAs in that order, and the reversal made it appear that it was the US that is pushing the current effort, a perception that has threatened domestic support in Korea.

The successful Korea–US (KORUS) FTA negotiations have now raised the political stakes in both capitols, making its ratification and implementation all the more important politically, to say nothing of the economic benefits of the deal. After several years of largely negative developments in US–ROK political relations, the FTA negotiations have provided a welcome opportunity for focusing on positive developments in US–ROK relations. However, the risk is that if the FTA fails to be ratified, the inevitable recriminations would actually accelerate the decline of US–ROK political relations and further undermine the trust that is necessary to sustain the US–ROK alliance. The impact of a failure would not be limited to the Korean peninsula, but would likely damage the prospects for future negotiations with Japan and also affect US perceptions of the multilateral trade negotiations more broadly.

Japan: Odd Man Out?

In some sense, the hype over the emergence of China and the ROK Free Trade Agreement obscures the continuing dominance of the Japanese economy in the region. Even assuming uninterrupted growth in China, there is little question that the Japanese economy will remain the region's preeminent one for years to come. However, in the realm of perception, and more importantly in questions of regional leadership on economic issues, one senses that the baton may already be in the process of being passed, if not wrested, from Japan's hands. In this regard, the KORUS FTA may actually present an opportunity for Japan. The fact that the politically sensitive rice sector was excluded from the KORUS FTA removes a key roadblock for a similar negotiation to be considered between the US and Japan, and there are growing calls for a US–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, if not a full-fledged FTA.

To return to the broader theme of “drivers” behind US policy in the region, it is clear that the KORUS FTA was largely a South Korean initiative. While its wisdom and political origins are still being debated in Seoul, the emergence of China likely had some impact on South Korean calculations. It also appears that, if there is to be a Japan–US economic partnership agreement or FTA in the near future, the impetus for that effort will need to come from Tokyo. While the US continues to preach trade liberalization on a broad global and theoretical level, it is difficult to discern a clear US policy specifically for the East Asia region that is steered from Washington. As with security issues, the long-term implications of a relative or perceived decline in US initiative in the region will have real implications not only for Japan but also for other nations as they decide how to respond to China's growing economic influence.

NATIONALISM IN ASIA: HISTORICAL LEGACIES AND FUTURE COMPETITIONS

One of the most concerning developments in Northeast Asia during the past several years has been the emergence of what appears to be an unhealthy nationalism largely focused on, but not limited to, historical legacies in the region. While some of this sentiment is attributable to the failure of governments in the region to engage their respective publics in the airing and surmounting of historical grievances that were simply glossed over by fiat, it is also true that current leaders have sought to exploit such nationalistic sentiment for domestic political advantage. At a minimum, there has been a striking lack of regional leadership in Seoul, Tokyo, and Beijing as politicians have pandered to popular sentiment, rather than articulating each country's respective national interest in moving beyond such issues.

Japan–China Divide: Past or Future?

Of greatest concern, perhaps because of the lack of a free press or any other counterbalances, is the emergence of strong anti-Japanese sentiment in China. In contrast to Korean sensitivities, which remain focused primarily on the past, at least some portion of the growing sentiment in China is firmly focused on the future and a competition between China and Japan for influence in the region.

While many Japanese were shocked by and remain focused on such public expressions of anti-Japanese sentiment like those voiced in the anti-Japanese riots during the 2006 Asia Cup soccer games in Beijing, of greater concern may be what appears to be an emerging official line that places an impassioned emphasis on Japan's unworthiness to play a regional or global leadership role due to its failure to fully atone for its actions during World War II. The triggers for this line of thinking have been the controversial visits of former Prime Minister Koizumi to the Yasukuni Shrine. However, there is now growing evidence that the Chinese position extends beyond this particular act and that China would be unsatisfied by anything less than a clear indication that Japan recognizes Chinese preeminence in the region.

While such underlying concerns remain, Prime Minister Abe's well received visit to China at the outset of his term in October 2006 and the April 2007 visit to Tokyo by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao have served to strengthen bilateral ties, at least at the political level. Furthermore, the relatively muted response of China to the "comfort women" controversy is seen by many in Japan and the US as evidence of intent on China's side to keep matters from getting out of hand.

Japan–Korea Tensions: When the Enemy of my Friend is my Ally

Korea's surge of anti-Japanese sentiment, like that of China, also focuses on historical legacy issues such as the Yasukuni Shrine and textbooks, but also has been particularly inflamed by the territorial dispute over the Tokdo/Takeshima Islands, which Koreans have firmly placed in the context of Japanese colonial legacy in Korea. The primary difference is that Korea and Japan are both allies of the US and democratic free-market societies and as such, the United States, perhaps unrealistically, has higher expectations of both.

The deterioration of Korea–Japan relations strikes at the heart of any long-term US security planning in the region. While Koreans in particular tend to bifurcate Korea–US and Korea–Japan relations, this is a false dichotomy. From a US perspective, it is impossible to separate long-term planning for the US–ROK alliance from the US–Japan alliance and US desires for strengthened

relations between its two allies in the region. On a more practical level, it is an unfortunate reality that there are few Korea specialists at most levels in the US government and, for the most part, particularly at more senior levels. Thus, the individuals responsible for US–ROK relations are also responsible for US–Japan relations. In short, the deterioration of ROK–Japan relations is seen through the prism of the US–Japan alliance.

Complexities of Intra-Regional Tensions for the US

Not surprisingly, in the midst of this surge of nationalism and the failure of political leadership in Northeast Asia, there have been calls in all countries for the US to assume a more active leadership role. The challenge is that the respective visions for the role that the US should play are as deeply divided as the national perspectives involved. From a Japanese perspective and from the perspective of those in Korea and Southeast Asia that are particularly wary of growing Chinese influence, US influence and leadership is needed to serve as a hedge or bulwark in the region. China, as well as a good number of Koreans, remains deeply concerned about the growth of perceived nationalism or militarism in Japan and view an active US role in the region as a key to mitigating Japan’s harsher tendencies. While the actual ability or willingness of the US to play either of those roles is debatable, there is little question that the extent of proactive US involvement in such issues will influence the behavior of the other countries in the region.

CONCLUSION

Much of the discussion of Okinawa in the context of the US–Japan alliance centers on the role of Okinawa in post-GPR regional contingencies. Given the primacy of the role of the military on Okinawa and the regional implications of the US military presence in Okinawa, that is not surprising. However, at the same time, we need to be keenly aware of the impact of a number of regional issues, not just upon US–Japan security cooperation, but also upon US perceptions of and policy toward the entire region. Given the increasing necessity for US political leaders to build domestic support in the United States for its role in Asia, as well as the central role of Japan in influencing US views of the region, it is increasingly incumbent upon Japan to view Okinawa through the broader prism of the US role in the region.

**RECONFIGURATION OF THE
US FORCES IN KOREA:
IMPACT OF THE
GLOBAL POSTURE REVIEW**

Scott A. Snyder

A variety of global, regional, and local forces have come together during the past few years to bring about significant changes to the presence of US Forces in Korea (USFK). These changes have occurred as part of a global defense transformation process designed by the United States to adjust from its Cold War posture, which was focused against clearly identified fixed threats, to an environment in which threats may arise from multiple sources in many different forms. These global changes have catalyzed the first major adjustment to US deployments on the peninsula since the Nixon Doctrine of the late 1960s, which resulted in the withdrawal of one US army division. At that time, the prospect of US disengagement stimulated anxieties in South Korea that led to covert efforts under Republic of Korea (ROK) President Park Chung Hee to acquire independent nuclear capacity.

Although the strategic context has changed dramatically during the past three decades, it was only in 2002 that additional steps were taken to reconfigure the US military presence on the peninsula. An analogous process had taken place in Japan in the early 1970s in the context of the Okinawa reversion. In addition to the US global defense transformation led by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, a range of other considerations has affected the nature and pace of adjustments to USFK, including local conditions on the Korean peninsula, the growing divergence of US/ROK priorities vis-à-vis North Korea, and South Korean democratization.

As a result of these additional factors and uncertainties regarding the future of confrontation on the Korean peninsula, it is difficult to predict whether the envisioned reconfiguration of US forces on the Korean peninsula will represent a new end state, or instead represents only the first phase of a possible additional disengagement of the US military from the Korean peninsula. Thus, the

indeterminate future of the US force presence could have unforeseen strategic implications for Japan and for the continuation of the American military presence in Japan. The evolution of the current threat environment in Northeast Asia, developments in South Korean domestic politics, and the outcome of ongoing bilateral US–ROK defense talks (known as the Strategic Policy Initiative) to affirm and implement a post-North Korean threat strategic rationale for a continued US troop presence are some key factors that will determine how the situation evolves from this point. This paper will review developments in the reconfiguration of USFK as a way of shedding light on all of the above factors.

THE END OF THE COLD WAR, THE NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR THREAT, AND THE US–ROK ALLIANCE

The Nixon-era reduction of US forces on the Korean peninsula set troop levels at around 40,000 following the withdrawal of the Seventh Infantry Division in 1969, a presence that was sustained until the end of the Cold War. President Jimmy Carter pledged to withdraw US forces from the Korean peninsula during the 1976 presidential election campaign in protest against the human rights abuses of the authoritarian Park Chung Hee regime. During the mid-1970s, the North Korean economy and military capacity appeared to be ahead of that of the South, so the prospect of an American abandonment had a serious psychological impact on South Korean military planners. Strenuous efforts on the part of foreign policy professionals at all levels of the US government and a revised intelligence assessment that drastically upgraded the American assessment of North Korean military capacity and readiness to move south eventually persuaded President Carter not to fulfill that campaign promise.⁵⁹

In 1990, the end of the Cold War and accompanying pressure by the US Congress to reduce the number of US troops based overseas marked the next attempt by the United States to adjust its troop levels on the Korean peninsula. By 1990, the Soviet threat was disappearing, South Korea’s economic miracle was rapidly tilting the economic balance of power on the Korean peninsula in the direction of Seoul while growth in Pyongyang had stagnated, and the 1988 Olympic Games afforded an opportunity for South Korea to normalize diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and many Eastern European countries. In this context, the United States initiated and presented to Congress a “Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim,” known as the East Asian Strategic Initiative (EASI).

This plan envisaged a gradual reduction of the USFK in three stages. The first stage, carried out during three years from 1990–92, involved a 7,000-person

troop reduction, the appointment of an ROK general officer to head the Military Armistice Commission, and the transfer of a number of operational tasks to South Korea as part of the transition of the US from playing a “leading” role to a “supporting” role on the Korean peninsula. The second phase of the plan envisaged the transfer of patrol duties to Korean forces at the Joint Security Area (JSA), the removal of two brigades from the US Second Infantry Division, and a reorganization of the 7th Air Force into one fighter wing. The third stage involved determination of the appropriate long-term size of USFK based on a joint threat assessment and other regional needs that might be met by USFK, relocation of Yongsan Army Garrison to another location outside of Seoul, and transfer of the area under the responsibility of the US Second Infantry Division, along with changes in the authority of wartime operational control and development of an ROK–US parallel command system.⁶⁰ Although the first stage of the EASI was implemented, the rise of the North Korean nuclear crisis in 1991–92 led then-Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney to freeze implementation of the EASI pending a resolution of the crisis.⁶¹

By the time that the North Korea nuclear crisis eased with the signing of the Geneva Agreed Framework in 1994, the Clinton administration had undertaken its own review of the US force presence in Asia that was conducted by Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye. One result of that Pentagon review was the decision to keep US troop levels in Asia constant at a level of 100,000 in an attempt to reassure allies that the US security commitment to Asia remained constant and to preserve the foundations of a US–Japan relationship that had been eroded by a focus on trade tensions. That decision put to rest any further discussion of additional US troop withdrawals from the Korean peninsula through the 1990s.⁶²

FACTORS INFLUENCING USFK RECONFIGURATION

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld joined the Bush administration in early 2001 with the objective of transforming the configuration and capacities of the US military on a global scale to meet new security challenges. The shock of 9/11 both distracted from and provided a compelling rationale for moving forward with a restructuring of US forces on a global scale. These efforts initially targeted the US troop presence in Germany and Asia as components of the US force structure that would be the focus of revisions under the Global Posture Review (GPR). The GPR in Asia involved parallel negotiations on revisions to the US presence in both Japan and the ROK.

In the case of the Korean peninsula, the objectives of US defense transformation were formally adopted in the 5 December 2002 Security Consultative Meeting

(SCM) Joint Communiqué, which stated that, “The Secretary reaffirmed the goal of consolidating the U.S. force presence in Korea to enhance force protection, improve readiness, increase efficient use and balanced development of ROK land, and provide the basis for an enduring force structure for U.S. forces in Korea. The Secretary and the Minister agreed on the need to find a mutually acceptable way to relocate U.S. forces outside the city of Seoul.”⁶³ To achieve this objective, the US Secretary of Defense and ROK Minister of Defense agreed to establish the Future of the Alliance Policy Initiative (FOTA). The FOTA talks would be the major venue for negotiating a revised US troop presence along the lines of what had been originally proposed and agreed upon as part of the East Asian Strategic Initiative in 1990.

The critical assumptions underlying the GPR directly contradict many of the foundational presuppositions underlying the USFK’s traditional mission and focus. US troops on the Korean peninsula have been “dedicated” to the single task of deterring North Korean aggression, but the premise underlying the GPR is that new technologies can support a more flexible set of military deployments capable of responding to emerging threats from multiple quarters. The need for troops to support the stabilization of Iraq and a doctrine that emphasized greater flexibility in troop deployments directly contradicted the military philosophy that had long characterized American deployments on the Korean peninsula. A reduction in forces and greater flexibility for forces deployed on the Korean peninsula would allow troops on the peninsula to respond to multiple threats.

Thus, the idea that the US forces are needed as a “tripwire” is no longer compelling. Instead, the “tripwire” logic gave the impression that the United States was incurring unnecessary military risks for the sake of providing political reassurance to its ally. Equally as significant, revised thinking about the role and purposes of USFK allowed the issue of US deployments on the Korean peninsula to be de-linked from the North Korean nuclear threat, effectively reversing the decision made by former Secretary of Defense Cheney in 1992 to halt US force redeployments in light of the North Korean threat.

In addition to the GPR, a number of factors on the South Korean side served to catalyze the establishment of negotiations for a reconfigured presence of USFK on the Korean peninsula, including:

- The changing strategic environment on the Korean peninsula, including threat perceptions of North Korea;
- Domestic factors in South Korea, including encroachment on once-isolated military facilities as a result of the country’s rapid economic growth and urbanization; and,

- Deteriorating public opinion among South Koreans toward the United States, which was cemented by an incident involving two young schoolgirls who were accidentally killed by a US military vehicle, setting off nationwide protests against perceived USFK impunity.

The divergence in threat perceptions regarding North Korea had its origins in the end of the Cold War, which effectively de-linked American global threat perceptions from the regional threat posed to South Korea by the North. The relative priority of North Korea's nuclear versus conventional threat was another factor that led to differences between the United States and South Korea, as the Clinton administration opted to open an unprecedented direct dialogue with North Korea to discuss the nuclear threat. These differences were exacerbated by the fact that South Korea was assigned responsibility to pay for implementation of the Agreed Framework, despite its lack of participation in those negotiations. The 2000 inter-Korean summit served to further divide American and South Korean threat perceptions, as President Kim Dae Jung declared upon his return from Pyongyang that there was no possibility of war on the Korean peninsula, indirectly raising questions at the level of South Korean public opinion about the need for a continued US presence on the Korean peninsula. The incoming Bush administration proved to have a different view of the North, and President Bush's direct criticism of Kim Jong Il and his characterization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as part of the "Axis of Evil" further alienated many South Koreans whose hopes for peaceful coexistence and eventual Korean unification had been raised by progress in the inter-Korean economic cooperation and cultural exchange.

Likewise, South Korea's economic growth had changed the role and impact of USFK on South Korean society. The USFK in the 1960s and 1970s had been a magnet for economic activity and opportunity for South Koreans attached to the base, but with South Korea's economic growth, the US bases actually became a drag on the country's growing prosperity. As towns and cities expanded around US military bases, traffic worsened and there were more direct and irritating conflicts at the local level between Americans and South Koreans. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) became a focal point for South Koreans, who viewed Americans as being immune from punishment for crimes and misdemeanors committed on South Korean soil. Publicity surrounding an American massacre of South Korean villagers in the town of Nogunri during the Korean War was used by anti-base activists to raise questions about the motivations and effects of the original US intervention. South Korea's democratization and political liberalization meant that many subjects that had been previously taboo—including those that challenged the US presence or were critical of the United States—were now able to be raised for public debate. Non-governmental organization (NGO) activists charged that the USFK had damaged the

environment in South Korea with impunity and criticized ROK military procurements from the United States.

These factors converged in June of 2002 when two Korean middle school girls were killed by a US military vehicle returning from exercises to base along a relatively narrow highway. The acquittal of the American vehicle operators set off widespread candlelight protests and vitriolic criticisms of perceived USFK impunity for actions taken on the Korean peninsula. The demonstrations lasted for several weeks and coincided with South Korea's December 2002 presidential campaign, becoming a major issue between the two candidates. International coverage of the demonstrations painted them as "anti-American," leaving the impression among politicians and senior defense officials that South Koreans were no longer "grateful" for the American presence and drastic revisions were needed to preserve a US presence on sustainable terms. These demonstrations served as a catalyst for the already-planned FOTA talks, which became a top agenda item for the United States in negotiations with the newly elected Roh Moo-hyun administration in early 2003.⁶⁴

FUTURE OF THE ALLIANCE TALKS (2002–2004)

The FOTA talks consisted of twelve rounds of negotiations between 2002 and 2004 that focused on the details of US defense force transformation on the Korean peninsula, including the ongoing reduction of forces by one-third to 25,000, implementation of steps necessary for the redeployment of key USFK command, transfer of several missions from the United States to South Korea, return of Yongsan base to the ROK, and the repositioning of US troops away from the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ). In addition to the proposed troop reductions, the United States also pledged US\$11 billion over three years to implement force improvements in the region that would enhance deterrence against any possible military threat posed by North Korea. By 2008, the USFK would have turned over the bulk of operational responsibilities near the DMZ and pulled back all troops positioned north of Seoul to a consolidated main base at Osan–Pyongtaek (Camp Humphreys). The USFK operations currently housed at Yongsan military base would also be transferred to Camp Humphreys. As part of a troop reduction of approximately 12,500 personnel, a brigade of the 8th Army Division was deployed to Iraq in the summer of 2005 and is anticipated to be based permanently at Fort Lewis, Washington. Presumably because the FOTA talks were deemed to be more challenging, they preceded the start of GPR negotiations with Japan. FOTA also served as a venue for the identification of issues currently under negotiation (including the idea of strategic flexibility and revision of combined operational control arrangements during wartime) as part of a follow-on negotiating forum, the Security Policy Initiative (see later in this chapter).

The United States had originally proposed a deadline of 2005 for implementing troop redeployments, but South Korea initially requested that the process be carried out by 2008; subsequently, the process has faced even more delays, giving additional time for implementation of the changes already underway. The negotiations are reported to have been carried out relatively smoothly, perhaps reflecting an unlikely coincidence of objectives between Secretary Rumsfeld and President Roh in response to the new political and security realities on the Korean peninsula. The most challenging issues have primarily been budgetary ones related to who would bear the cost of implementing the agreement, as well as the financial costs of rebuilding an infrastructure that will effectively accommodate the new arrangements. The Blue House kept a tight rein on costs that the ROK would assume as part of the relocation, but the ROK government took primary responsibility for purchase of the land necessary to build an expanded command structure, a challenging political process involving local actors that also attracted opposition from many South Korean civic groups that have long demonstrated against the presence of the USFK in Korea. The Ministry of National Defense took decisive action in early May of 2006 to clear activists and secure the land in question, as well as prepare the site for building construction that began in the summer of 2006.

STRATEGIC POLICY INITIATIVE (2004–2007)

The Strategic Policy Initiative was initiated through the 2004 SCM as a successor to the FOTA. The purpose was to discuss the “broader, long-term issues that the alliance faces,” including the future rationale for the alliance, strategic flexibility, and wartime operational control arrangements.⁶⁵ In addition, the SPI talks have been used to discuss issues related to implementation of FOTA as they arise. For instance, SPI talks have dealt with issues involving the coordination of ongoing transfer of operational tasks from the United States to ROK forces, as well as questions regarding responsibility for environmental clean-up on the assumption that the USFK would return lands to the ROK.⁶⁶ As of October 2006, preliminary agreements had been reached on some issues, described as follows.

STRATEGIC FLEXIBILITY

As suggested above, strategic flexibility is an essential prerequisite to fulfill the foundations of the GPR, the underlying philosophy of which requires flexibility to respond to multiple threats. This issue has been somewhat controversial as part of the public debate in Seoul. At commencement ceremonies at the Korean Air Force Academy in early March of 2005, President Roh said, “There have been some voices worrying about possible expansion of the role of U.S. Forces in Korea. This has to do with what is called ‘strategic flexibility.’ However, it should be clarified that we will not be embroiled in any conflict in Northeast

Asia against our will. This is an absolutely firm principle we cannot yield under any circumstance.”⁶⁷ President Roh’s statement seemed to imply that South Korea should have the ability to approve of American deployments off the Korean peninsula and that such deployments would not be in the South Korean interest in the event of cross-strait tensions between China and Taiwan.^x

This issue was addressed at the first round of the Security Consultation for Alliance Partnership (SCAP) discussions mandated by the two presidents during a November 2005 summit meeting in Gyongju. The first round of talks between US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon yielded a rather vague agreement based on SPI discussions in which South Korea accepted the principle of strategic flexibility while affirming South Korean autonomy to make its own foreign policies: “The ROK, as an ally, fully understands the rationale for the transformation of the U.S. global military strategy, and respects the necessity for strategic flexibility of the U.S. forces in the ROK. In the implementation of strategic flexibility, the U.S. respects the ROK position that it shall not be involved in a regional conflict in Northeast Asia against the will of the Korean people.”⁶⁸

Command and Control Arrangements

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld welcomed the South Korean initiative to regain sole wartime operational control. Thus, a general agreement to move forward with the transfer was made at the October 2006 SCM, although the joint statement reveals differences between the two sides on the timing of the transfer.

The debate over the timing of South Korea’s exercise of sole wartime operational control revolves around the question of how long it will take the South Korean military to achieve the capabilities necessary to achieve independent command and control functions that are essential to self-reliant defense. This is a matter of developing the necessary budget and organizational structures to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of National Defense to support this national objective. This issue has been resolved through the creation of joint task force liaison groups designed to coordinate tasks between Korean and American commanders. However, the air force command structure will remain unified for the time being, although it will be guided by the objective of supporting the needs of the South Korean military leadership as it defines its mission.

^x South Korean officials have been interested in exploring the concept of “prior notification” that is included in the US-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty, but regularly side-stepped in practice. Conversations with American and South Korean officials, March 2005.

Envisioning the Alliance

As part of the SPI, the United States and South Korea will carry out a comprehensive security assessment as part of the process of determining the troop levels that are needed to sustain the alliance. But more important will be the task of developing a mutually sustainable rationale for alliance cooperation in a post-North Korean threat environment. The sensitivities related to the concept of “strategic flexibility” are a good indicator of the different priorities that the United States and South Korea are applying to possible threats related to China’s rise, or at least, to different strategies for responding to China’s increasing influence in regional affairs.

However, this does not mean that it will be impossible to imagine a rationale for sustaining the US–ROK security alliance. While there are many South Koreans, including President Roh, who might feel uncomfortable with an alliance reoriented to fill balance-of-power objectives vis-à-vis China, the idea of working together with the United States to enable South Korea to project power and contribute to global stability is within the realm of acceptability, as exemplified by the ROK troop dispatch to support the stabilization of Iraq. Some analysts also accept the validity of the need for stability against future regional uncertainties under an ongoing US–ROK alliance framework.⁶⁹

From a US perspective, the US–ROK Joint Statement adopted by Presidents Bush and Roh at Gyongju in November of 2005 contains language that was designed to refashion alliance cooperation for the sake of regional and global stability based on shared values. Much of this same rhetoric was adopted as part of the US–Japan Joint Statement in early 2005 and reflects a desire on the part of some in the Bush administration to strengthen the rationale for alliances in Asia that embrace shared values. According to the Joint Statement, “The two leaders agreed that the alliance not only stands against threats but also for the promotion of the common values of democracy, market economy, freedom, and human rights in Asia and around the world,” in addition to affirming alliance cooperation through the establishment of the aforementioned Security Consultation for Alliance Partnership and affirming a range of security and political cooperation measures, including cooperation to address the North Korean nuclear issue.⁷⁰

Implications for UN Command

One interesting question relating to the changes in operational control and the possible dissolution of the Combined Forces Command (CFC) on the Korean peninsula is how such a development will influence the future of the UN Command, which was authorized by the United Nations following the North’s

surprise invasion of South Korea in June of 1950. The United States received wartime command of ROK forces through a letter from Rhee Syngman addressed to the United Nations via the UN Commander representing the United Nations, but for all practical purposes, the United States played the key role in creating and representing the UN Command. The UN Command was authorized by the United Nations, but has remained under US control from the beginning.

Arguably, the UN Command could be terminated at any time by a resolution of the UN Security Council, but in practical terms, such a resolution would not succeed until the United States was willing to support it. There have been recent suggestions that a reinvigorated UN Command structure with a more multinational character might play a useful role in managing the security liaison aspects of the relationship with the DPRK in the context of the US's transition from a lead to supporting role for USFK on the peninsula. Presumably, the UN Command would be dismantled in connection with the replacement of the armistice by a permanent peace regime. Another alternative might be for the UN Command to be relieved of responsibilities for maintaining the armistice, but still retain a role for providing international support to South Korean forces in the event of renewed conflict.

It is unclear under what circumstances the UN Command would retain the legitimacy of its role in the event of renewed hostilities on the Korean peninsula. The authority of the UN Command would presumably be retained only in relation to armistice-related measures or renewed North Korean aggression, and thus would not have authorization to respond to hypothetical internal conflicts or instability inside North Korea. The dissolution of the UN Command would arguably have important implications in terms of prior notification for UN-supported activities at a number of UN-flagged bases in Japan, but the trajectory of changes in the US–Japan security relationship appears to minimize the potential importance of such distinctions in practice.

The UN Command still retains nominal authority and jurisdiction on any matters relating to the armistice or the DMZ. Technically, the UN Command could try to insist on a dominant role on all DMZ-related issues, but as a practical matter, the UN Command has found it desirable to not interfere with the inter-Korean railway and other cooperation projects, except in the formal sense that the UN Command still receives notification of inter-Korean activities at the DMZ. However, customs and other cooperative arrangements involving inter-Korean trade and exchanges are, for all practical purposes, being handled by the two Koreas themselves.

There are a variety of adjustments to the UN Command that are occurring in conjunction with the reconfiguration of US troops on the Korean peninsula. Some have argued that the UN Command should move its office from Yongsan to a location near the DMZ. Others have offered that the UN Command could even perpetuate itself off the peninsula, for instance, as part of rear-area support operations based in Japan. There are many legal and technical issues relating to the UN Command; however, if a permanent peace is declared in a manner that requires dissolution of the armistice, the UN Command is also likely to fade away in actuality, even if not by a direct authorization.

CONCLUSION: NEXT STEPS IN USFK RECONFIGURATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR OKINAWA

This paper has examined many implications of the US defense transformation on the Korean peninsula. But the process itself is still incomplete. In particular, there could be an additional downward adjustment in the US troop presence on the peninsula to the extent that in five to ten years there may be no US ground forces left and only a residual air and naval presence. However, especially now that Secretary Rumsfeld has left the Pentagon, the process could slow down as a result of political opposition to the transfer by a future, more conservative South Korean government or as a result of inertia on the part of the uniformed military in pressing toward the goal of completing the transfer by the target date. Secondary factors that could shape the level of future US troop presence are the debate over strategic flexibility and the potential pressure for reducing US troops in the context of China's rising economic and political influence on the Korean peninsula. Another possibility might be that inter-Korean tensions could ease and the consolidation of a peaceful coexistence between the two Koreas could create additional pressures for additional revisions in the US troop presence. The most likely outcome is that a residual US troop presence will remain in South Korea as a sign of continuing commitment to deterrence against a continuing threat from North Korea. One worrisome unmet challenge is the task of envisioning the future of the alliance and gaining bipartisan support for a continuing security relationship between the United States and South Korea.

The respective processes for reconfiguring the US military presence in South Korea and Japan, respectively, under the rubric of the Global Posture Review, have essentially been structured as roughly parallel negotiations to achieve similar objectives in response to changes in US global capabilities and strategic outlook. In the cases of both FOTA/SPI and the Defense Policy Review Initiative (which focused on assessing new roles, missions and capabilities in the US–Japan alliance, as well as the deployment posture of US forces in Japan), technological advances and the desire for greater mobility and flexibility have

driven the modest reductions in the US footprint and also enabled US forces to move further back from the “front lines.” The decision to pull back American troops from the DMZ and move the US command south from Yongsan to Osan/Pyongtaek parallels efforts to reduce US forces on Okinawa through plans for relocating the Marine command elements to Guam. In both cases, the negotiations and resulting changes have encountered resistance from local NGO activists and also caused strains between central and local jurisdictions in both Japan and South Korea, respectively. It appears that these strains have been handled more successfully by the Korean government at central and local levels; however, in both Japan and South Korea, local politics has resulted in significant implementation delays as compared to the original timetables that were negotiated on a government-to-government basis.

It is inevitable that stories of US troop reductions in South Korea are likely to attract attention in Okinawa, where the burdens of and frustrations with a continuing US presence are high and the visible signs of immediate threat to Okinawa itself are low. For decades, it has been the conventional wisdom to view the US presence in South Korea and Japan as directly tied to each other. Thus, it is logical that a prospective American disengagement from South Korea might lead some to assume that there would also be additional reduction, if not elimination, of the US forces based on Okinawa. The parallels in the implementation of the GPR in South Korea and Japan may even indirectly reinforce such a perspective, especially in light of strengthened ties among anti-base activists in South Korea and Okinawa. However, discrepancies over the relative strategic value of Okinawa and South Korea, in combination with differences in the trajectory of public support and strategic rationales for the US presence in South Korea and Japan, have diminished the political salience of any perceived political linkage between the US presence in Japan and South Korea. For instance, one among many purposes for a US troop presence in Japan is to deter hostile aggression on the Korean peninsula, but it remains to be seen whether the US troop presence in South Korea will evolve effectively and gain popular support beyond the objective of deterrence against the North Korean threat. Japan’s strategic position and threat perceptions have gradually grown apart from those of South Korea following the end of the Cold War. As a result, views on and prospects for the future of US troop presence in each country are also developing on differing trajectories.

Despite the divergence in the strategic rationales underlying the US presence in South Korea and Japan, some important connections between the two alliances remain. First, the respective US presence in both places is designed to serve regional security objectives of providing for regional stability and enhancing peace and prosperity. There is not yet a firm guarantee that such an

environment can be maintained in the absence of a US forward-deployed presence in the region, especially in the context of China's rise. Second, South Korea and Japan, as fellow democracies, should be natural allies whose interests in preventing the spread of global instability strongly coincide with each other. This has been most strikingly illustrated in recent years by the South Korean and Japanese military commitments to assist the United States in the effort to stabilize the situation in Iraq. Third, the respective alliances, if properly understood, should be a factor that would help to mitigate tensions between South Korea and Japan, thereby reassuring both countries against the respective threats they may perceive from each other. The immediate challenge posed by rising Japan–ROK political tensions should be a matter of concern to the United States, which is uniquely positioned to mitigate such tensions while simultaneously easing South Korean and Japanese mutual threat perceptions by virtue of the existence of parallel alliance frameworks. This would also be the basis for a regionalized American security strategy in East Asia beyond the existing “hub and spokes” bilateral alliance framework. But this thinking also suggests the need to maintain and cultivate both alliances as a basis for building a foundation for regional cooperative security that a politically liberalized China and other partners might eventually be invited to join.

US STRATEGY IN EAST ASIA: IMPACT OF THE CHINA FACTOR

Eric Heginbotham

The views of Tokyo and Washington on China-related security issues appear to be converging in many ways. This convergence is symbolized by the willingness of both capitals to cite concerns about China explicitly in their joint communiqués, as well as by their recent decisions to co-locate bases, intensify joint training, and conduct at least limited joint planning. Okinawa's proximity to potential conflict spots in Northeast Asia makes it a particularly important base for China-related contingencies. Naval, ground, and, especially, air units operating from Okinawa are in a position to provide critical support for combat operations around Taiwan or elsewhere.

At the same time, the views of Tokyo and Washington on China are not always identical and may differ dramatically at times. Japanese officials have long feared becoming entangled in a conflict not of its own making between China and the United States (US). With the deterioration of the Sino-Japan relationship, however, the United States must now consider similar entanglements in disputes between China and Japan. Operationally, with Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) demands on Okinawan bases likely to rise even as the US presence is being challenged politically, the pressures resulting from limited basing space are likely to grow. At the same time, China's improving air and missile capabilities are making bases on Okinawa increasingly vulnerable, another consideration that will have to be weighed against the rising military value of the bases. These are the China-related issues with which Tokyo and Washington must grapple as they seek to realign their forces to serve their military and political purposes.

This paper is divided into three parts. The first addresses international political issues, examining trends in the US relationship with, and policy toward, China, developments in Tokyo's relationship with Beijing, and the degree to which the US and Japanese positions vis-à-vis China are likely to converge or diverge. The second section addresses China-related military issues, including both the advantages and disadvantages of Okinawa's proximity to potential military

contingencies and the incentives for US and Japanese forces to share bases in Okinawa. The final section offers summary comments, concluding that given the dynamic and changing international political and military circumstances (as well as evolving domestic political circumstances), a final solution for Okinawan bases is unlikely. The United States and Japan should instead focus on creating a process that will enable them to respond to shifting political and military imperatives.

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS: AMERICAN AND JAPANESE VIEWS OF CHINA

The US relationship with China is extraordinarily complex. Washington and Beijing share deep economic ties, recognize a variety of common interests, and are partners on political issues from North Korean nuclear weapons to counter-terrorism. At the same time, the two disagree on a number of other important issues, including the relative importance of democracy, sovereignty, and stability, as well as how to apply these values to places ranging from North Korea to Africa and South America. Washington and Beijing hedge against and compete with one another, even as they cooperate. No flashpoint is more dangerous than Taiwan, where the United States and China could, should the worst come to pass, find themselves at war with little or no warning. The relationship between Beijing and Tokyo is equally—or perhaps even more—complex. A history of cultural exchange and borrowing combined with the experience of war, territorial disputes, and extraordinary economic ties pulls the relationship in contradictory directions.

Washington and Tokyo share a set of critical common interests, not least of which is maintaining regional stability and defending Japan. But the relationship that each has with Beijing can—and often does—march to its own beat. Washington and Tokyo's specific interests with regard to China are not always identical, and both domestic politics and the idiosyncrasies of bilateral dynamics can act to drive their individual relationships with Beijing in divergent directions. For many years after the end of the Cold War, Japan enjoyed a relatively closer relationship with China than did the United States. More recently, however, Japan and China have engaged in a number of public (and sometimes bitter) disputes that have dragged the relationship to new lows, while Sino-US relations have recently been more stable and pragmatic. The point is not that this latter set of conditions is permanent or immutable, but that the dynamics of Sino-US and Sino-Japanese relations are often independent of one another, and that what Washington does at one point in time with regard to Beijing may not be well received in Tokyo and vice versa.

Hedging in the US Strategy toward China

The US–China relationship may not be as strong as it was in November 2004, when US Secretary of State Colin Powell described it as “the best relationship that the United States has had with China in over thirty years.”⁷¹ Tensions over trade have increased somewhat and the United States is now taking Beijing to the World Trade Organization (WTO) over export subsidies. Politically, Beijing and Washington are at odds over action on the Iran nuclear issue and China’s support for other pariah regimes in its quest for advantage in energy markets. From Beijing’s perspective, the US invasion of Iraq continues to raise doubts about how America’s future intentions and policies toward China might evolve. More recently, China’s anti-satellite (ASAT) test in January 2007 exposed some suspicions and disagreements on both sides about the military use of space. Nevertheless, bilateral relations are clearly not at a low point either. Washington has a cooperative relationship with Beijing in several areas, including most importantly the North Korea nuclear threat. Chinese leaders have proven unwilling to exert the pressure necessary to force North Korea’s capitulation, but they have conducted active diplomacy that has repeatedly delivered North Korea’s leaders to the Six-Party Talks working to resolve and head off this potential threat.

Whether good or bad, the current state of relations with Beijing is less important to security planners than is the structural uncertainty of future relations. With China’s future trajectory a necessarily unknown variable, the United States has adopted an explicit hedging strategy: an approach that seeks to draw China further into the international community by engaging it economically and politically, while taking measures to discourage it from adopting a more aggressive course. The balance between these two elements of hedging may shift over time in response to events, headlines, and domestic politics. However, given the importance of continuing to draw China further into the world community, together with the possibility that, for whatever reason, this effort may fail, the US is likely to keep the main pillars of this hedging framework in place for the foreseeable future. (The same, with some amendments, could be said of China’s policy toward the United States, but here we focus on the US perspective.)

US interests in engaging positively with China rest on several considerations. First is the trend of China’s integration with the global economy and its expanding involvement in international institutions. US engagement with Beijing can encourage China to continue down this path. The calls from former US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick for Beijing to act as a “responsible stakeholder” in international society reflected an effort to target engagement and maximize the likelihood of such an outcome. Specific phrases

come and go and the “stakeholder” language may or may not long survive Zoellick’s departure. Engagement with China on a similar range of issues, however, is likely to continue. In September 2006, US President George W. Bush and Chinese President Hu Jintao agreed to institutionalize a “US–China Strategic Economic Dialogue,” a discussion that is led, on the US side, by Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson. The US Treasury Department’s backing for a larger Chinese vote share in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demonstrates that the United States is willing to cede greater international authority in exchange for China’s agreement to abide by a growing range of international rules and norms.

Second, the United States has a variety of strategic interests, and China can be a partner in achieving national objectives where interests overlap. The 2006 *US National Security Strategy* establishes nine critical tasks for the United States, including three on which interests overlap significantly with Beijing’s: defeating global terrorism; preventing enemies from threatening the US and its allies with weapons of mass destruction; and, promoting global economic growth through free markets and trade.⁷² Washington and Beijing already conduct low-key cooperation on counter-terrorism, and China is a central partner on Korean proliferation issues. Economically, although the United States has several complaints about China’s position (especially on exchange rates, export subsidies, product safety, and intellectual property rights [IPR] enforcement), it also sees Beijing’s generally open position on trade and investment as providing a salutary example to Asia and the developing world.^{xi} A final set of factors underpinning the engagement aspects of the US hedging strategy is the international context and lack of viable alternatives. There is no support in Asia for a strategy based on the isolation or containment of China. Washington’s attention is currently focused on the Middle East and the global fight against terrorism. China looms large in American calculations of its global position, but few policymakers would allow it to divert attention from the hot war America still now faces in Iraq, or its emerging cold war with Iran. Beyond the weight of these strategic issues and the expectations of the American public, leaders in both political parties have taken public positions on Iraq policy, on which their reputations now ride. China, in other words, is an important but secondary issue and stability in the relationship has become a paramount concern.

^{xi} The level of incoming Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in China is, for example, far closer to that of the United States (or in proportional terms, Europe) than it is to the proportionally much smaller figures for Japan or Korea, and its bilateral trade is, relative to GDP, far higher than that of the latter two countries.

If engagement is likely to be an enduring feature of US policy toward China, deterrence and the maintenance of political and military options is equally likely to continue to backstop the American position. Diplomatic and military measures are designed to maximize options in the event that China's behavior changes for the worse and, more importantly, discourage Chinese leaders from undertaking such a shift in Beijing's foreign policy. The US hedging strategy is established most explicitly, though not particularly deftly, in the Pentagon's 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR).^{xii} In it, China, along with Russia and India, are highlighted as states at "strategic crossroads," whose future direction will "affect the future strategic position and freedom of action of the United States, its allies and partners." Subsequent text makes clear that, of the three, China is regarded as the source of greatest concern.^{xiii}

If well orchestrated and balanced, the two elements of the US hedging strategy, engagement and deterrence, may be complementary tools that contribute to a single outcome: the continued integration of China into international society. A powerful US military and diplomatic presence in Asia works to discourage adventurism on the part of Beijing, buying time for China's further integration into the international community. To the extent that the United States maintains military preponderance—and a demonstrated willingness to use it—even the discussion of certain military options in Beijing may be short-circuited. This deterrent presence, depending on how it is structured and employed, may, therefore, influence domestic Chinese politics and strengthen the hand of those who advocate reform at home and restraint abroad.

Chinese military capabilities are improving rapidly, and the US military posture must adjust.⁷³ The budgets of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) increased by an inflation-adjusted average of 9.8 percent between 1990 and 2005. The technological, organizational, and material base at the start of this period was, admittedly, largely archaic. Nevertheless, these budget increases, together with organizational reform of the procurement and other systems, has laid the groundwork for what is becoming a modern military. After contracting for the

^{xii} The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (hereafter QDR, 6 February 2006) is the first open official document to employ the term "hedging." In the QDR, hedging refers only to the negative (e.g., military preparedness and deterrent) aspects of the overall strategy, but as Evan Medeiros and others have observed, the larger two-part strategy (ideally, one of well calibrated engagement and deterrence) can be described as a hedging strategy. I use "hedging" in this latter sense of the word. See Evan Medeiros, "Strategy Hedging and the Future of Asia-Pacific Stability," *Washington Quarterly* (Winter 2005-2006).

^{xiii} China, with the "greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States," is given three times as much space as Russia or India in the QDR, and the litany of questions and complaints about Beijing's behavior makes it clear that China is a major focus of US security planning.

domestic co-production of Russian fourth-generation SU-27s in 1996, the Chinese aviation industry has apparently resolved initial problems and is (or will soon be) capable of producing significant quantities. The J-10, an indigenous design roughly comparable to the F-16, is also entering production. The PLA Navy's most recent two destroyers incorporate phased-array radars and are, at least in that respect, roughly comparable to the early US Aegis systems. The PLA has also deployed some 800 ballistic missiles opposite Taiwan.

In ten years, as these Chinese systems and American fifth-generation combat aircraft and next-generation naval ships come on-line, the United States will still enjoy a full one-generation lead in deployed military technology.^{xiv} This will, however, represent a narrowing of the technological military gap. Given the likely physical location of most conceivable Sino–American military flashpoints along China's periphery (and particularly across the Taiwan Strait), even these older systems will present new challenges for US planners. To maintain its deterrent capability, the United States is deploying a larger percentage of its total available air and, especially, naval forces in the Pacific.^{xv} In the future, other adjustments may be necessary, both in deployments and in military acquisition. Currently, for example, the navy's future plans call for littoral attack ships with only limited war-fighting capability against enemy fleets, an emphasis that may be challenged by the rise of Chinese naval capabilities.

The two elements of America's hedging strategy, engagement and deterrence, are designed to complement one another. Much, however, depends on how military forces are actually employed. Adequate US forces, deployed in secure locations within range of potential action and backed by reinforcements from the United States, serve an existential deterrent purpose. Beyond that, military-to-military engagement with China and military-related diplomacy can be used to enhance other aspects of confidence-building and a more general political engagement of China. A measure of preparation for possible hostilities will always be required to maintain the capability to prevail in the event that the worst—a war—does occur. However, military measures always carry political

^{xiv} Any discussion of “generations” of military hardware will, of necessity, involve rough estimates that are subject to debate. By 2015, it is likely that China may have deployed thousands of fourth-generation aircraft (though this is far from certain), while only a portion of current US combat aircraft have been replaced by F-22s and F-35s. Even if that is the case, however, many “fourth-generation” US aircraft, including the F-18E/F “Super Hornet,” incorporate features that make them, effectively, closer to fifth-generation than even the newest Chinese aircraft.

^{xv} The number of submarines based in the Pacific will rise from twenty-five to thirty, and the number of Pacific-based carriers will rise from five to six. Forces within the Pacific will also be pushed farther west, with the possible basing of a carrier in Hawaii. Currently all US-based Pacific carriers are ported in West coast bases.

significance, and overly forward-leaning preparations may be received in Beijing as a signal that US intentions are less than benign. America's forward presence can, in other words, help create the stable environment in which engagement can productively occur, but, if handled poorly, it has the potential to produce the opposite effect. Hence, calibrating America's strategy toward China will always be a delicate task.

Evolving Japanese Views and the US–Japan Alliance

The Japan–US alliance has evolved faster than any other Cold War-era American alliance. The alliance has taken on global relevance with the dispatch of Japanese forces to the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. In East Asia, cooperation has also expanded alliance functions. Notably, joint statements now include explicit reference to China as a concern, a change that reflects Japan's own willingness to identify China as a potential threat in its own defense planning. Both Japan's specific operational plans and joint US–Japan training exercises are now designed with China-specific scenarios in mind, even if the “enemy” is not identified as such.

During the 1990s, the United States encouraged Japan to identify China-related contingencies—and Taiwan contingencies in particular—as an alliance concern that could trigger an alliance response. In 1997, Japan took the first step in this direction with the inclusion in the Guidelines for US–Japan Defense Cooperation, which included a lengthy discussion of “cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security.”⁷⁴ Although neither China nor Taiwan was mentioned, the Guidelines opened the door to cooperation, depending on circumstances and a specific decision by the governments to do so in the actual event of a crisis. Another threshold was crossed in February 2005, when Taiwan was first mentioned explicitly and jointly by alliance handlers. The statement, at the conclusion of the Security Consultative Committee (SCC, or so-called “Two-plus-Two”) meetings between US and Japanese diplomatic and defense officials, specified that one of the two countries' common objectives was “encouraging the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait.”⁷⁵ The May 2006 SCC joint statement contained similar language.

The development of an alliance dialogue on China reflects changes within Japan itself as much as changes in the interaction between Japan and the United States. Japanese defense planners and politicians are increasingly willing to talk about a China as a potential security threat. The 2004 National Defense Program Guideline (NDPG, approved in December 2004) explicitly addresses these issues for the first time: “China, which has a major impact on regional security, continues to modernize its nuclear forces and missile capabilities as well as its

naval and air forces. China is also expanding its area of operation at sea. We will have to remain attentive to its future actions.”⁷⁶ The *East Asian Strategic Review 2006*, published by the think-tank of the Japan Defense Agency (JDA), the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), similarly devotes significantly greater space to the challenges posed by China than these annual reports have in past years. The 2006 report devotes four of seven paragraphs in its overview of “destabilizing factors in East Asia” to China, its military modernization, its relations with Taiwan, and its attitude toward Japan.⁷⁷ Foreign Minister Taro Aso and former opposition leader Seiji Maehara have been even more direct, saying that China poses a “real threat.”⁷⁸

These shifts in Japanese perception have enabled closer defense cooperation. The May 2006 SCC meeting concluded with a joint statement on realignment, which, among other things, called for the establishment of a joint training center and requires both sides to submit bilateral training plans.⁷⁹ Increasingly, the ground forces of the two countries cooperate, in addition to naval and air force elements. In 2002, for example, a 700-strong Western Army Infantry Regiment, charged with amphibious operations in defense of outer islands—which would include, most prominently, the Senkaku Islands—was formed in Nagasaki Prefecture, Kyushu. In January 2006, elements of this regiment received three weeks of intensive training in amphibious reconnaissance and assault training from US Marine Corps instructors at the Naval Air Station in Coronado and Camp Pendleton, California.⁸⁰

Role Reversal?

While US–Japanese military collaboration is clearly increasing, there has been something of a role reversal between the two in the larger bilateral political dialogue with and on China. For decades, Tokyo feared entanglement in US conflicts. During the 1990s, Washington encouraged Japan to be forthcoming on China-related security issues, while Tokyo was reticent, if not outright resistant. In 2005, however, it was Japan, according to some sources, that sought inclusion of Taiwan in the joint statement that followed the February SCC meeting.⁸¹ Today, if the shoe is not entirely on the other foot, such concerns exist in both capitals. A small but growing number of US security specialists are concerned that tensions between Japan and China, particularly over history and other symbolic issues, might draw the United States into conflicts that do not serve its interests.⁸² Several US Congressmen, including the former (Republican Henry Hyde) and late Congressman Tom Lantos, who served as the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, have urged an end to Japanese leadership worship at the Yasukuni Shrine.⁸³ In their words, they have urged Japan to look forward rather than backward.

At first blush, this situation may appear anomalous rather than enduring. In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and former Foreign Minister Taro Aso have moved to repair relations with China, and Beijing has reciprocated. In Washington, the Democratic Party's resurgence is likely to mark a worsening of trade tensions with Beijing that could, conceivably, spill over into the larger political relationship. But while the Sino–American relationship has always been marked by ups and downs (and by divisions between Congress and the Executive), something more fundamental appears to have changed in Tokyo. Japan has become a political player in Asian political–military politics, marking a fundamental turn away from its historic post-WWII posture. It has announced a joint security declaration with Australia on March 14, 2007, developed a strategic relationship with India (including nascent but growing military-to-military ties), and moved delicately, but visibly, toward developing security cooperation with officials in Taiwan. Tokyo's new discussion of an “arc of freedom and prosperity,” meanwhile, is as much an effort to highlight Japan's democratic leadership credentials (and China's lack thereof) as it is to enumerate a set of guiding values.⁸⁴

The point is not that Tokyo's geopolitical awakening will result in a secular worsening of the Sino–Japanese relationship, but that, unlike in past decades, the relationship is likely to see the same kinds of ups and downs as those between Washington and Beijing. These cycles of the relations of Tokyo and Washington with Beijing, however, will not necessarily coincide in time, magnitude, or cause. Moreover, with both Tokyo and Beijing relatively new to the great power game (or returning after a long absence), the dynamics of the relationship between the two may, for some time, be volatile—a condition that may be exacerbated further by proximity and historical rivalry. If these dynamics are new for Japanese and Chinese leaders, dealing with the consequences will be an equally new and challenging problem for US leaders. And nowhere do the new and evolving possibilities and challenges for the US–Japan alliance come together with greater salience than in Okinawa.

MILITARY DIMENSIONS: THE OPERATIONAL UTILITY OF OKINAWA

US military bases on Okinawa, increasingly shared with Japanese forces, remain critically important to the alliance. In thinking about the value of these and other bases, and how best to align and balance the basing structure, a variety of factors are relevant: the proximity to areas of possible military conflict; the effects of basing issues on joint training and inter-operability; the vulnerability of Okinawa and other bases to attack; and, the availability of alternative bases in Japan or elsewhere in the region. Some observations about each of these are offered below, followed by a discussion of the points of tension between them.

Proximity and Combat Operations

The proximity to possible military contingencies is Okinawa's greatest attraction. Okinawa provides the largest set of US and Japanese bases close to the site of key China-related contingencies, including the Taiwan Strait and the disputed Senkaku Islands. The advantages of proximity can vary tremendously depending on the types of units and missions involved, so the specific tasks to be accomplished must be considered in assessing the implications for the alignment and realignment of forces on the island. Also, proximity to China is also proximity from China. Depending on how Chinese military capabilities evolve over time, the advantages of nearness may be partly or entirely offset by the increasing vulnerability of bases on Okinawa to missile or air attack.

US forces on Okinawa can be deployed anywhere in the world. These forces are well positioned to respond to crises in Korea and are far closer to contingencies in the Middle East than are troops based in the United States. The unique advantage of basing on Okinawa, however, comes from the proximity of the bases to China-related scenarios. In this context, no flashpoint looms larger than Taiwan. With Ma Ying-jeou becoming president in May 2008, Taiwan crises have become less likely. If history is a guide, however, the dynamics across the Taiwan Strait could change quickly and unpredictably. Furthermore, although Washington and Beijing are exercising discipline in their current diplomatic approach to Taiwan and each other, political or international circumstances could produce different behavior with relatively little warning. In the case of Taiwan, the dynamics between key actors are far more complex than the sum of their parts and could produce outcomes that may not be initially favored by any of the parties.

US bases on Okinawa would play a critical role in any US–Taiwan contingency. At 457 nautical miles (nm) from the Taiwan Strait, Okinawa is far closer to Taiwan than bases on mainland Japan (e.g., Yokota at 1,197 nm), Guam (1,559 nm), or Hawaii (4,472 nm) (see Table 1). The specific military roles played by US forces on Okinawa during a crisis or war would depend on the problems faced and opportunities presented. Among the more likely possibilities: AWAC (Airborne Warning and Control) aircraft on Okinawa could provide coordination to US and Taiwanese air elements. Tankers from Okinawa would refuel planes flying toward Taiwan from elsewhere in the region (or extend the range of those flying from Okinawa). Okinawa-based P-3 and EP-3s would provide support for anti-submarine and electronic warfare operations. Fighters flying from Okinawa could react quickly to tactical situations in or around the Strait and recover quickly for subsequent missions. Bases on Okinawa might support the limited re-supply of naval forces deploying toward Taiwan, as they did during the crises of 1996–7 in the Strait. Finally, the marines of III MEF (Third Marine

Expeditionary Force) could be deployed quickly to Taiwan (after joining with transport and headquarters elements) for either combat operations or the evacuation of US citizens from Taiwan.

Table 6-1: Distance from Taiwan Strait to Median Line of Selected Cities/Bases (in nautical miles)

To Okinawa (Kadena AFB)	457
To Yokohama (Honshu)	1,197
To Guam (Andresen AFB)	1,559
To Hawaii (Hickam AFB)	4,472
To San Diego (Naval Station)	6,061
To Darwin (Northern Australia)	2,330

(Distance calculated from approximate north-south point of the median line (24 degrees 50 minutes North 119 degrees 59 minutes East)

The military and political situation across the Strait is evolving. If China continues to build up its missile, aircraft, and naval strength, the balance of power will erode from Taiwan's perspective and the importance of US support will increase correspondingly. The United States might choose to abandon this effort, especially if Taiwan refuses to bolster its own defenses; however, leaving Taiwan on its own would be politically difficult, even if it were strategically defensible. At the same time, Tokyo's own relationship with Taipei is deepening, and as SCC joint statements since 2005 have indicated, Japan may be willing to support US military operations in Taiwan. As the military challenge of defending Taiwan increases, the value of bases on Okinawa will rise by equal measure.

For Japan, an equally important China-related contingency is the defense of the Senkaku Islands or, if the islands are captured, their recovery. The 2004 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) specified for the first time that a response to the invasion of outlying islands is a critical task for the SDF. Operational plans have been drawn up and rehearsed for the re-conquest of captured islands.⁸⁵ Logistics and air support for such missions would be largely run out of Okinawa, although the plans call for forward (or tactical) logistical centers to be set up closer to the scene of the action. While the United States may not play any direct role in such conflicts, the US Marine Corps is already helping to train Japan's Western Infantry Regiment, which is designated as

Japan's amphibious assault force. To the extent that southern contingencies involving China increase in prominence for the SDF, the basing dilemmas in Okinawa are likely to grow more severe as both SDF and US forces seek politically sustainable basing locations on the island.

The advantages of proximity to likely contingencies vary depending on the type of unit and the specific scenario in question. For fighter aircraft involved in combat air patrols, for example, distance has an immediate effect on the amount of fuel they have available after arriving on station and, consequently, the length of time they can remain on patrol. That, in turn, affects how many patrols can be maintained in place at any one time and the ratio of friendly to enemy aircraft. Tankers can extend flight ranges and, therefore, patrol time per flight. But there are other limits. There may be a finite number of tankers. Fighter (and tanker) pilots can only fly a set number of hours before resting, and for a variety of reasons (having mostly to do with training practices), the ratio of pilots to aircraft cannot be significantly increased. The required maintenance times on aircraft also increase with longer flights. Even assuming unlimited tanker support, F-22s flying from Guam could keep only 60 percent as many combat air patrol sorties going over the Taiwan Strait as an equal number of F-22s flying from Okinawa.^{xvi}

For ground forces too, having support bases close to the theater can be important, but the proximity of the actual point of embarkation for the main landing force may be less important than in the case of fighter or support aircraft. Ground forces, of course, generally make a single round trip to the scene of battle, whereas combat aircraft make the commute daily. This, of course, oversimplifies the problem even as it captures an essential truth, and support bases must be considered. Needless to say, enormous differences in distance—like that between Okinawa and Taiwan (457 nm) and Hawaii and Taiwan (4,472 nm)—could slow a landing operation by a week to ten days. But even this delay may be relatively unimportant, depending on, for example, the overall preparation time for an operation. In an emergency, ground forces (particularly infantry or other light forces) can often be flown in close to the area of operations. And in a larger strategic sense, most of America's allies and partners in the region, including both South Korea and Taiwan, are relatively

^{xvi} Openly available data on mission profiles, fuel consumption, etc., indicates that 126 F-22s operating from Guam would be able to keep three combat air patrols of two aircraft each over the Strait, while the same number flying from Okinawa would be able to keep five. With the same number of SU-27s, the Chinese air force, flying from nearby bases, would be able to keep six patrols over the area. It is, however, likely that the PLA Air Force could deploy significantly more aircraft to the area, placing an even greater premium on the ability of US forces to maximize the number of sorties generated by their units. I am grateful to John Stillion of the Rand Corporation for providing the framework and parameters for these calculations.

strong in ground forces, but weak in air and naval strength. This has produced a *de facto* division of labor, reflected in US global realignment plans, that emphasizes the ability of the United States to quickly bring significant air and naval forces to bear, while relying primarily on allies to provide the bulk of ground combat power.

These observations are not meant to be definitive. Likely scenarios must be modeled in detail—and then discounted for uncertainty—before firm conclusions can be drawn about the number and type of forces that should be maintained on Okinawa. However, they do tentatively suggest the importance of maintaining substantial and survivable air bases on Okinawa and the possibility of further realignment in marine basing.^{xvii} A marine realignment would not necessarily involve a further net movement of troops off the island, but would rather reconsider the overall package of marine assets that should be maintained on Okinawa.

Joint Basing (Co-location): Military, Utility, and Political Implications

The US forces in Okinawa provide opportunities for co-location with Japanese SDF elements, thereby facilitating joint training (and, potentially, joint planning and operations). Co-location is a major theme of the new basing plans for US forces in Japan.

During the October 2005 meeting of the Security Consultative Committee (SCC), both US and Japanese officials agreed to increase the co-location of forces, joint training, and the ability to conduct joint operations. This is not driven in any narrow sense by China, but with both Washington and Tokyo considering various China-related scenarios, it is clearly an important consideration. Given the increasing military demands on shrinking space in Okinawa, as well as their proximity to China-related contingencies, the motivations and opportunities for co-location on Okinawa are particularly salient.

The US Army's Japan headquarters will be upgraded with the transfer of the I Corps Headquarters from Fort Lewis (Washington) to Camp Zama (near Tokyo), and the headquarters of Japan's Central Readiness Force will establish

^{xvii} For one study that does model combat across the Taiwan Strait and highlights the importance of bases on Okinawa to military outcomes, see David A. Shlapak, David T. Orletsky, and Barry Wilson, *Dire Strait: Military Aspects of the China–Taiwan Confrontation and Options for U.S. Policy* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2000).

itself at Zama by 2012. Japan's Air Defense Command and associated units will move to the US Yokota Air Force Base outside Tokyo. In Okinawa, Japanese ASDF (Air Self-Defense Force) elements have been using the US Kadena Air Force Base (AFB) for limited training; and, the May 2006 SCC document specifies the use of Kadena AFB for joint training and opens the door for US aircraft from Kadena (and those from Misawa AFB and Iwakuni Naval Air Station [NAS]) to participate in joint training on Japanese bases. The deployment of additional Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) elements to Okinawa is being considered, which would open the possibility of increased opportunities for joint training between those units and US Marine Corps elements remaining on the island.

Increased co-location and intensified joint training is all part of an effort to make the US–Japan alliance a more equal, comprehensive, and globally oriented partnership. Both sides would benefit from the new training opportunities, with Japanese operators in particular able to learn from their American counterparts. Although joint training could take place outside of Japan, it would be much harder and less likely. The advantage of US basing in Japan obviously applies throughout the islands and is not restricted to Okinawa. But with the SDF increasingly focused on its southern missions (and with its center of gravity moving in that direction), Okinawa's value in this regard is high and growing.

Vulnerability

Balanced against various advantages of US basing in Okinawa (including proximity and co-location) is the potential vulnerability of these bases. This is both the reverse face of proximity—Okinawa is closer to China and therefore easier to hit than other US bases in Asia—and a function of growing Chinese military capabilities. China has deployed hundreds of cruise missiles (up to 800 by some counts, though great uncertainty remains) opposite Taiwan. The accuracy of these missiles continues to improve. As suggested earlier, China is also on the cusp of deploying significant numbers of fourth-generation combat aircraft, and most of these (including the J-10 and J-11) are likely to have ground attack capabilities.

Both missiles and aircraft could be used against bases on Okinawa. Depending on the types of weapons used and the defenses in place, these might destroy aircraft on the ground, crater the runways, or destroy other critical parts of the infrastructure (e.g., repair facilities or fuel storage facilities). The challenges posed would grow significantly if China deployed cruise missiles, added terminal guidance to its existing ballistic missiles, acquired (so-called) precision guided bombs, or developed effective area attack or denial bombs or warheads (i.e., cluster or scatter weapons). Improved or more numerous Airborne Warning

and Control System (AWACS) capabilities and aerial refueling would also complicate the task of wing and airbase commanders.

Several measures, including hardening aircraft shelters and enhancing air and missile defenses, could mitigate these challenges and extend the useful life of the bases, but all things being equal, the vulnerability of the bases is also likely to rise. It is unlikely that Okinawan bases will become untenable in the near- or mid-term (i.e., ten-year) future, but modestly rising vulnerability will almost certainly encourage a diversified approach to basing. Okinawa will thus play an important role in US and Japanese planning, but it should be considered as part of a larger network designed with resilience and flexibility in mind.

Alternatives to Okinawa?

US military leaders have recently emphasized capabilities rather than location. Both operational and political considerations, though, suggest that forward US deployment in Asia will remain important for the foreseeable future. The total potential basing capacity for US forces in the region therefore remains another variable in Okinawa's military future. Some room remains for the United States to increase its troop presence in the region without tapping Okinawa, or alternatively, to redeploy forces from Okinawa to other locations. But there are a variety of limits on this potential.

Guam, a US territory with a lower population density than Okinawa, would be the most likely recipient of forces relocating from Okinawa, or new forces relocating from the United States. But the currently scheduled redeployment of 8,000 marines will more than double the total military presence on the island and, with dependents, will add 10 percent to the island's total population. In the short term, then, the potential disruption to the economy and population discourages further relocation of forces from Okinawa to Guam. From an operational perspective, Guam may prove to be the best alternative to Okinawa, but it has drawbacks. As observed earlier, it is more than three times as far from Taiwan and other contingencies, and it would increase the costs (both in terms of money, time, and coordination) of joint US–Japanese training. Other Asia–Pacific states might agree to base US forces. Australia is probably the leading candidate, although Singapore is also a possibility. But both countries are even farther from Taiwan: Darwin is about 2,330 nm from Taiwan and Singapore around 1,705 nm away. While basing in any of these locations would add flexibility and could be important supplemental locations, none is likely to replace or supplant bases on Okinawa.

CONCLUSION

Other chapters in this volume illustrate the complexity of basing issues vis-à-vis domestic Japanese and local Okinawan politics. This chapter suggests that the international context of these issues is no less complex and may be evolving just as quickly. On the one hand, China looms as a rising consideration in America's Asian defense planning, as it does in Japanese thinking on security issues. To some extent, there is convergence of strategic views. Both consider Beijing to be at least a potential threat and seek to hedge militarily against its future behavior, even as they engage it politically and economically. Okinawa, for its part, houses bases that are closer to the potential scenes of conflict than any others. As such, the island's military importance grows in direct proportion to the weight that China scenarios are accorded in Washington and Tokyo's defense planning.

For every generalization outlined above, however, there is a potential wrinkle as ongoing political and operational developments place different imperatives in tension with one another. Strategically, despite a certain type of convergence, the individual relationships of Washington and Tokyo with Beijing largely follow their own logic and are often out of sync with one another. Operationally, there are a number of questions lingering about the future status of Okinawan bases. The value of the bases to both the US and Japanese militaries is rising as Taiwan and other contingencies become more challenging. But the same developments that are complicating the Taiwan and other scenarios—primarily improving Chinese capabilities—also make bases on Okinawa more vulnerable to attack. As far as relocation and space are concerned, the incentives for moving SDF elements to Okinawa are increasing, even as local expectations for the return of military lands have sharpened. Finally, strategic and operational questions come together as military incentives for US–Japanese co-location and collaboration are increasing, while at the same time, co-location and integration heighten the dangers to both of entanglement in future crises not of their own making.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to reconcile these various tensions, but clearly they still must be considered as US and Japanese officials meet to discuss the further realignment of forces in Okinawa. There is no imminent “resolution” of Okinawa-related alliance issues, and anyone who believes there is will likely be sorely disappointed. Needs and challenges will continue to evolve, and it will behoove policymakers to think in terms of improving the process of Okinawa policymaking, rather than looking toward a single solution for the specific problems currently bedeviling the alliance.

**THE DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW
INITIATIVE:
THE JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE**

Takashi Kawakami

The Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) was finalized on 1 May 2006, when the US–Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) released its final report on the topic, *The US–Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*. Having taken more than three years to conclude, the report describes the future footprint of US military bases in Japan and provides recommendations for the means to improve US–Japan bilateral security and defense cooperation, as well as to realign US forces on Okinawa. The May 2006 agreement also stressed the importance of strengthening and improving the effectiveness of bilateral security and defense cooperation in such areas as ballistic missile defense, bilateral contingency planning, information sharing and intelligence cooperation, and international peace cooperation activities, as well as the need to improve interoperability between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and US forces, as outlined in the recommendations on bilateral roles, missions, and capabilities (RMC) summarized in the SCC’s October 2005 interim report on the US–Japan Alliance.

This essay first analyzes how the Global Posture Review (GPR) has progressed, describing the background and details on this endeavor. Next, it discusses how and why the DPRI started, as well as the process that ultimately culminated in the SCC’s joint statement of 19 February 2005 and the interim report released on 29 October 2005. Finally, the essay examines the meaning of the common strategic objectives and revision of roles, missions, capabilities, and force posture of the US forces and SDF that were announced in the joint statement in October 2005.

BACKGROUND

The DPRI was initiated based on an agreement reached by the US–Japan Security Consultative Committee on 16 December 2002. Japan viewed the DPRI and transformation of the US military and repositioning of Japan’s bases as the

Main Operating Bases (MOB) as an ideal opportunity to reduce the burdens on its municipalities that host US troops, while still maintaining and strengthening Japan's deterrence capabilities.^{xviii} Throughout the DPRI process, it was more or less the Japanese side that took the initiative and engaged in the negotiations to achieve their goals.

However, the DPRI was deadlocked from July 2004 to September 2004. While this was primarily due to a lack of policy coordination among relevant agencies in the Japanese government, other factors such as domestic politics, including the debate over deployment of SDF troops to the Indian Ocean and Iraq, also distracted the Japanese government from focusing on issues related to US-Japan alliance transformation. In particular, an internal bureaucratic struggle between those who favored a "small package" (i.e., personnel in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or MOFA) and those who supported a "total package," (i.e., staff in the Japan Defense Agency, or JDA) was a key factor in the deadlock.^{xix}

In September 2004, Prime Minister Koizumi and his cabinet finally began to exert pressure in encouraging the bureaucracy to renew its efforts in the DPRI process. Prime Minister Koizumi announced that the main focus of the Government of Japan (GOJ) in regard to the realignment of US Forces in Japan would be to "maintain the deterrent power of US forces and reduce the burden on the people of Japan," and negotiations were conducted thereafter based on these criteria. In addition, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and National Security Council (NSC) Senior Country Director for Asia Michael Green also intervened to accelerate the process.

^{xviii} In addition, as the Republic of Korea (ROK)'s foreign policy gradually shifted from the United States to China, the United States had become more concerned about whether their bases in the ROK would be definitively usable at times of crisis, such as one in the Taiwan Strait. As a result, the United States felt the need to gradually reduce the size of its bases in the ROK and instead increase its dependence on the US bases in Japan.

^{xix} The Ministry of Foreign Affairs took a minimalist approach and proposed what they called a "small package." Yukio Takeuchi, former Director-General of the Treaty Bureau who then became vice minister, played a central role in creating MOFA's position in the negotiation. He and his so-called "Treaty Mafia" within MOFA were hesitant about revising US-Japan security relations and hoped to minimize the extent of the US force realignment in Japan. In this light, accepting relocation of the First U.S. Army Corps to Camp Zama was interpreted by MOFA as a measure that goes far beyond the scope of Article 6 of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States. Thus, MOFA insisted on shared use of Yokota Air Base by both the US military and SDF. The Japan Defense Agency, on the other hand, advocated a "total package" approach that attempted to redefine the roles of the US-Japan security alliance, requesting a large-scale return of US bases to Japan in exchange for Japan's increasing role within the alliance. Takemasa Moriya, a politically strong vice-minister who played a critical role in positioning JDA in the negotiation with the United States, perceived this as a great opportunity and sought to transform the US military presence in Japan at Japan's initiative. His position was supported by other senior JDA officials, including Chisato Yamauchi, Deputy Director General of the Defense Policy Bureau.

In October 2004, US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura agreed to review the US-Japan alliance by first discussing overall mutual strategic objectives, with specific discussions to follow on how best to realign US forces in Japan. Since then, bilateral consultation has progressed in the following stages: 1) common strategic objectives, 2) roles and missions of Japan's Self-Defense Forces and the US forces, and 3) force and base realignment plans.

As the DPRI proceeded, the Japanese government increasingly began to view the negotiations as a major opportunity to reduce the burden on local communities in Japan that host US bases while still maintaining the deterrence capability of the US-Japan alliance. In the Japanese context, the burden of hosting US forces refers to the danger of the possibility of an accident, as evidenced by the actual crash of a US Marine helicopter on the campus of Okinawa International University, crimes committed by US soldiers, including the rape of an elementary school girl, and the loud, disruptive noises caused by night-landing practice (NLP) and other operations. In general, any relocation of bases and troops is not simple. Besides strategic concerns, the environmental impact, noise and pollution level, and community safety all have to be addressed. Without doing so, just moving the bases will not be sufficient to alleviate the consequences on Okinawa residents in the long term. In particular, both governments have long recognized the desire of Okinawan residents to have US force relocations commence quickly, but Okinawa is still the major US logistics base in the Western Pacific. Finding a balance between maintaining deterrence and capabilities while reducing the burden on local populations will remain difficult.

The DPRI proceeded in three steps: establishment of a common strategic agenda, definition of the roles, missions, and capabilities of both Japan and the US, and the finalization of the plan for realigning the US forces in Japan.

EVALUATION OF THE DPRI PROCESS

"Strengthening deterrence" and "reducing burdens" were the slogans that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and President George W. Bush used to advance the DPRI. Japan's deterrence was strengthened first by setting forth the strategic objectives that were common to both Japan and the United States. By doing so, Japan was effectively assured of continuing military support from the US during any contingencies or crises in the future. Secondly, Japan and the United States redefined their respective roles and missions, wherein Japan effectively redefined the *1997 US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation* to expand their scope to a global one. Thirdly, as both the US military and SDF go through

their respective force posture realignment, headquarter functions will be strengthened, allowing shared military use of facilities between the US military and SDF. The two governments decided to also pursue "reduction of the burden" through the process of realigning US forces in Japan.

Common Strategic Objectives

On February 19, 2005, the SCC proclaimed a set of "common strategic objectives." As the US Secretaries of State and Defense, Japanese Foreign Minister, Minister of State, and Director-General for the Japan Defense Agency discussed the new security environment, emerging threats such as international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery were revealed to be common and major challenges. They also recognized that deepening the interdependence among nations in a global community means that such threats can affect the security of nations worldwide, including the United States and Japan.

In East Asia, eleven common strategic objectives were identified, including encouraging the People's Republic of China (PRC) to improve the transparency of its military affairs, supporting the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait, and supporting the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. There were also five global common strategic objectives identified, including the promotion of fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in the international community, and further consolidation of the US–Japan partnership in international peace cooperation activities and development assistance to promote peace, stability, and prosperity worldwide.

Roles, Missions and Capabilities

On October 29, 2005, the SCC released the interim report, *US–Japan Alliance: The Revolution and Reorganization for the Future*.^{xx} The report was divided into sections on "the roles, capabilities and division of capabilities" and the realignment of US forces in Japan. When Japan and the United States redefined their bilateral alliance to serve as "the cornerstone of the peace and security in the Asia-Pacific," the two countries also revised the bilateral guidelines for defense cooperation as a concrete way to operationalize such a vision. As a result, the revised *Guidelines for US–Japan Defense Cooperation* that were announced in September 2007 placed greater emphasis on regional security and expanded the scope of the "Far East" stipulated in Article Six of the *Mutual*

^{xx} The US Department of Defense contends that the report was intended to be the final list of agreed upon principles for transformation of the US–Japan alliance, and that no substantial part of the report was subject to re-negotiation.

Security Treaty between Japan and the United States to “situations in the areas surrounding Japan” (so-called *shuhen jitai*). The role of the Self-Defense Forces was also expanded accordingly.⁸⁶

However, particularly after the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, the supporting role that Japan plays for the United States has gone beyond what was defined in the 1997 Guidelines.^{xxi} The Roles, Missions and Capabilities (RMC) section of the *US-Japan Alliance: The Revolution and Reorganization for the Future* attempts to tackle the areas that had not been addressed in the 1997 Guidelines to strengthen the functionality of the US-Japan alliance. To respond and adjust to the new security environment, the report defined the focus areas as: 1) defense of homeland and responses to the areas in the situation surrounding Japan, and 2) arrangement for the improvement of the international security environment. The report confirms the basic understanding of those focus areas. For the defense of the homeland and responses to situations in the areas surrounding Japan, the report lists the roles to be played respectively by the JSDF and US forces, the role of the JSDF in supporting US operations, and US-Japan joint operations. To achieve a better international security environment, the report contends that Japan and the United States should cooperate strategically. It also calls for improved bilateral coordination given the importance of flexibility.

In addition, fifteen items, including air defense, ballistic missile defense (BMD), the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), counter-terrorism, humanitarian relief, patrolling of US bases in Japan and surrounding areas, use of Non-combat Evacuation Operation (NEO), as well as the use of ports, airports, roads, water space, airspace and band-width frequency were listed as "examples of activities that need improvement in the bilateral relationship for security and defense cooperation between the two countries." Furthermore, the report mentioned the following as "indispensable measures to be strengthened to complement these activities (during times of peace):" 1) close and continuous policy and operational coordination; 2) progress in bilateral cooperation planning; 3) improvement in information sharing and information cooperation; 4) improvement in interoperability; 5) expansion of training opportunities in Japan and the United States; 6) shared use of military facilities by the JSDF and US forces; and 7) cooperation in ballistic missile defense.

^{xxi} This includes activities by the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) in the Indian Ocean under the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law and those by the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) in Iraq (completed in June 2007) and the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) in Kuwait and Qatar (still in operation as of October 2007) under the Iraq Reconstruction Assistance Special Measures Law.

US Force Realignment

In the SCC's October 2005 report, specifically the section addressing the issues related to the realignment of US forces in Japan, four major points were raised:

- Strengthening headquarters' functions and promoting "jointness" between US forces and the Japan Self-Defense Forces.
- Promoting shared use of military facilities.
- Realigning US Marines Corps forces in Okinawa and relocating Futenma Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS).
- Relocating carrier aircraft from Atsugi Air Station to Iwakuni Air Station.

1) Strengthening command functions

The enhancement of command functions forms a critical pillar for the operational integration between JSDF and US forces. Specifically, the report referred to "establishment of the bilateral joint operations coordination center (BJOCC)," the "co-location of the Air Command" (Yokota AFB), and "enhancement of the command function of the US Army headquarters" (Camp Zama) as the three target areas.

Establishment of the BJOCC to help enhance the integration of joint operation coordination in Yokota AFB, the headquarters for US forces in Japan, is particularly important. The BJOCC will enable the JSDF and US forces in Japan to ensure both connectivity and interoperability, which is vital in the context of the redefined roles and missions between Japan and the United States stipulated by the DPRI. The BJOCC is expected to play important functions, such as providing for information sharing among US forces and JSDF and coordinating joint operations.

The "co-location of air command" constitutes the relocation of the Air Defense Command (ADC) of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) in Fuchu, Tokyo to Yokota AFB, co-locating it with the US Fifth Air Force headquarters (HQ). This allows the ADC and Fifth Air Force HQ to share information in contingencies such as an enemy missile launch and intrusion into airspace, heightens the operational cooperation of missile defense to a control level, and strengthens burden sharing for air defense in emergencies. Censor information will be provided through the BJOCC that will be established at Yokota AFB.

Further, "improvement of the US Army headquarters function" was achieved through the decision to transfer the realigned US Army First Corps Headquarters, currently located in Seattle, Washington, to Camp Zama in

Kanagawa Prefecture. This will provide the US Army Headquarters in Camp Zama with the capacity to form a Joint Task Force (JTF). The JTF is formed for specific missions ordered by the joint force commander and is extremely effective for narrowly-defined missions. For instance, in the disaster in Bangladesh in 1991 and the earthquake in Indonesia in 2004, the Third Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) in Okinawa was designated to be the JTF and executed relief operations. Currently, the JTF is independent from the commanders of each military service and operates only at the orders of the Commander of US Pacific Command (PACOM). In peacetime, the commanders of the First Army Corps, the Seventh Fleet, and the III MEF are designated in advance as potential candidates for the commander of the Joint Task Force (CJTF).

In addition, the Central Readiness Force (CRF) headquarters of the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) will be established at Camp Zama. The CRF headquarters centrally controls mobile operations and other specialized units, as well as serves as the force provider for other regional units at time of emergencies. For example, special force units will be mobilized if there is a guerrilla command invasion and a consequent need to defeat these enemy forces. If more forces are necessary, the 101st Special Operation Force, composed of three infantry battalions, will be dispatched.

The co-location of the First Army Corps headquarters and the GSDF CRF headquarters at Camp Zama will enhance the coordination, information sharing, and cooperation between the GSDF and the US Army. Moreover, it will allow the CJTF to conduct joint operations with the GSDF more easily.

2) Joint use of military facilities and areas by the SDF and US Military

Concerning joint use of military facilities and areas by the SDF and US forces, the two governments are examining the possibility of the joint use of Yokota AFB, Camp Zama, Kadena AFB, Kanoya and Chitose, Hyakuri, Komatsu, Nyutabaru, and Tsuiki Air Bases of the SDF, as well as Misawa AFB. If the SDF and US forces move into the direction of further operational integration in the future, information sharing and interoperability will improve between the two forces and joint use of facilities by the SDF and US military will increase as a result.

3) Realignment and relocation of US Marine Corps presence in Okinawa

During the DPRI process, the US and Japanese governments decided to substantially realign the US Marine forces in Okinawa. This decision was based on the judgment reached by both governments after they considered how to balance the maintenance of a deterrence force with a reduction of burdens on local communities hosting US forces in Japan.

To help alleviate the burden of hosting US forces in Okinawa, the two governments decided that Futenma MCAS would relocate to the coastal area in Camp Schwab and that the III MEF headquarters would move to Guam. The remainder of the Marine Corps based in Okinawa would be reorganized into a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB). In addition, it was decided that 8,000 members of the III MEF, along with their 9,000 family members, would move to Guam in accordance with these changes, alleviating the burden on the local community near Futenma significantly.⁸⁷ Furthermore, when relocation of Futenma MCAS within Okinawa has been completed, then six additional facilities (Maki Port Supply Base (Camp Kinser), Camp Zukeran, Camp Kuwae, Naha Harbor Facility, and Army POL Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1) would be returned to Okinawa. This will amount to returning the equivalent of 1,500 hectares of land, which will be a significant reduction in the physical burden on Okinawa.

To maintain existing deterrence capabilities, however, the two governments decided that the Thirty-First Marine Expeditionary Unit (31MEU) would remain stationed in Okinawa because of two key operational reasons. The first is the response time that would be required for the Marines in case of regional contingencies. If they are relocated to the station in mainland Japan, then it would delay their arrival at these potential flashpoints by one or two days, which could be critical in time of combat.^{xxii}

Another reason is the Marines' operational need to keep the helicopter unit currently based at Futenma MCAS located near combat troops. It is difficult to disperse the various functions of combat units over a geographical area because this would delay staging activities, making it impossible for the Marines to mobilize within six hours and thus decreasing their overall readiness.

^{xxii} From Okinawa, the 31MEU can be deployed to Taiwan and the Korean peninsula within a day. From mainland Japan—Camp Fuji, for instance—it takes them two days to arrive at the Korean peninsula, three days to Taiwan. In addition, if a rescue mission in a Taiwan Strait crisis becomes necessary or if China plans to come ashore to islands such as Miyako and Senkaku in case of Taiwan contingency, the 31MEU would respond in cooperation with the SDF. In such emergencies, delay of one or two days can make a difference.

4) Transfer of the Carrier Aircraft Wing

Finally, based on the agreement reached by Japan and the United States, the Carrier Aircraft Wing (including the carrier surveillance aircrafts and E2C flight group) that is currently stationed at Air Facility Atsugi will move to Air Station Iwakuni after the runway transfer project is complete.

From the perspective of alleviating the burden on the host community, this will considerably reduce the burdens on residents in Atsugi, while at the same time increasing burdens on Iwakuni residents. To help compensate for the anticipated increase of burdens for residents in Iwakuni, the EP3, OP3 and UP3 flight squadron of the MSDF will transfer from Atsugi to Iwakuni.

Balance between “Deterrence” and “Reducing Burden”

The DPRI process demonstrated the difficulty in balancing between “reducing the burden” on local communities that host US bases and “maintaining deterrence” against threats. The following chart summarizes how the US and Japan finalized the balance sheet between these two objectives (Table 7-1).

Table 7-1: Balance sheet - DPRI Process

	Maintain/strengthen deterrence	Reduce burdens
M A I N L A N D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moving reorganized I Corps headquarters to Camp Zama ● Establishing Ground Self-Defense Force Central Readiness Force Command headquarters in Camp Zama ● Co-locating Japan's Air Defense Command with the headquarters of the US 5th Air Force at Yokota Air Base ● Establishing a bilateral and joint operations coordination center at Yokota Air Base ● Sharing X-Band radar data with the Government of Japan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Δ Relocating CVW-5 squadrons from Atsugi Air Facility to Marine Corps Air Station in Iwakuni Δ Relocating US Marine Corps CH-53D helicopters in Iwakuni to Guam Δ Using aircraft from three US facilities (Kadena, Misawa, and Iwakuni) to participate in relocated training conducted at Chitose, Misawa, Hyakuri, Momatsu, Tsuiki, and Nyutabaru Δ Relocating CVW squadrons, the carrier jet, and E-2C squadrons from Asugi Air Facility to MCAS Iwakuni Air Station
O K I N A W A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using Camp Hansen for GSDF training ● Using Kadena Air Base for ASDF bilateral training with US forces ▲ Relocating the III MEF headquarters to Guam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relocating the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) headquarters to Guam ○ Relocating 8,000 III MEF personnel and their 9,000 dependents from Okinawa to Guam Δ Relocating the Futenma Replacement Facility to Henoko-Saki Δ Basing the KC130 squadron at MCAS Iwakuni with its headquarters Δ Returning the following six facilities, totally or partially: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Camp Kuwae: Total return 2. Camp Zukeran: Partial return 3. MCAS Futenma: Total return 4. Makiminato Service Area: Total return 5. Naha Port: Total return 6. Army POL Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No.1: Total return

LEGEND: ● = maintain or strengthen deterrence
 ▲ = might reduce deterrence
 Δ = ambiguous
 ○ = reduce burdens

To evaluate the force posture realignment from the Japanese perspective, the DPRI agreements must be examined in the form of a set of balance sheets that compare the measures to maintain or strengthen deterrence and the measures to reduce burdens on the host community for the US forces in Japan.

First, in the area of deterrence, Japan and the United States sought to maintain the existing level of deterrence by strengthening command functions, promoting increased joint facility usage by the SDF and US forces, positioning the X-band radar system in Shariki, and realigning US Marine forces in Okinawa. In particular, the decision by the two governments to keep the 31MEU in Okinawa was deliberately made to maintain the existing level of deterrence, responding to concerns that relocation of the III MEF headquarters to Guam may negatively impact deterrence.

Regarding reducing the burden on local communities, the central and southern parts of Okinawa clearly benefit from the May 2006 bilateral agreement. The transfer of 8,000 US Marines and 9,000 of their family members to Guam would be a tangible reduction of local burdens.^{xxiii} In addition, the return of the MCAS Futenma, as well as part or all of the US military facilities in the southern part of Okinawa, would be a burden reduction for residents of mid-southern Okinawa.^{xxiv} However, such a reduction of burdens in the south would cause an increase in the burdens on the northern part of Okinawa. In particular, municipalities such as Nago City (the destination for the Futenma relocation facility) would have to bear a considerable increase in their burden.^{xxv} Therefore, to even out the burdens for local communities, the realignment of US forces in Japan would be a physical barter to transfer between US and SDF assets through dispersion. Further, the government has enacted the US Force Realignment Law (*Beigun Saihen Ho*), which aims to eliminate negative impacts through funding and dialogues and stipulates other measures that would allow local communities to be compensated for any increases in their burden of hosting US forces after the realignment has been implemented.

^{xxiii} “Local” in this case refers to local communities that currently host the facilities such as Camp Courtney, Camp Hansen, Futenma Air Base, Camp Zukeran, and Maki Port Supply Base (Camp Kinser).

^{xxiv} Full or partial return of six US military facilities in the southern region of the prefecture include: Camp Kuwae (full return); Camp Zukeran (partial return); Futenma Air Base (full return); Maki Port Supply Base (full return); Naha harbor facilities (full return); and Army POL Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1 (full return).

^{xxv} Affiliated municipalities include Nago City, Ginoza Village, Higashi Village, and Kin-cho.

Implementing DPRI to Improve the US-Japan Alliance— from Japan’s Perspective

The US Force Realignment Law was approved by the Diet in December 2006 and is composed of two elements. One is for the host community and requests 51 billion yen for the 2009 budget. The Government of Japan (GOJ) will provide subsidies to the host community aimed at improving the overall quality of life for Japanese citizens, enhancing local industry, and addressing the needs of Japanese employees working at US bases. The subsidy will be paid proportionally to the host community accepting the US Force realignment. If the host community’s burden increases substantially because of the realignment, then GOJ’s subsidy will respond accordingly. Ten percent of the subsidy will be paid if the host community accepts the agreement and 30 percent of the subsidy will be paid if the community starts an environmental assessment for the facility maintenance. Thirdly, if the community initiates actions necessary to achieve the realignment, then the balance of the subsidy will be paid.

The other pillar is Japan’s payment of \$6.09 billion out of the total cost of \$10.27 billion to move 8,000 Marines and their 9,000 dependents from Okinawa to Guam. Of that sum, \$2.8 billion would be in direct cash contributions to jump-start the move, “recognizing the strong desire of Okinawa residents that such force relocation be realized rapidly,” according to the May 2006 *Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*. The rest of Japan’s contribution includes \$1.5 billion for special investments and \$1.79 billion in long-term loans.

Another critical problem for GOJ is to cooperate with the fifty-five host communities, which is key to implementing the realignment of US forces and thus assuring stable and flexible use of US bases in Japan. Host communities, even though they were not opposed to the substance of the proposed relocation plan, were offended that the plan was agreed between the two governments without meaningful consultation with them. In other words, they believed they had “lost face.” This put the individuals who were willing to cooperate with the GOJ in a difficult position, while those who had objected to the plans gained an advantage.

The base realignment package, including the delayed relocation of Futenma Air Base, is meeting strong opposition from virtually all host communities in Japan. The realignment plan intends to reduce the burden on host communities, especially in Okinawa, while maintaining deterrence. But opposition from host communities and Washington’s strong will to secure the DPRI agreement could threaten to derail the realignment package.

For dealing with the host community in Okinawa, the GOJ has started consultation meetings between the GOJ and main host communities in Okinawa.^{xxvi} In addition to establishing the coordination mechanism between the GOJ and major host communities in Okinawa, the GOJ will also prepare a subsidy for the host community in order to accept the increase in burden resulting from the US force realignment.

When the DPRI is finally completed, it will help strengthen the US-Japan alliance. Even if Japan's deterrence increases, its ultimate self-interest may not be favored as long as it simply obeys the US strategy. Thus, Japan can help create a more conducive strategic environment for itself if it becomes a more equal co-manager of the alliance. But to attain that outcome, Japan will have to create and promote her own strategy for dealing with the US.

As the second largest economy in the world, Japan must play a responsible role in the international community. Representing the largest economies worldwide, US and Japanese leaders should take the initiative in designing a national strategy and in establishing a system and environment to pursue their mutual strategic goals.

^{xxvi} The members of the consultation meeting are: Defense Minister, Foreign Minister, Finance Minister, Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishers of Japan, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Japan, Minister of the Environment, Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, Mayor of Nago City. The chiefs of the villages of Ginoza, Touseon and the Mayor of Kincyo.

**CHANGING ROLES AND MISSIONS IN THE
JAPAN-US ALLIANCE:
DEFENSE COOPERATION UNDER THE
DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE
AND FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Sugio Takahashi

The Japan–US alliance was redefined during the late 1990s. Through the April 1996 *US–Japan Joint Declaration on Security* by Japan Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and United States (US) President William J. Clinton and the revision of the *Guidelines for Japan–US Defense Cooperation* in September 1997, the two countries reaffirmed the important role that the alliance plays in the regional security of the Asia–Pacific region, as well as the expansion of Japan’s role within the Japan–US alliance itself.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the rationale for the Japan–US alliance was reassessed again. Following Japan’s dispatch of destroyers to the Indian Ocean and of ground troops to Iraq, the two countries entered into a new phase of strategic cooperation at the Security Consultative Committee (SCC, commonly called the “Two-plus-Two”) meeting in December 2002. This consultation, known as the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI), focused on assessing the new Roles, Missions, and Capabilities (RMC) in the alliance as well as the deployment posture of US Forces in Japan (USFJ). The DPRI process concluded with the adoption of a joint document on 1 May 2006 at the SCC (referred to as the May 2006 SCC Document hereafter). During this process, many issues were discussed, including the relocation of Futenma Air Station in Okinawa and the question of who should bear the financial burden of relocating US Marine Corps assets to other areas in Okinawa.

While the May 2006 SCC Document focuses exclusively on base relocation and the associated financial implications, the DPRI process was not limited to such administrative matters. More significant changes under DPRI involved reassessments of both Japan’s Self-Defense Force (SDF) and the US military’s RMC. Through the realignment of force posture and review of RMC, the DPRI

will help to strengthen the Japan–US alliance, as long as alliance managers in both countries follow through with consistent effort to fulfill their respective responsibilities.

This paper assesses the implications of the DPRI by focusing on RMC from the Japanese strategic perspective, noting how these changes relate to alliance cooperation. First, Japanese and US strategic goals in the DPRI process are evaluated in regards to the stipulations of the 2004 *National Defense Program Guideline* (NDPG) and the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR). Second, given recent developments in the overall strategic environment in East Asia, the potential need for additional recommendations under the DPRI will be discussed. Finally, the paper identifies a number of critical challenges to Japan–US defense cooperation in the aftermath of the DPRI process.

ROLES, MISSION, AND CAPABILITIES IN DPRI— CONVERGENCE OF STRATEGIC EXPECTATIONS BETWEEN TOKYO AND WASHINGTON

Two Goals of Japan’s Security Policy

Since the end of the Cold War, and in particular the 1991 Gulf War, the defense policy of Japan has been undergoing a process of dramatic transformation. After the first commitment of Japanese support in international peacekeeping operations in Cambodia in 1992, the SDF has been dispatched to Mozambique, the Golan Heights, East Timor, the Indian Ocean, and Iraq. Only a short decade ago, few experts on Japanese security policy would have predicted that the country’s Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) destroyers and supply ships would operate in the Indian Ocean or that the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) troops would be dispatched to Iraq.^{xxvii} As these expansions of the roles and missions of the SDF in international security indicate, Japan’s attention to this area has increased.

Reflecting this expansion, the 2004 NDPG articulates two goals of Japanese security policy and three approaches to achieving these two goals.⁸⁸ The two goals are: (1) to prevent any threats from reaching Japan; and, (2) to improve the international security environment so that any threats to Japan are reduced.

^{xxvii} A notable exception is Torkel Patterson, who discusses the expectation of SDF Aegis destroyers and AWACS operations in the Persian Gulf in 2007 in his article, “Future Roles and Missions of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces,” in Ralph Cossa, ed., *Restructuring the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Toward a More Equal Partnership* (CSIS Press, 1997), 128–138.

Three approaches that will be used to achieve these goals are Japan's own efforts, cooperation with the US under the alliance, and cooperation with the international community. Among the approaches, the DPRI represents the core framework for alliance cooperation.

The 2004 NDPG stipulates how to promote cooperation with the United States as follows:

From this point of view, the Government of Japan will on its own initiative engage in strategic dialogue with the United States on wide-ranging security issues such as role-sharing between the two countries and the military posture such as force structure of the US forces in Japan, while trying to share common views on the new security environment and on strategic objectives in that context. In doing so, the Government of Japan will bear in mind the need to reduce the excessive burden that US military bases and facilities place on local communities, while maintaining the deterrent that the US military presence in Japan provides.⁸⁹

The Common Strategic Objective issued at the Two-plus-Two meeting in February 2005, furthermore, states that Tokyo and Washington “share common views on the new security environment and on strategic objectives in that context.”⁹⁰ As these excerpts demonstrate, the NDPG clarified the process of the DPRI. The October 2005 SCC Document on RMC and force realignment and the May 2006 SCC Document on the implementation of force realignment are the products of “strategic dialogue with the United States on wide-ranging security issues such as role-sharing between the two countries and the military posture such as force structure of the U.S. forces in Japan.”⁹¹

As previously stated, under the framework of the 2004 NDPG three approaches were outlined to achieve Japan's two security goals. To achieve the first goal of defending Japan from any threats, the maintenance of overall stability in East Asia (specifically, balancing against China and North Korea) is a major focus of Japanese security policy. Unlike Europe, where regional inter-state threats do not exist, Japan must prepare for traditional inter-state threats stemming from the legacies of the Cold War, problems on the Korean Peninsula, and ongoing tensions across the Taiwan Strait—all of which still loom heavily over the region. In addition, even though it is not necessarily a direct threat, the rise of China is of increasing concern to Japan.

As for the second goal of improving international security, Japan has expanded SDF engagement in peacekeeping activities around the world. While Islamic terrorism is a serious threat to US and global security, it does not pose a direct or immediate threat to Japan. As a result of this, and because Japan distances itself from religious conflicts, the threat from Islamic fundamentalists is a secondary

concern in Japanese security policy. The SDF's primary focus is that of preventing the emergence of direct threats against Japan's national interests, and it has recently attempted to do this by engaging internationally in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict reconstruction.

In sum, Japan's strategic expectation for the DPRI is to enhance the Japan-US alliance in order to meet the country's two security goals. To ensure the defense of Japan as well as maintain regional stability in East Asia, defense cooperation with the United States is critical. To achieve the second goal of improving international security, Japan's limited capabilities in strategic transportation and global intelligence require cooperation with the United States to improve the overall effectiveness of the global operations of the SDF.

Convergence of Goals: The 2004 NDPG and the October 2005 SCC Document

As discussed in the previous section, Japan's expectations for the DPRI are stipulated in the 2004 NDPG. This section compares the 2004 NDPG and the October 2005 SCC documents to demonstrate how they also reinforce each other.

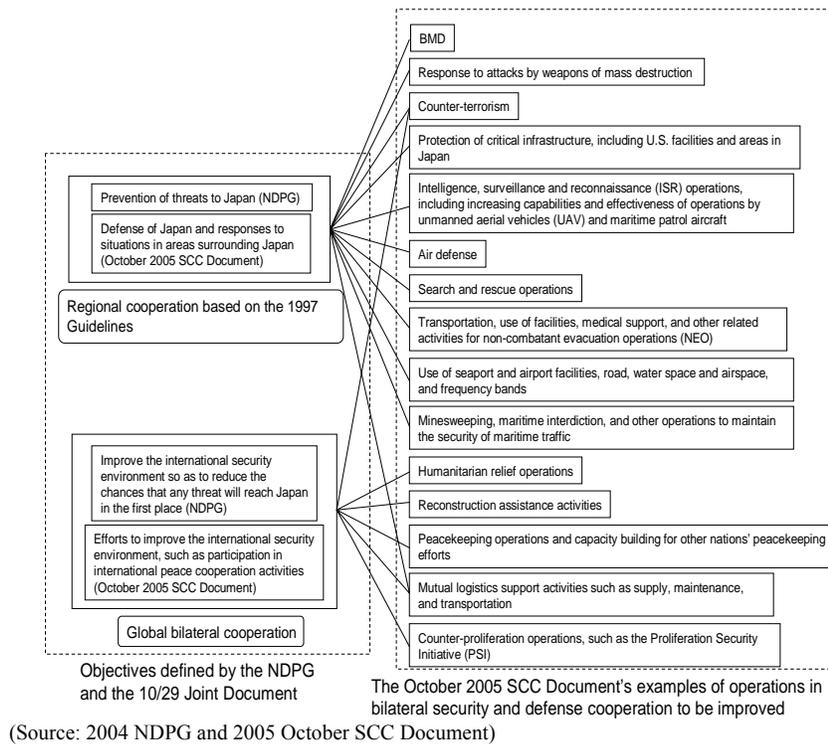
First of all, the NDPG 2004 and October 2005 SCC Document state the same goals for Japan ("defense of Japan and responses to situations in areas surrounding Japan" and "to improve the international security environment"), demonstrating that the DPRI consultation took place within the parameters of the 2004 NDPG. While the 2004 NDPG articulates the basic framework of SDF goals and roles within Japanese security strategy, the October 2005 document indicates how Japan and the United States should cooperate to achieve these goals.

Table 1 shows how the two documents are mutually reinforcing in support of the goal to defend Japan. For instance, examples in the October 2005 SCC Document of bilateral security and defense cooperation elements to be improved revolve around enhancing the roles and missions of the SDF, which was stipulated in more detail in the 2004 NDPG. The two boxes on the left-hand side of this table list the goals of Japanese security policy and Japan-US alliance cooperation as reflected in both the 2004 NDPG and the October 2005 SCC Document. The first goal of "prevention of threats to Japan" (2004 NDPG) and the "defense of Japan and responses to situations in areas surrounding Japan" (October 2005 SCC Document) will be achieved through regional cooperation based on the 1997 revised defense guidelines. The second goal of "improving the international security environment so as to reduce the chance that any threat

will reach Japan in the first place” will be achieved through global bilateral cooperation.

Cooperation to attain the first goal, defending Japan, can be promoted relatively easily because a framework for cooperation had been established in the 1997 defense guidelines. No such framework exists to achieve the second goal, improving the international security environment through bilateral cooperation, however, underscored by the fact that there are no permanent laws in place to govern SDF global operations, other than the international criteria used to guide UN peacekeeping operations. To achieve global bilateral cooperation, therefore, it will be necessary to establish a new framework similar to the 1997 defense guidelines and to enact laws for governing SDF global operations.

Table 8-1: Convergence of US and Japanese Security Policy Goals



Quadrennial Defense Review 2006 and DPRI Documents

The previous section describes how the DPRI process is reflective of current Japanese defense strategy, but this is only one side of the story. A close examination of the 2006 QDR and its relation to the DPRI agreements reveals US expectations of Japan in this critical area.

The 2006 QDR consists of three parts: strategic goals, force construct concepts, and “QDR decisions” for force modernization. Some defense experts criticize the decisions made in the 2006 QDR as postponing “hard choices,” arguing that the US Department of Defense (DOD) cannot buy everything under a flat budget and that it must cut the budget for Cold War legacy items and concentrate its resources on transformative programs instead.⁹² Even these critics, however, strongly support the strategic goals outlined in the 2006 QDR; their criticism is really focused on the 2006 QDR’s decisions, not its strategic goals.

The strategic goals in the 2006 QDR are based on threat perception. The document specifies four types of threats against the United States—traditional, catastrophic, irregular, and disruptive. The review determines that the United States has sufficient capability to address traditional threats and thus recommends that Washington shift its focus to address the other types of threat. To do this, the 2006 QDR outlines four areas of focus as US strategic goals: (1) defeating terrorism; (2) homeland defense; (3) shaping the choices of countries at strategic crossroads; and, (4) prevention of proliferation and use of WMD.⁹³ These focus areas shape the strategic framework of the US in the DPRI process. Table 2 shows how these focus areas compare and coincide with DPRI documents. The items in the Common Strategic Objective in the February 2005 and the October 2005 SCC documents are means to achieve the goals outlined in these four focus areas (Table 8-2).

Table 8-2: The 2006 QDR and DPRI Documents

	<i>Defeating Terrorism</i>	<i>Shaping the choices</i>	<i>Prevention of WMD</i>
Common Strategic Objective (regional)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security of Japan • Peace and stability in Asia-Pacific region • Maintain capability to address contingencies • Develop cooperative relationship with China, urging it to play a responsible and constructive role regionally and globally • Encourage peaceful resolution of Taiwan Strait issues through dialogue • Increase Chinese military's transparency • Encourage Russia's constructive engagement • Promote a peaceful, stable, and vibrant Southeast Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek peaceful resolution of issues related to North Korea, including nuclear programs, ballistic missile activities, illicit activities, and humanitarian issues, such as the abduction of Japanese nationals
Common Strategic Objective (global)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent and eradicate terrorism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, and the rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the reduction and nonproliferation of WMD (NPT, IAEA, PSI)
October 29 Joint Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter-terrorism • Humanitarian relief • Reconstruction assistance • Peacekeeping operations and capacity building • Protection of critical infrastructure, including US facilities and areas in Japan • Mutual logistics support activities such as supply, maintenance, and transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMD • Information, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations, including increasing capabilities and effectiveness of operations by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and maritime patrol aircraft • Force realignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter-proliferation such as PSI • Response to WMD attacks

As Table 8-2 shows, the missions stipulated in the DPRI documents are also reflected in the areas of “shaping the choices” and “defeating terrorism” contained in the 2006 QDR. Such focused attention on these areas indicates that Washington expects Tokyo to cooperate in hedging against China and also to act as an ally in the war on terrorism. These expectations align very well with Japan’s own security goals, suggesting that the strategic expectations of both countries have converged during the DPRI process and are determining the direction of bilateral defense cooperation.

RECENT STRATEGIC ISSUES IN THE ASIA–PACIFIC REGION AND THEIR IMPACT ON ALLIANCE COOPERATION

The three DPRI documents reflect the strategic visions of both the US and Japan and show that both countries have come to more deeply address key issues of mutual strategic concern in the context of alliance cooperation. However, recent events in East Asia may be outpacing the accomplishments of both countries’ alliance managers. The growing emergence of China as a diplomatic/political rival to the Japan–US alliance may require both countries to rethink the roles and missions of the SDF and US forces as a vehicle for regional security cooperation. The October 2006 nuclear test by North Korea pointed to the potential for instability in East Asia. These factors, among others, should encourage Japan and the United States to review and adjust the framework for RMC cooperation.

China’s Growing Access Denial Capability

Table 8-3 outlines the escalation ladder of conflict in terms of military balance between the Japan–US alliance and China. The table divides the level of escalation into four categories: tactical, theater-limited, theater-wide, and strategic. The tactical level indicates the military balance in the East China Sea and Taiwan Strait. In the case of the East China Sea, Japan’s SDF and the maritime and air assets of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of China are the primary players, and in the case of the Taiwan Strait, Taiwanese military forces and China’s amphibious forces are the primary players. Reinforcements for possible confrontation at the tactical level, namely US forces in the Asia–Pacific region and SDF on mainland Japan, are theater-level assets for the Japan–US alliance. Counter-measures against US reinforcement, namely, access denial capability such as the intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM)/medium range ballistic missiles (MRBM) or cruise missiles, are theater-level assets for China.^{xxviii} Theater-level assets should be differentiated between “theater-

^{xxviii} In the case of Taiwan, the US military supports Taiwan only if the US government decides to intervene in any given situation. If the US does not intervene, then escalation will never happen. If

limited” assets and “theater-wide” assets. The former consists of military assets in Okinawa and the access denial capability of the PLA against military assets in Okinawa, and the latter includes assets in Japan and Guam and the access denial capability of the PLA against them, including bases in Mainland China. At the top of the escalation ladder is the US strategic nuclear force and China’s inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) capability.

Table 8-3: Escalation Ladder of East Asia

	Japan–US	China
Strategic Level: Nuclear Confrontation	Strategic Nuclear Force	ICBM/SLBM
Theater Level (Wide): Mainland Japan– Mainland China	US Forces in the Asia-Pacific SDF and US Forces on Japan’s Mainland	Access Denial Capability *Ballistic/Cruise Missile *SSN *Long-range anti-ship capabilities
Theater Level (Limited): Nearby Okinawa	SDF and US forces in Okinawa	Access Denial Capability *Short/medium range missiles *Su-27/30 *Diesel-powered SS
Tactical Level: East China Sea	MSDF and ASDF	Navy and Air Force
Tactical Level: Taiwan	Taiwan military	Amphibious forces

So far, the Japan–US alliance has enjoyed considerable superiority at all four levels. In the near future, the current balance—which is largely favorable to the Japan–US alliance—may change. At the tactical level, although the PLA Navy (PLAN) will not be able to acquire highly advanced destroyers like Aegis ships in the near future, the Chinese will greatly improve their forces nonetheless. The number of fourth-generation fighters, such as the Su-27/30, will increase to about 200, and the size of the modern fighter force of the PLA could increase to be roughly equal to that of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF).⁹⁴ In addition, the improvement of the PLAN submarine fleet(s) is a growing concern for Japan, as evidenced by the illegal submerged passage of Chinese nuclear submarines into

the US does intervene, Japan’s commitment is only to provide logistical support and a base of operations for the US. Thus, unless the battlefield expands to Japanese territory, the SDF will not militarily engage in the conflict.

Japan's territorial waters in November 2004. In short, the gap at the tactical level between the Japan–US alliance and China will narrow in the near future. The balance between the Japan–US alliance and China at the theater-level may also narrow. With the PLA's growing access denial capability provided by IRBMs/MRBMs and nuclear-powered attack submarine fleets, other Asia–Pacific nations might hesitate to provide reinforcement to the United States.

At the strategic level, however, US dominance vis-à-vis China will continue for some time. China reportedly has not expanded its ICBM forces considerably, and its number of nuclear warheads has not yet increased into the thousands. Although China has put a significant effort into developing the submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM, called the JL-2), it does not have a strategic “bastion” for Ship Submersible Ballistic Missile Nuclear Power Submarines (SSBN). China's SSBNs in the East China Sea and Yellow Sea will continue to be vulnerable unless the PLA acquires dominant air superiority above the water in which the SSBNs are deployed. If the PLA does not develop air superiority of that area, then the SSBNs could be detected by P-3C (or the next generation of maritime patrol aircraft) and US attack submarines. In addition, the United States has begun to operate a ground-based midcourse ballistic missile defense to defend the homeland in 2004. With this development, China will not be able to have more than minimum deterrence capability against the United States at the strategic level.

To summarize, while the United States continues to enjoy advantages at the strategic level vis-à-vis China, the advantages it has maintained to date at the theater and tactical levels are no longer guaranteed. Even though China does not now have quantitative and qualitative superiority at theater levels, it may yet acquire enough access denial capability to significantly deter the United States. China's access denial capability, especially at the theater-limited level, could shift the regional military balance of power in the near future. Considering this, the relocation of US Marines from Okinawa to Guam could help to protect this important theater-level asset from Chinese tactical strike capability in the future.

As demonstrated by China's brash anti-satellite test in January 2007, China will continue to modernize its access denial capabilities. Working on effective measures to hedge against the country's growing military and economic power should continue to be an important issue in the Japan–US alliance cooperation in the post-DPRI era.

“Rising China” as a Political/Diplomatic Rival

China is the greatest variable in determining the future of the Asia–Pacific region. If China strongly challenges a US-led world and regional order, an era of

instability or even war may result. In this sense, China could become a great opponent of the United States in the same manner as the former Soviet Union. On the other hand, overly simplistic thinking that regards China solely as a challenge to the United States overlooks the realities of the current situation.

For both Japan and the United States, China has three faces. The first is one of a military “threat” or “concern” as reflected by its growing military power. Second, China has a face of a political and diplomatic rival. In this context, China’s political and diplomatic competition to expand its influence in the Asia–Pacific and other regions is unfolding. Finally, China has a face of a partner in economic and global issues. US–China and Japan–China economic relations are growing more interdependent. For example, keeping sea lanes open is a common concern to all three countries. Environmental issues are also a common concern. In these and other areas, Japan, the United States, and China are facing a number of challenges that will require significant cooperation among all of them.

The role and influence of China as a political/diplomatic rival in particular is expanding. The diplomatic competition over United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform is one example, where Japan sought to join the UNSC in 2005 as part of the “G4” (i.e., Japan, Germany, Brazil, and India). China was opposed to this move and launched a campaign against the proposal.⁹⁵ Another example is China’s active regional diplomacy (“neighboring diplomacy”), including its efforts to strengthen the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).⁹⁶ Through the SCO, China might attempt to provide an alternative to the existing regional order. The Six-Party Talks aimed at resolving the North Korea nuclear threat is yet another example of China’s growing diplomatic and political influence. In the Six-Party Talks, Japan diplomatically competes with China just as it did in the debate to define the members of the East Asia Summit. Thus far, China’s emergence as a diplomatic/political rival has not been sufficiently considered in the DPRI. In addition to hedging against China, ways to address or counter diplomatic/political competition with China in the Asia–Pacific should be discussed more fully in the context of alliance defense cooperation.

A Nuclear North Korea

The turning point of the North Korea nuclear problem came in the middle of 2006. Following missile tests in July 2006, North Korea conducted a nuclear test in October 2006. The test was confirmed by the United States, and, consequently, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1718 to impose an embargo of WMD-related material and economic sanctions against North Korea.

Disregarding strong pressure from the international community, North Korea has not abandoned its nuclear programs; indeed, it is demanding to be considered a nuclear state. In February 2007, the participants in the Six-Party Talks agreed to start the process to de-nuclearize North Korea. Based on the statement issued at the talks on 13 February 2007, North Korea was supposed to have disabled its nuclear facilities during the sixty-day initial phase. In addition, working groups were established to discuss issues other than North Korea's nuclear program, including the normalization of Japan–North Korea and US–North Korea relations. Even after the initial phase of the talks, however, North Korea continued to express its intent to acquire nuclear capabilities and the process for denuclearization has thus stagnated.

These events dramatically illustrate the instability of the current East Asian security environment. In light of this situation, the two goals of Japan's security policy might need to be adjusted in terms of their priority; that is, Japan's own national security interests may need to take precedence over its goal to improve the international security environment. Indeed, after North Korea's missile and nuclear tests, Japan declared its intention to advance the schedule for its deployment of PAC-3 missiles. With a flat national defense budget, however, this decision would limit the resources available for commitment to other global needs. In this respect, the recent threat posed by North Korea undermines the 2004 NDPG that set forth international security improvement as a major goal of Japanese security policy. Thus, RMC cooperation in the alliance should be adjusted accordingly. For example, strike operation against ballistic missile sites could be a possible area of cooperation between Japan and the United States.

CHALLENGES TO DEFENSE COOPERATION IN THE DECADE FOLLOWING THE DPRI

Hedging Against China

What are the implications of the strategic balance between the Japan–US alliance and China, as shown by Table 3, for the security of Japan? The good news is that American superiority continues at the strategic level. While China maintains minimum deterrence capabilities, the numerical advantage of the US in terms of its strategic nuclear force is dominant. In addition, the US deployment of a ground-based midcourse defense system in Alaska and the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system will render the effect of China's minimum deterrence force as just that, quite minimal. Minimum deterrence is still deterrence, however, and there remains the possibility that, to avoid retaliation on US interests, the US would not retaliate on behalf of Japan if it came under nuclear attack. In other words, the Japanese concern about “de-coupling” (being de-coupled from US extended deterrence) would be hardly

alleviated. At the same time, minimum deterrence is deterrence with minimum capability, and the Japanese concern about de-coupling will also remain at a minimal level if the United States continues to reaffirm its commitment for extended deterrence. Given this strategic backdrop, Japan should have three policy goals to reinforce deterrence in the region: to support the continuance of US superiority at the strategic level, to enhance the credibility of the escalation ladder from a tactical or theater level to the strategic level, and to maintain its current advantage at both the tactical and theater-limited levels.

Deterrence at the strategic level is the most important in terms of thwarting conflicts, because nuclear force has the ability to decimate any country. At this level, the United States has, and will maintain, both quantitative and qualitative superiority over China. China, however, deploys minimum deterrence capabilities with a limited number of ICBMs. Even for the United States, the elimination of the ICBMs possessed by China before they are launched is not easy, and in fact may not even be possible. This means that regardless of the US relative advantage at the strategic level, the US nuclear umbrella may be compromised by China's nuclear arsenal. One way to enhance the credibility of US extended deterrence is to deploy missile defense because a viable missile defense capability would neutralize China's ICBM forces. Alternatively, a concrete demonstration by the US of its strong resolve to defend Japan regardless of the threat of re-retaliation by China's minimum nuclear force could be effective at keeping China at bay.

Japan's current policy is consistent with either of these approaches. In the case of the former, cooperation on missile defense research and development of the Aegis BMD system may improve the performance of interceptors for US homeland defense, even though Japanese BMD could not defend the United States under current constitutional constraints. For the latter, promoting operational integration between US forces and the SDF would serve to reinforce the US commitment to defend Japan. US missile defense in Japan would compromise the threat of re-retaliation by "minimum" strategic nuclear forces, such as the one possessed by China.

Second, enhancement of the credibility of the escalation ladder linking the tactical or theater level with the strategic level would be indispensable in taking advantage of superiority at the strategic level. As long as the Japan-US alliance maintains superiority at the strategic level and a credible escalation ladder at that level, narrowing the gap at the tactical or theater level is not as important. Thus, to deter China's explicit challenge against the current balance of power, the linkage among all four levels of the ladder must be strengthened, rather than just seeking superiority at each of the four levels.

Traditionally, the escalation ladder of the Japan–US alliance has been based on different assumptions than those for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the US–Korea alliance. In these alliances, the escalation ladders are guaranteed through “tripwire” US forces present on the soil of the ally countries. But in the case of the Japan–US alliance, there has been no escalation tripwire. Instead, the credibility of the escalation ladder has been guaranteed by “overall consolidation of the alliance.”^{xxix} In other words, the credibility of the Japan–US alliance is guaranteed by overall bilateral political or defense cooperation, rather than specific tripwire troops.

The basic structure of the escalation ladder in the Japan–US alliance has not changed since the end of the Cold War. In this context, Japan’s support of the Iraq War, including the dispatch of ground troops to Iraq and joint research and development of missile defense, has contributed to improving the credibility of the alliance. Improving the operational integration between the SDF and the USFJ, including joint use of bases, would be another effective way to strengthen the credibility of the escalation ladder built into the alliance. In this sense, the DPRI plays a significant role. Both the October 2005 and May 2006 SCC documents contribute to making the escalation ladder more viable by promoting the integration of bilateral operations.

Third, the military balance at the tactical and theater-limited levels cannot be neglected. Having the advantage at the tactical level is still necessary for Japan to counter China’s access denial capabilities because “the fear of abandonment” at these levels is greater than at higher levels. Although Japan and the United States share the same basic security policy approach toward China (namely, “shaping the choices,” “dissuasion,” or “deterrence”), the two countries’ policy goals are different. The United States wants to “shape” China so that it does not challenge the current regional and global order, whereas Japan wants to “shape” China so that it will not take an assertive attitude in bilateral relations. Therefore, Japan may be less tolerant of the Chinese challenge.

Japan should increase investment in the SDF at the tactical and theater-limited levels to maintain its advantage vis-à-vis the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). But because of severe fiscal constraints, Japan’s defense budget has been on a downward trend. The only growing area of the budget is for missile defense, which comes at the expense of heavy ground force, anti-submarine warfare

^{xxix} In the Diet, the Japanese government has never described in detail how the US nuclear umbrella works. The Government has testified that, “the base of the Japan–U.S. security treaty is American overall deterrence posture, including nuclear arsenal. The U.S. defense posture plays a role of ‘umbrella’ for Japan’s security in a broad sense.” *Transcript of the Special Committee of Security*, No. 5, 17 April 1985, 18.

(ASW), and air superiority capabilities.⁹⁷ Among these, ASW and air superiority are key to maintaining its current advantage at the tactical level. If Japan continues to underestimate the importance of these capabilities, then its existing advantage will be drastically reduced.

To mitigate this effect, Japan will need to enhance the credibility of the escalation ladder and the overall Japan–US alliance. Promoting integration between the SDF and USFJ through the DPRI then becomes critical at the theater and tactical levels. This means that Japan will inevitably and increasingly rely on the escalation ladder with the United States to maintain a strategic balance with China. The side effect of this choice for Japan is that Japan–China relations may turn into a dependent variable of US–China relations, which would not solve the problem that arises from the differences in the tolerance levels of the two countries toward China’s challenge. To avoid this, Japan should delegate more resources to conventional maritime and air assets. Large-scale deployment of a missile defense system for perfect or near perfect defense against a ballistic missile threat is less necessary than having resources such as an F-22A squadron at the country’s disposal.

As this section shows, the DPRI almost fulfills current requirements for Japanese defense policy. Faced with a more powerful China at the tactical and theater levels, though, Japan needs to reinforce the credibility of the escalation ladder through close cooperation between the SDF and USFJ. At the same time, however, the risk of increasing dependence on the escalation ladder without regard for Japan’s own capability at the tactical level should be discussed within Japan more robustly.

Competition in Security Regionalism

The recent emergence of China as a rising diplomatic/political rival has been increasingly apparent. To support diplomatic competition in the Asia–Pacific region, Japan should more actively articulate its vision for regional security cooperation and participate in existing security cooperation. The 2004 NDPG has failed to meet this objective. While it includes a more proactive security exchange/defense dialogue, it does not pay enough attention to functional regional security cooperation after 9/11.

The October 2005 SCC Document does refer to security cooperation with other countries. However, the Japan Defense Agency (now the Ministry of Defense, or MOD) has focused too much on Japan–US bilateral cooperation and little progress has been made on issues involving regional security cooperation that underpin Japan–US defense cooperation. As the Indian Ocean Tsunami relief operation in 2004–2005 showed, the United States and Japan have far superior

capability to respond to such situations compared to other countries in the region. Building security cooperation on transnational issues based on the Japan–US alliance could benefit the region in a number of ways.

The “theater security cooperation” promoted by the US Pacific Command is one approach to promoting security cooperation in this context. After the relocation of III MEF’s headquarters from Okinawa to Guam is completed, the US Marine Corps plans to use Guam and other Mariana Islands as the hub of theater security cooperation centered around support for the US war on terrorism, as well as other security concerns.⁹⁸ Moreover, this move will support Japan and its efforts in capacity building. Efforts to cooperate with countries in the Asia–Pacific should expand even more and the Japan–US alliance could be an effective tool in this regard. One of the goals of the Japan–US alliance in the post-DPRI period should be to transform the alliance into a broader forum for regional cooperation, which would also benefit the Japan–US alliance deal with rising Chinese diplomatic/political competition.

In addition, maintaining a balance between hedging and cooperating with China will be helpful in “shaping the choices” for China. For the effective combination of these two approaches, strategic consultation between Japan and the US must continue to deepen.

Bilateral Cooperation in Strike Operations

In Japan, the growing North Korea threat has encouraged discussion regarding the potential acquisition of strike capability—which Japan does not have under its current principle of an exclusively defense-oriented policy—or even pursuit of a nuclear capability option.

For Japan, acquisition of the nuclear option would not be a good choice. Because North Korea still does not have an ICBM system, the United States is safe from nuclear threat from North Korea. This means that US extended deterrence is not compromised, and therefore Japan does not need to consider creating its own nuclear capability. Furthermore, even if US deterrence vis-à-vis North Korea fails, Tokyo would not be able to deter Pyongyang with its own nuclear force because Japan’s nuclear force would be considerably more primitive than that of the United States. Under such circumstances, it is neither necessary nor wise for Japan to pursue its own nuclear forces.

Japan’s acquisition of strike capability, however, does merit consideration, because this capability would serve to offset the threat of a ballistic missile attack and increase the effectiveness of a missile defense system. Japan does not necessarily need to organize a full set of strike forces that includes attackers,

electronic jammers, or sensors to track “time-sensitive” ground targets—this would take a long time to organize and would be too expensive under the current defense budget. Therefore a bilateral combined strike force against land-based ballistic missiles should be an important area in bilateral defense cooperation.⁹⁹ Even if Japan does not have a full set of strike forces, it can still cooperate and enhance the effectiveness of strike operations by providing aerial refueling aircraft or escort fighters for a bilateral strike package. Beyond the DPRI, this type of defense cooperation may possibly emerge as an important agenda item between Japan and the US.

CONCLUSION

Because Japan and the United States operate under very different strategic environments, it is logical that the two countries also have different strategic priorities and goals. The contrast is particularly evident in their respective attitudes towards Islamic terrorism and China. For the United States, international terrorism is the top priority because it poses the only immediate and serious threat to the American homeland. For Japan, the threat of Islamic terrorism is secondary, while North Korea and China pose more serious concerns. As the 2006 QDR stipulates, the United States is also very concerned about the future of China. But while Tokyo and Washington share the same basic policy approach in countering China, the two countries differ in their sensitivity regarding the country’s rising influence.

One implicit goal of the DPRI is to mitigate these differences by improving policy coordination between the US and Japan. While the DPRI does fulfill both countries’ expectations for each other, it is only an agreement on paper. Implementation will be the key to ultimate success. In addition, considering that recent developments may be outpacing what was agreed upon in the DPRI, both countries should continue efforts to revise its recommendations, with particular attention to competitive security in the Asia–Pacific region.

THE DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES

Yuki Tatsumi

The Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) was launched in December 2002 as a bilateral consultative process for the United States (US) and Japan to discuss how the US–Japan alliance could be more responsive to the global and regional strategic environment in the post-9/11 world. Two years into the consultation, the US and Japan announced “common strategic objectives” at the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) meeting in Washington D.C. on 19 February 2005.¹⁰⁰ In the document summarizing the results of the meeting, both governments officially expressed their mutual interest in developing the US–Japan alliance into a global partnership, identifying their security interests beyond the Asia–Pacific region for the first time.¹⁰¹

The identification of the “common strategic objectives” in the February 2005 SCC document was followed by intense bilateral negotiations in two areas: the division of roles, missions and capabilities (RMC) between the US forces and the Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the realignment of US forces in Japan. The negotiations culminated in the second SCC document entitled, *US–Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*, which was released on 29 October 2005. This document not only reaffirmed the intent of Washington and Tokyo to transform the US–Japan alliance into a global partnership, but also offered a set of recommendations to help the two governments in achieving that goal.¹⁰²

The third SCC document, *The United States and Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*, was announced at the SCC meeting held on 1 May 2006. Building on the October 2005 SCC document, this document set forth a concrete plan to begin implementing the realignment of US forces in Japan. The heart of the document focused on the relocation of Futenma Marine Corps Air

Station (MCAS) in Okinawa, as well as the transfer of approximately 17,000 Marine Corps personnel to Guam.^{xxx}

Officially, both Tokyo and Washington claim that the DPRI was a comprehensive alliance transformation process that took the logical steps of: (1) confirming the common strategic interests and goals shared by the United States and Japan; (2) identifying the measures required for the US–Japan alliance to support both countries in achieving these shared objectives; and, (3) laying out a concrete plan to implement the measures that were agreed upon. But is this really the case? If it is, how does one explain the frequency with which the Japanese media has reported so-called “US frustration” toward Japan? Can these reports be dismissed as just US attempts to manipulate the Japanese media in order to gain ground in the negotiations? Or, despite the official celebratory tone, can they be taken as a sign that suggests that the United States may not be completely satisfied with the outcome of the DPRI process thus far?

This paper focuses on examining the underlying attitudes of the US toward the DPRI process and examines the changes in US perceptions that occurred during its three phases of work to date. Following identification of the noteworthy characteristics of US responses during each phase, the paper concludes by discussing the main points of US concerns for the future of the DPRI and its impact on the resilience of the US–Japan alliance writ large.

PERCEPTIONS IN WASHINGTON ON THE DPRI PROCESS¹⁰³

The DPRI process can be roughly divided into three phases: (1) December 2002 to September 2004, (2) September 2004 to May 2006, and (3) May 2006 to the present. This section provides a brief overview of what Washington anticipated and how it perceived its interactions with Tokyo during each phase.

Phase One (December 2002–September 2004)—High Hopes Turn into Disappointment

At the SCC meeting in December 2002, the US and Japanese governments “discussed defense and national security strategies and the need to review their respective defense postures in the new security environment.” Both sides agreed to “intensify security consultations between the two countries to explore areas of cooperation... (including) bilateral roles and missions, forces and force

^{xxx} The figure includes approximately 8,000 III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) personnel and their approximately 9,000 dependents. US–Japan SCC, *The United States and Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*, 1 May 2006, <http://www.jda.go.jp/j/news/youjin/2006/05/0501-e02.html>.

structures, bilateral cooperation in facing regional and global challenges, participation in international peacekeeping and other multilateral efforts, further consultation and cooperation on missile defense, and progress on resolving issues related to US facilities and areas in Japan.”¹⁰⁴ This effectively marked the launching of the DPRI process.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that the United States began to consider the realignment of its military presence in the Asia–Pacific region with the beginning of the DPRI. In fact, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had authorized a comprehensive reexamination of the US military presence overseas as early as August 2001.¹⁰⁵ Rumsfeld’s decision was subsequently endorsed in the 2002 *National Security Strategy*.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the review of the US overseas presence had been underway for almost a year when the DPRI was officially launched.

When the DPRI first started, the US government had hoped it would provide a venue to intensify consultation with Japan on the reposturing of the US forces in Japan in the context of GPR, particularly a comprehensive reexamination of its military presence in the Asia–Pacific. It also looked as though Washington had good reason to be hopeful. In November 2001, Japan decided to dispatch its Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) vessels to the Indian Ocean in support of the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). In the eyes of US alliance managers who remember Japan’s reluctance to participate in the multilateral force at the time of the 1990-91 Gulf War, this was an unprecedented decision, particularly because the dispatch occurred when combat was still ongoing, even if JMSDF vessels would be operating in a non-combat area. To those in the US government, particularly those who managed the US–Japan alliance at that time, this decision seemed to signal Japan’s intention to share a greater operational burden in the spirit of assuming a bigger role in the US-Japan alliance. This is the major reason why Washington did not intend to use a “facility-by-facility” approach in its talks with Japan; rather, Washington preferred to discuss the realignment of the US forces in Japan as a total package.

By the time President Bush formally announced in November 2003 that the United States “will intensify our consultations with the Congress and our friends, allies, and partners overseas on our ongoing review of our overseas force posture,”¹⁰⁷ there were additional developments in Japan that made Washington even more hopeful to this end: the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) had already begun an internal review of Japan’s defense posture in September 2001.¹⁰⁸ Visiting JDA officials had begun to speak about Japan’s interest in discussing force posture with the United States so that “reorganization of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) could move forward in tandem with US

military transformation.”¹⁰⁹ To the United States, such statements were logical: any repositioning of the US forces in Japan would certainly impact how they and the JSDF would work together under various contingency scenarios. Therefore, to sustain the deterrence provided by the US–Japan alliance after the completion of the GPR, the reposturing of US forces in Japan would have to be closely linked with that of the JSDF in some way. In the face of these developments, the US government, particularly officials at the Department of Defense (DOD), thought that Japan might be more willing than it had been in the past to share its ideas on changing Japan’s defense posture in response to a potential realignment of US forces in the country.

Once the United States and Japan formally began the DPRI consultation, however, the DOD representatives were surprised to find that their Japanese counterparts were unresponsive. The heart of the discussion between the two governments during this period was the possible relocation of the First Army Corps Headquarters to Camp Zama. The United States first presented its ideas on the force realignment in Japan, which included this relocation, in November 2003. Washington then presented a more detailed plan to Japan in the follow-up DPRI meeting in April 2004. The Japanese government, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), was less than lukewarm to such a proposition. Because the area of responsibility for the US Army First Corps was broader than East Asia, MOFA believed that transferring its headquarters to Japan could be inconsistent with Article Six of the US–Japan Security Treaty, which authorizes US forces to use facilities in Japan to contribute to peace and stability in the Far East.¹¹⁰ Japanese officials resisted the US proposal, arguing that the placement of the First Army Headquarters would force Japan to expand the interpretation of Article Six in the US–Japan Security Treaty or expand the prohibition on Japan’s exercise of the right of collective self-defense—neither step Japan was yet ready to take.

To many US officials involved in the bilateral consultation during this phase, the apparent unresponsiveness exhibited by their Japanese counterparts suggested that they did not appreciate the global context in which the United States was placing the bilateral discussion. The US officials thought that the Japanese negotiators were looking at the process mostly from a narrow bilateral perspective, focusing only on the relocation of US forces in Japan.¹¹¹ In fact, the Japanese government officials who participated during this phase appeared more concerned that the discussion took place within the existing framework of the US–Japan alliance, rather than focusing on a serious discussion of how the US–Japan alliance could be transformed to meet new post-9/11 security threats to maintain its credibility. As a result, when Japan rejected the US plan to relocate the US Army First Corp Headquarters to Camp Zama without presenting an

alternative proposal of its own at the DPRI meeting in July 2004, the DPRI process became deadlocked.

Japan's lukewarm response to the US proposal, as well as its reluctance to engage in a truly constructive dialogue with Washington—as demonstrated especially by its unwillingness to put a counter-proposal on the table—greatly disappointed the United States. In fact, Washington felt that Tokyo had used its domestic political calendar (i.e., the March 2003 unified local election, the Upper House election in July 2004, and the Okinawa gubernatorial election in November 2006) as an excuse for not responding to the US proposal or for suggesting that the discussion be postponed. In the eyes of many US officials, their Japanese counterparts looked as passive as they had been in the past. To summarize the disappointment experienced by US officials during this period, one official said, “Japan has always complained that we (the United States) did not take their view into consideration. So we tried to do exactly that in this talk. We have presented our ideas of how we see the realignment of US forces in Japan fit in the context of our Global Posture Review and invited them to react to it, but they did not respond. No response is worse than disagreement. If they do not want to offer their own view, why do they even ask for such an opportunity?”¹¹²

Phase Two (September 2004–May 2006)

At the summit meeting in September 2004, President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi agreed to accelerate the force realignment talks. With this agreement at the summit level, the DPRI essentially started over.

When the DPRI consultation came to a halt in the summer of 2004, the United States decided to fundamentally change its approach toward the DPRI based on the “lessons learned” from the deadlock in April 2004. Namely, some in the US government felt that the DOD, despite its insistence to reject the “facility-by-facility” approach, nonetheless placed too much emphasis on the relocation of US forces too early in the process without articulating the strategic rationale behind its decision. They thought that such an approach blurred Washington's initial goal for the DPRI, and it may have contributed to the lack of response from Japan. The comments by then-Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage succinctly described such views during his press conference at the US Embassy in Tokyo on 13 October 2004: “I think that when we began our discussions of transformation, we perhaps began in the wrong spot. We started talking about individual items or individual locations...rather than starting from a philosophical discussion of how we, that is Japan and the U.S., saw our alliance, in say, in 15 years or 20 years. If we started there, then I think we could

work back and the individual elements of the transformation - both our transformation and the Japanese transformation - would become clearer.”¹¹³

Another US official noted that, because the discussion began with the relocation of US military facilities, even when the DOD meant to discuss this issue as a comprehensive package, the discussion entered the pattern of the US making suggestions to which Japan was slow to respond, bringing the discussion back to the default of the US blaming Japan for its non-action.¹¹⁴ The officials who took such a view felt that the two sides should restart the talks by first coming to an agreement on a shared long-term vision for the US–Japan alliance. The specifics of what it would take for both sides to achieve the vision—such as a concrete force realignment plan—could be weaved back into the process at a later date.

Bilateral discussions on a long-term strategic vision for the US–Japan alliance culminated in February 2005 in the SCC Joint Statement. Both sides agreed on a set of Common Strategic Objectives that encompass both regional and global security challenges. The document also reiterated Washington and Tokyo’s commitment in continuing the discussion on “the roles, missions and capabilities of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces and US Armed Forces required to respond to diverse challenges in a well coordinated manner.”¹¹⁵ The document was celebrated as the declaration of the intents of both the US and Japanese governments to expand the scope of the US–Japan alliance into a global partnership.

The follow-up bilateral consultation had two pillars—roles, missions and capabilities (RMC) of the US forces and the JSDF, and the realignment of US military facilities in Japan. The consultation process turned out to be frustrating for both parties. From the US perspective, the biggest source of frustration was in the difference in emphasis that each side brought to the meeting.

During the DPRI the United States placed extensive emphasis on the dialogue regarding the RMC. From Washington’s perspective, as previously mentioned, the DPRI was part of the overall US effort to reexamine its alliance relationships around the world. As the priority of US security policy shifted to the global war on terrorism, the United States began to reexamine the status of its alliances from the perspective of the extent to which each ally could contribute to US efforts to respond to global terrorism threats, while maintaining sufficient deterrence against conventional threats. This meant the revision of the traditional division of roles between US forward-deployed forces and its allies, and the US forces in Japan were no exception. Therefore, US officials argued that the DPRI was “fundamentally about transforming the US–Japan alliance to

ensure that it remains capable of achieving Common Strategic Objectives for the US and Japan as established.”¹¹⁶ US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer also asked the Japanese public to understand that the United States viewed the DPRI “from a strategic point of view.”¹¹⁷ In addition, in the testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 2005, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Richard Lawless stressed that the US force realignment in Japan depended on the decisions Japan will make for its security “more than in any other country.”¹¹⁸

On the contrary, in the eyes of Washington, Japan placed much greater emphasis on the US force realignment. Among the relocation plans, Tokyo considered the consolidation of the US military presence in Okinawa as the centerpiece of the negotiation. In particular, the relocation of the MCAS Futenma—which had been stalled for more than six years since Tokyo and Washington first agreed to move this facility out of its current location per the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) Final Report—became the most contentious issue between the two countries that attracted the most attention from the Japanese media. While Japan pressed for consolidation of the MCAS Futenma with the existing US military facility in Okinawa, the United States continued to ask for an alternative separate facility that would replace the MCAS Futenma.¹¹⁹

In fact, Washington was frustrated with their counterparts in Tokyo who seemed to be only interested in reducing the US military presence in Japan, particularly in Okinawa. Although the negotiations over the US force realignment and consultation on RMC occurred in parallel under the DPRI framework, it was clear that Japan placed a greater emphasis on the force realignment. One indication of Japan’s preoccupation with US force realignment throughout the DPRI negotiation was how the Japanese media referred to the talk. In the Japanese coverage, the DPRI was barely referred to by its original name (*bouei seisaku minaoshi kyogei*), but usually referred to as *beigun saihei kyogei* (US force realignment talks). The DOD was also irritated that the JDA leadership—including Yoshinori Ohno and Fukushima Nukaga, the two JDA chiefs who oversaw the DPRI process—often referred *only* to “reduction of the burden” that would be the result of the realignment as the primary purpose of the DPRI, with little or no mention of the strategic meaning of the DPRI. US negotiators thought that the characterizations of the DPRI by Ohno and Nukaga contributed to spreading a misleading impression in Japan that the DPRI was *only* about the negotiation of the relocation of US bases.

In particular, as the negotiation progressed, Washington grew frustrated over the increasing number of news articles in the Japanese media regarding the substance of the negotiations that were seemingly leaked by the JDA. In

particular, after the Japanese media began to report on the options for the Futenma Relocation Facility (FRF) based on information the US believed was provided by JDA sources, Washington began to wage its own media offensive. The staff in the Office of Secretary of Defense began to hold background briefings to Japanese media in Washington, D.C., on a more regular basis to counter the JDA. This accelerated when the Japanese media began to report on the negotiation over the sites for the Futenma Relocation Facility in September 2005.¹²⁰

After a much contested negotiation, both sides finally agreed on the FRF location. The results of the negotiation, together with the progress made on the RMC talks at that point, were articulated in the document *US-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*, which was presented at the Security Consultative Committee meeting in Washington on 29 October 2005. While the statements on the RMC in the document essentially stopped at confirming the basic concepts and the areas in which the United States and Japan should deepen their bilateral cooperation, those on the force realignment were much more detailed and thorough, including more concrete recommendations. In particular, the document went into great detail on the consolidation of the US military presence in Okinawa, including the relocation associated with the construction of the FRF.¹²¹ At this time, the MCAS Futenma relocation plan that was originally agreed to in the SACO Final Report in 1998 was officially replaced with the FRF relocation plan articulated in this document.

As the United States and Japan continued the bilateral discussion to establish a more detailed plan to implement the relocation arrangement laid out in the October 2005 SCC document, Washington faced another source of frustration. When Tokyo and Washington finally reached agreement on the geographical location of the FRF, Richard Lawless immediately released a statement in which he maintained the appearance that the United States had made a compromise by accepting “the most recent JDA proposal and plan” for the relocation of Futenma.¹²² Unambiguously stressing that the Japanese negotiating team led by the JDA “has assured the USG[overnment] that this evolved plan represents the best solution available and assured us that this plan can and will be fully executable in a comprehensive and timely manner,”¹²³ the statement by Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Richard Lawless was meant to signal that the onus of implementation of the Futenma relocation plan would fall mostly on Japan’s shoulders. Washington was irritated, therefore, when it noticed that their Japanese counterparts were referring to the October 2005 document as “*chukan hokoku* (interim report),” and Japanese media used this same terminology in reporting on the October 2005 agreement. Washington considered the October 2005 SCC document as a finalized list of the agreed upon principles for

transforming the US–Japan alliance. In the eyes of US officials, such moves by their counterparts in Tokyo appeared as though Japanese officials were using the word “interim” on purpose to maintain a false perception, particularly among the local communities that would be affected by the US force realignment, that the content of the plan was tentative and therefore somehow still negotiable.¹²⁴

Following the October 2005 agreement, the United States and Japan entered an intense negotiation over the details of force realignment. In this process, the central issue was the details of the relocation of the MCAS Futenma to the FRF, which was designated to be relocated to the area that combines “the shoreline areas of Camp Schwab and adjacent water areas of Oura Bay.”¹²⁵ Such details included the specifics of the size of the runways to be built in the FRF, the construction method, and the sharing of the cost associated with the relocation of the Marines to Guam that will happen as progress is made on construction of the FRF. After a prolonged, intense negotiation, the two sides announced their agreement on 1 May 2006 in the SCC document *United States–Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*,¹²⁶ where the two sides announced their goal of completing the construction of the FRF by 2014. It was also agreed that Japan would shoulder approximately 59 percent (\$6.09 billion) of the total estimated cost (\$10.27 billion in US Fiscal Year 2008 dollars) associated with construction of the facilities and infrastructure in Guam required to accommodate and house the Marines.^{xxx1} With the adoption of *The United States and Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation* in May 2006, the official rounds of the DPRI negotiation concluded.

Phase Three (Implementation) (May 2006–present)

Since May 2006, the DPRI has been in the implementation stage, which is still ongoing at the time of this writing. As demonstrated by the October 2005 statement by Lawless, the United States has maintained the position that the onus of implementing the relocation plan now is on the Japanese government.

At the SCC meeting on 1 May 2007, the United States and Japan reviewed the progress that had been made on the US force realignment, including those in Okinawa. In particular, both sides agreed on the significance of completing the construction of the FRF by 2014, including the relocation of US Marine personnel and their dependents to Guam, as the key component of US force realignment in Japan.¹²⁷ A technical working group continues to examine the issues relevant to the construction of the FRF and phased relocation of the

^{xxx1} In the beginning, the United States requested that Japan bear 75 percent of the costs associated with the Marines’ relocation to Guam. For detailed narratives of the negotiation between October 2005 and May 2006, see Tsuyoshi Sunohara, *op.cit.*, and Masahiko Hisae, *op. cit.*

Marines to Guam. The Defense Facilities Administration Agency (DFAA) has expressed its hope to begin the preliminary investigation for the construction of the FRF, as well as the assessment of the environmental impact of the construction, as soon as possible.¹²⁸ Since then, both sides are continuing to meet at the working level to discuss realignment-related issues on roughly a monthly basis. Depending on the agenda, the meeting takes place in Tokyo, Washington, D.C., Hawaii, or Guam.

Meanwhile, the United States still has two particular concerns in mind. The first relates to how the Japanese government will finance its share of the relocation costs. US government officials nervously watched a tug-of-war ensue between the JDA and Ministry of Finance (MOF) over the ratio of the relocation costs that is to be covered by the JDA's core defense budget and the portion that should be financed by special budgetary measures. They were concerned that, if a large portion of the relocation costs is covered by the core budget, then this would considerably delay the pace of Japan introducing ballistic missile defense (BMD)-related systems and other SDF modernization measures. They also point out that, given the fact that a significant percentage of the budget for new acquisitions is already being allocated to missile defense items, any additional pressure on the JDA budget would squeeze JSDF modernization efforts overall; the only possible exception to this is the Air Self-Defense Force, which benefits from the force realignment because it provides the justification needed to collocate its Air Defense Command with the 5th Air Force. Worse yet, some US military officers have expressed serious concern that without a prospect for a big increase in the defense budget, the JDA budget squeeze would lead to additional reductions in the budget allocated for training JSDF personnel and maintaining and recapitalizing its current platforms, perhaps causing further reductions in the salaries of JDA and JSDF personnel—all of which could result in deterioration of JSDF readiness and capabilities.¹²⁹ The fact that Japan's defense budget proposal for FY2007 was only 0.7 percent larger than the previous year's budget seems to confirm their concern.¹³⁰ In this sense, Washington monitors with keen interest any legislation introduced in Japan's Parliament (called the Diet) that would ensure financing of US force relocation costs by using resources outside the defense budget.

Their concerns were greatly alleviated when the Japanese Diet approved the Special Measures Law for a Smooth Implementation of the Measures regarding the Realignment of US Forces (*Churyu-gun Nado no Saihen no Enkatsu na Jisshi ni kansuru Tokubetu Sochi Ho*, more commonly referred to as *Beigun Saihen Kanren-ho* (US Force Realignment-related Law) in May 2007. This law, set to take effect on 1 October 2008, laid out in detail the economic stimulus package for the local communities that are affected by US force realignment, as

well as the terms of the financing to be provided by the Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) to cover the cost of the Marine relocation to Guam.¹³¹ However, given the still tenuous state of Japan's economic health, concerns linger over whether Japan can follow through with the financing scheme provided in the law.

Further, concern continues to exist over the paucity of Japanese public support for the force realignment plan. Pointing to the essential failure of the Futenma relocation under the SACO, the United States argues that even though there is agreement at the leadership level, a successful relocation effort will require support from the Japanese public. Low public support for the US force realignment also makes US officials wonder whether the public understands the merits of the agreed upon plan and whether the Japanese government is making a sufficient effort to help its citizens understand the benefits of the realignment for the country's security. Furthermore, such low public support makes US officials question whether the goal of the United States with respect to the DPRI—ensuring a sustainable military presence in Japan—is being achieved with the current agreement. In this context, statements made by former Japan Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma on his flexibility toward reconsidering the FRF plan fueled Washington's concern regarding the level of Japanese commitment of implementing the force realignment plan. The slower-than-expected progress on the preparatory process toward the construction of the FRF—the MOD says that it is finally ready to conduct a full-scale environmental impact assessment—continues to stir US anxiety on whether the relocation of the Marines in Okinawa can indeed take place according to the plan agreed to in May 2006.

Some former and current US officials also express frustration toward the slow progress in the bilateral consultation regarding the RMC. On the one hand, both US government officials and outside observers argue that the “to-do” list in the RMC talk is long and ambitious, and therefore it takes time to address all the items on the agenda in the first place. They also recognize that part of the frustration stems from the complexity of the consultation process itself. Each RMC action item is intimately linked with different parts of the force realignment plan, and they need to move either in tandem or in sequence to be effective. Other aspects of their frustration, however, come from Japan's inability to discuss certain issues in RMC consultations with the United States. They point out that Japan, still restricted by its ban on collective self-defense (and some parties even add operations outside of the region, based on Article Six—the Far East Clause—of the US–Japan Security Treaty), will not be in the position to discuss the RMC in the manner prescribed by the DPRI. Japan's inability to do so, in their opinion, further impedes the deepening of bilateral defense relations and therefore prevents the US–Japan alliance from becoming

one of the “core” alliance relationships that the United States engages in globally.

Finally, another major worry of the US is the dim prospect of the emergence of a strong leader in Japan for the foreseeable future. The experience with Japan under former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi impressed upon US officials that strong leadership at the top political level is required for Japan to overcome domestic challenges and fulfill its alliance commitment. His successor Shinzo Abe, while committed to strengthening the US-Japan alliance, neither had the time to develop his own personal interest in the US force realignment nor stayed in office long enough to exercise any political influence. After a surprisingly (and therefore disappointing to many) short term of Shinzo Abe’s cabinet, US officials simply did not see that kind of strong leadership in the Fukuda government, and in today’s political circles in Japan writ large. Washington was very disappointed when Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba explored the chance of visiting the United States in the spring of 2008; he was not interested in discussing the realignment issues. To the DOD, this was very discouraging because it signaled the lack of political commitment to carry out the force realignment in Tokyo.

CONCLUSION: US PERCEPTIONS OF THE DPRI AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE US–JAPAN ALLIANCE

For the United States, the DPRI was an opportunity to ensure a sustainable military presence in Japan, which is critically important for the US security strategy in Asia. While an agreement was reached on the plan for relocation of US forces in Japan, considerable challenges are facing both countries as they work to ensure that the plan is implemented.

In reality, however, Washington has several reasons to be disappointed and frustrated with Japan during the DPRI. First, US officials were disappointed that their Japanese counterparts were not as proactive as they had hoped they would be in sharing their ideas on the future of the US–Japan alliance. Second, the US was frustrated that Japan appeared to be interested only in reducing the burden of the relocation on local communities because Washington felt strongly that such a reduction could only occur while still maintaining deterrence capability. In this context, some former and current US military officers question the sequence of the issues tackled by the DPRI. They would have preferred that the discussion of roles, missions, and capabilities had taken place before the base relocation issues were discussed. Third, continuous leaks to the Japanese media regarding the status of negotiations and the substance of the consultation damaged the atmosphere of trust between the United States and

Japan. Fourth, Washington was frustrated with the JDA-led negotiating team for the sometimes less-than-poor interagency coordination and breakdown of communications within the JDA itself. Last, even after the May 2006 agreement, there still remains a substantial level of anxiety on the part of the United States in regard to whether Japan can actually implement the realignment plan.

In particular, the success of the relocation of US Marines in Okinawa will likely be used as a yardstick to measure the success of the overall US force realignment and Japan's commitment to this effort. On the one hand, the United States is acutely aware that the relocation of Futenma is vital to its sustainable military presence in Okinawa. The Marine helicopter crash in August 2004 was a vivid reminder to the United States, however, that it just takes one accident that claims lives and affects local properties and citizens for anti-US base sentiment to rise along with cries calling for a complete withdrawal of US forces in Okinawa. Given the fact that the regional security environment in East Asia looks more uncertain than ever, with a nuclear North Korea and China's rapid military modernization potentially negatively impacting the cross-Strait military balance, it is critical that the US maintains the forward-deployment of a certain level of deterrence capability in Okinawa. Thus, the relocation of Futenma is the key in ensuring the long-term presence of US forces in Japan.

In recent months, Japan has been proposing to the United States that the two governments issue a new declaration—something that builds on the 1996 US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security—to reconfirm the vital importance of the US-Japan alliance as a global partnership. However, the United States has given a rather chilly response to this idea. There is a certain level of disappointment among US officials who were involved in the DPRI that, all promises and political rhetoric aside, nothing in the basic dynamic of the US-Japan alliance has really changed. Many still question whether the Japanese really grasped the strategic significance of the DPRI. From the US viewpoint, the sense of disappointment and frustration still continues, and the US believes that it is imperative for the longevity of the US-Japan alliance that implementation of the US force realignment and continuing discussion on RMC occurs in a way that enhances trust between the two allies. To them, another bilateral declaration that celebrates the alliance, while politically and symbolically useful, has little meaning if the United States and Japan cannot take steps to substantiate the alliance transformation by addressing all the issues that were identified in the October 2005 SCC document.

Furthermore, some in the United States pose an even more fundamental question—what was the purpose of the DPRI? When raising this basic issue, they again point to the lack of progress in Japan over the debate on the

principles of post-war Japanese security policy, including the right of collective self-defense. Although former Prime Ministers Junichiro Koizumi and Shinzo Abe both expressed their aspiration to make substantive progress in the debate on prohibition of the right of collective self-defense and broader constitutional revision, it is clear that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda does not share their sense of priority.

Nevertheless, from Washington's perspective, it is imperative that Japan resolves this issue if the US–Japan alliance is to be transformed as envisioned and outlined in the October 2005 SCC Joint Statement. There is no point in discussing a “global alliance” with Japan if the Japanese government is unable to even discuss these issues and is likely to continue to be constrained in the area of military action for the foreseeable future. The DPRI began with the lofty goal of transforming the US–Japan alliance. Whether the US–Japan alliance can be truly transformed as Washington had originally envisioned remains to be seen.

US POLICY TOWARD JAPAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR OKINAWA

Weston S. Konishi

This chapter examines the policy of the United States (US) toward Japan and implications for Okinawa in the context of the Bush administration's Global Posture Review (GPR). The GPR is aimed at restructuring US forward-deployed forces around the world into a more lethal and rapidly deployable power projection force—while at the same time reducing the so-called footprint of US military installations on local communities in foreign countries. As a key US ally in Northeast Asia and home to approximately 47,000 US troops, Japan stands to be directly affected by the GPR initiative. Regarding the US military presence in Okinawa, where a significant concentration of US forces in Japan is located, the GPR is likely to have a particularly tangible impact on local communities. Perhaps because of the immediacy of the GPR's impact on Okinawa, it is tempting for many Japanese citizens to view the GPR as primarily an opportunity to reduce the US footprint in Japan rather than, first and foremost, a strategic initiative with only secondary considerations for reducing the burden on local communities. Partly for this reason, many Japanese, particularly Okinawans, have had high expectations for the outcome of the GPR—assuming that it presents an opportunity for a complete withdrawal of US forces from the island.

This chapter attempts to recast the force realignment process in Okinawa within the broader context of the Bush administration's policy priorities toward Japan, including the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI, the Japan-specific component of the GPR) that was primarily carried out from December 2002 to May 2006. From this overview, it is clear that while reducing the footprint on Okinawa was a concern for US defense planners, a full withdrawal of US forces was never seriously considered, given the continuing strategic importance of the island to both US and Japanese security interests.

US POLICY TOWARD JAPAN AND OKINAWA BEFORE THE GLOBAL POSTURE REVIEW

Japan and Okinawa have long been locations of vital strategic importance to the United States. Throughout the Cold War, Japan was a key element of the US alliance structure in East Asia, providing an additional ally in the containment of communism and a well-located base of operations for US forward-deployed forces in Northeast Asia. Okinawa's location, in particular, provided strategic advantages for the projection of the US Marines and Air Force in response to a variety of potential contingencies, such as a conflict on the Korean Peninsula or a crisis in the Taiwan Strait. Indeed, the array of potential threats across Northeast Asia reinforced the salience of the US–Japan alliance and the need to maintain a sizeable force presence in Japan, particularly on Okinawa.

During the Cold War, the United States emphasized the strategic value of Okinawa over the concerns of local communities that bore the burden of hosting US military bases. Conflicts of various kinds occurring between the bases and local communities were either largely overlooked by US officials or passed on to mainland Japanese officials to sort out for themselves (as was often the case after the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972). The bottom line of the United States throughout the Cold War was that local concerns about Okinawa were minor and secondary, especially in contrast to the larger strategic priority of maintaining a robust US force presence on the island.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, new questions were raised about the rationale for the US–Japan alliance and the need to maintain the existing level of US forces on Okinawa.¹³² Indeed, the international post-Cold War security environment fundamentally changed the context of debate over the US military presence on Okinawa. With less tangible strategic reasons for maintaining a Cold War force structure on Okinawa, rising tensions between US bases and host communities became an ever-growing concern for alliance managers on both sides of the Pacific.

As the mid-1990s approached, the US–Japan alliance, as well as the fate of US bases on Okinawa, grew increasingly tenuous. Recognizing the severity of the situation, policymakers in Washington decided to launch the *1995 East Asia Strategy Report* (otherwise known as the Nye Initiative, named after then-US Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye). The results of the Nye Initiative, issued in February 1995, reaffirmed the US–Japan alliance as an important element in being able to meet the emerging post-Cold War threats, as well as the

need to maintain approximately 100,000 troops in the Asia–Pacific region—only a slight modification from prior Cold War troop levels.^{xxxii}

In September 1995, the horrific rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three US servicemen brought tensions on Okinawa to a boiling point and threatened to unravel the progress made under the Nye Initiative to shore up the bilateral alliance. With the US–Japan alliance seemingly on the edge of disaster, US policymakers realized that immediate action needed to be taken to address the situation and reduce tensions on Okinawa. A bilateral Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) was immediately established to begin outlining concrete ways to help improve base–community relations on the island.

A final report of the SACO was released in December 1996, issuing a number of recommended measures to reduce the “activities of US forces on communities in Okinawa.”¹³³ Among the measures called for in the final report were the following: a return of approximately 12,600 acres of land that were occupied by US military facilities, the relocation of the Futenma Marine Air Station from Ginowan City to an off-shore site, a significant reduction of live-fire training on the island, and streamlined legal procedures between the US and local authorities under the auspices of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).

The significance of the SACO is at least twofold. First, it had an immediate impact on alleviating the crisis on Okinawa in the wake of the rape incident. Second, the creation of SACO represented the first institutionalized effort on the part of the United States (and Japan) to address the concerns of local communities on Okinawa. In particular, SACO’s proposal to move the contentious Futenma Marine Air Station out of Ginowan City signaled an unprecedented decision on the part of the US Department of Defense to relocate a major US military facility as a direct response to anti-base sentiment.

However, the outcome of the rape incident may have produced vastly different lessons for the people in Okinawa and the US government. On the Okinawa side, the planned relocation of Futenma Air Station proved that significant adjustments to the US military presence on the island were indeed possible as a result of a strong public outcry. For the US government, on the other hand, the incident underscored the need to further address local community concerns to ensure the long-term sustainability of forward-deployed forces on Okinawa and elsewhere around the world.

^{xxxii} The reaffirmation of the alliance was further solidified by the April 1996 Joint Security Declaration between President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto as well as the subsequent revision of the National Defense Program Guidelines in 1997.

THE 2000 ARMITAGE–NYE REPORT AND INITIAL BUSH ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES

As the Bush administration entered office in 2001, Japan and Okinawa once again emerged as important elements of US strategic planning. The blueprint of this strategy stemmed from the recommendations of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who chaired a bipartisan study group that released a set of policy recommendations on US–Japan relations in October 2000 entitled, “The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership.”¹³⁴ The Armitage–Nye Report, as the report is also known, called on the United States to reaffirm the importance of Japan as the “keystone” of its involvement in Asia—a region of vital importance to US national interests—and (implicitly) a partner in the hedging strategy vis-à-vis China.¹³⁵

In response to the continuing challenges of the US military presence on Okinawa, the Armitage–Nye Report devoted a section to Okinawa-related issues. The report acknowledged the burden of “heavy concentrations of U.S. forces on Okinawa,” and called for the swift implementation of the recommendations in the 1996 SACO Final Report, including the reduction of US military facilities on the island and the relocation of the Futenma Air Station.¹³⁶ A key passage in the report, however, qualified the reduction of the US military footprint in Japan “as long as our capabilities can be maintained.”¹³⁷ This reference to capabilities versus force reductions foreshadowed future Department of Defense (DOD) explanations that base realignments under the GPR would not come at the cost of overall force capabilities because advancements in military technology would offset the potential reduction of forward-deployed troops. Indeed, these capabilities could be enhanced due to the advancements in military technology and equipment.

The emphasis on the alliance with Japan as reflected in the Armitage–Nye Report coincided with another Bush administration initiative: the transformation of the US military into a lighter, more flexible force able to meet future security challenges. This transformation would require a fundamental review of US forward-deployed force structures in allied countries around the world. As a result, the US alliance with Japan and the US force realignment on Okinawa were slated to become a major component of the US defense review.

The renewed US emphasis on Japan was manifest at the top levels of government. Soon after his inauguration as president, Bush met with his Japanese counterpart, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi—laying the foundation of a close personal relationship that would set the tone for a dramatically enhanced bilateral partnership.

As the US–Japan relationship deepened, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld launched a fundamental review of the worldwide US force structure in August 2001. This initial review led to the more comprehensive force structure review, called the Global Posture Review (GPR), which included many of the following defense transformation principles:

- Recognition that the nature of threats had changed since the Cold War to more asymmetrical and unpredictable threats.
- The need to shift US forces from a “threat-based” to “capabilities-based” structure, with greater flexibility, mobility and lethality.
- The maximization of US technical superiority in areas such as precision-guided munitions, command and control systems, and other military assets.
- The improvement of joint military coordination and communication with allies.
- The need to reduce the footprint of US forward-deployed bases around the world to help sustain alliances and strategic partnerships with friendly nations.¹³⁸

These points were reflected in the Pentagon’s 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR). Released soon after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the QDR seemed to reflect greater prescience with its warnings about a new generation of asymmetrical threats.¹³⁹ Although the 2001 QDR and GPR had no immediate impact on the alliance with Japan, it was clear that the security relationship with Japan would be affected at some point—but how and to what extent was still unclear.

An additional consideration for Secretary Rumsfeld was that the US–Japan alliance could serve as a model for the GPR with other alliance partners. In many ways, the US force structure in Japan already reflected what the Pentagon aimed to achieve in other parts of the world. With the III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) based on Okinawa and a potent air and naval force deployed throughout the archipelago, the US force structure in Japan already resembled the kind of rapid, flexible, mobile, and lethal force structure that Secretary Rumsfeld had envisioned for the GPR. Japan and Okinawa particularly represented a prime example of the need for reducing the US military footprint to support the long-term sustainability of the alliance—an important, albeit not primary, objective of the GPR.

9/11 AND THE IRAQ WAR: CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE IN THE ALLIANCE

It is likely that had the 9/11 attacks and resulting military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq not occurred, the process of realigning US forces in Japan would have commenced soon after the 2001 QDR. The urgency of the operations in the Middle East, however, took priority over force structure talks in both capitals.

Nevertheless, the Middle East operations only served to propel, not delay, progress in bilateral defense cooperation.

In response to the 9/11 attacks, Prime Minister Koizumi dispatched Japan Marine Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) vessels to the Indian Ocean in 2002 to provide rear-area support for US and other forces engaged in the war on terrorism. In 2003, Koizumi again called for the dispatch of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Forces (JGSDF) to Iraq to help assist in humanitarian and reconstruction activities. The JGSDF was eventually dispatched to Samawah, Iraq, in December 2003. In addition, the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) was deployed to Kuwait to support transport operations. These deployments were the first of their kind in post-war Japanese history and further cemented the Bush administration's appreciation for its main ally in Asia.

More importantly, the bilateral defense cooperation occurring in the Indian Ocean and Iraq provided momentum for change in the alliance structure and greater confidence in Tokyo and Washington that a fundamental transformation of their security arrangement could be achieved. Japan, in particular, seemed to be growing more comfortable with its expanded defense contributions—a trend that seemed to mirror changes in the Japanese public's traditional outlook on security.

In this vein, two important defense reports were released in Japan: the October 2004 Report by the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities, otherwise known as the "Araki Commission Report," and the December 2004 *National Defense Program Guidelines* (NDPG).¹⁴⁰ Both documents paralleled the spirit of the 2001 QDR, calling for greater security integration with the United States and a fundamental review and restructuring of the JSDF. In particular, the NDPG outlined plans to enhance the JSDF's technological assets and streamline its own force structure, for instance, by shifting the emphasis of Japan's defenses from positions in Hokkaido to positions further south on the archipelago, including Kyushu. Most importantly, from the US perspective, the Araki Commission Report and NDPG indicated Japan's willingness to adjust its own forces in tandem with the US defense transformation and Global Posture Review.

THE SCC STATEMENTS AND THE DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE (DPRI)

During this period of increasingly cooperative security positions, both allies issued a series of statements under the auspices of the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) revealing new details about bilateral security cooperation. In December 2002, the SCC announced that Japan and the United States would

review their “defense postures in the new security environment” and “address such issues as bilateral roles and missions, forces and force structure.”¹⁴¹ This was, in fact, an oblique reference to the launching of the DPRI, a bilateral initiative aimed at negotiating and planning the realignment of US forces in Japan and supporting the long-term transformation of the US–Japan alliance.

During the next several years, details regarding the DPRI were rarely available outside of the subsequent SCC joint statements. Reports in the summer of 2004, however, suggested that the initiative was stalling and that frustration and resentment were mounting on both sides of the Pacific as alliance managers clashed over the details of relocating US bases in Japan, as well as other aspects of the DPRI process.

Then, on 19 February 2005, both sides released a joint SCC statement announcing a breakthrough agreement on Common Strategic Objectives addressing regional and global security threats to the bilateral alliance—a significant milestone in the eyes of DOD officials because it represented an explicit acknowledgement from Tokyo that the defense of Japan should be seen in a global context. This was followed by another statement from the SCC on 29 October 2005 outlining additional progress in the negotiations over force realignments and plans to expand bilateral coordination in roles, missions, and capabilities.¹⁴² Among the measures called for under the recommendations for roles, missions, and capabilities are: improving policy and operational coordination at every level of government; improving interoperability of forces; and, expanding joint training exercises.

Under the force realignment recommendations, the two sides announced several major steps to reduce the US military footprint on Okinawa, including: the relocation of the III MEF headquarters from Okinawa to Guam (including some 8,000 personnel and their dependents); the consolidation of Marine facilities to facilitate the land return of numerous small areas; the continued implementation of the SACO Final Report; and, the relocation of Futenma Air Station to an offshore facility near Camp Schwab. An implementation plan for these measures was reached in a subsequent SCC meeting in May 2006.¹⁴³

In a historical context, all of the proposals to reduce the US footprint on Okinawa have amounted to significant reductions in the overall presence of US troops on the island, indicating the seriousness with which US defense planners viewed the problem they have had in sustaining an extensive and obtrusive force presence on Okinawa. Still, it is clear from the final set of proposals that a complete removal of US forces from Okinawa was far from being considered seriously. Despite the significance of relocating the Futenma Air Station and the

III MEF headquarters to Guam, the status quo on Okinawa was kept largely intact.

Indeed, the final DPRI plans indicate that the US forward-deployed structure in Japan, as it presently exists, represents the kind of force structure that Secretary Rumsfeld had envisioned replicating in other parts of the world through the GPR initiative. In other words, in balancing the concerns between maintaining a rapidly deployable marine and air force posture and reducing the footprint on Okinawa communities, the Pentagon clearly concluded that the former outweighed the latter and that a wholesale withdrawal of US forces from the island was out of the question. The recommendations of the 2000 Armitage–Nye report, in this case, proved to be especially perspicuous—reducing the footprint on Okinawa would proceed as long as it did not compromise US strategic assets and capabilities.

CONCLUSION

The Bush administration set out to bolster the alliance with Japan and radically transform the US military into a lighter, faster, more flexible, and more lethal force with a lighter footprint on foreign hosts of US forward-deployed elements. Although far from complete, the Bush administration was able to give Japan greater prominence in its diplomatic agenda. The Bush administration also reached an agreement with Tokyo on the transformation of the alliance under the DPRI process. It remains to be seen, however, whether this agreement can actually be implemented during the next several years in the face of anticipated resistance from local leaders in Okinawa and other relevant areas.^{xxxiii}

Another point of concern that arose in 2006, particularly on the Japanese side, was the possibility that the transformation of the US military (and by extension, transformation of the alliance with Japan) might lose momentum in the wake of Donald Rumsfeld's resignation as Secretary of Defense on 8 November 2006. Although Rumsfeld's resignation initially sent shock waves throughout the defense establishment, the most direct implication of his departure appears to have been on policy toward Iraq, as opposed to the broader initiative of defense transformation and the GPR. This is primarily because both initiatives have become accepted tenets among US defense planners and because progress on both fronts is too advanced to roll back at this point. Secretary Rumsfeld's

^{xxxiii} The November 2006 Okinawa gubernatorial election fielded candidates who openly criticized the relocation plans for Futenma Marine Air Station and other elements of the US realignment plans. Hirokazu Nakaima, a conservative candidate seen as being more receptive to the realignment proposal, eventually prevailed.

successor, Robert Gates, also signaled his commitment to carry out defense transformation more or less as originally planned.¹⁴⁴

Another concern is that the changing political dynamic in Washington, in particular the inauguration of a new president in 2009, may impede or even rescind defense transformation and realignment initiatives. So far, however, neither the defense transformation process nor the GPR have emerged as issues of debate in the presidential campaign. Criticism of the Bush administration's defense policy has focused almost exclusively on the US force presence in Iraq, not on the underlying tenets of the administration's defense transformation process. Similarly, the Bush administration's security policy toward Japan and the transformation of the US–Japan alliance is not likely to face significant scrutiny in the lead-up to the 2008 presidential election.

Among the alliance managers on the US side, the bilateral negotiation phase of the DPRI is now largely viewed as a *fait accompli*. This US position has been made clear on a number of occasions by both current and former US DOD officials. Most recently, Richard Lawless, former Deputy Undersecretary of Defense, reiterated the US position in his interview with *Asahi Shimbun* that the United States would not entertain a modification of the Futenma Relocation Plan.¹⁴⁵ That is, work at the bilateral government-to-government level mostly concluded with the May 2006 SCC statement outlining implementation plans for the DPRI process. The remaining issue for US defense planners, at this point, is no longer how they will negotiate the transformation of the alliance and realignment of forces on Okinawa, but whether Tokyo and local authorities will follow up with the implementation of DPRI as envisioned in previous SCC agreements.

Despite early signs of prevarication on DPRI follow-up items by Japanese officials,¹⁴⁶ both sides were able to acknowledge “significant progress” in US base consolidation plans on Okinawa in a 1 May 2007 joint SCC statement.¹⁴⁷ Yet, since the release of that statement, new complications have arisen due to sustained local resistance to the Futenma relocation plans. The full implementation of these plans over time will, in the eyes of US defense planners, close the book on major structural efforts to reduce the US military footprint on Okinawa for the foreseeable future.

**EVALUATION OF US FORCE
REALIGNMENT IN OKINAWA:
IS THE ROADMAP A BETTER ALTERNATIVE
TO NO AGREEMENT?**

Yuji Uesugi

Maintaining the capability of the United States Forces in Japan (USFJ), while reducing the burdens on local communities that have been associated with the US military facilities (such as in Okinawa), was identified as the primary goal of the Defense Posture Review Initiative (DPRI), which began in accordance with the Global Posture Review (GPR) initiative of the United States (US). As a result of the DPRI consultation that lasted more than three years, the two governments reached a series of agreements that were announced under the following joint statements of the Security Consultative Committee (SCC), or commonly called the “Two-plus-Two” meetings: the February 2005 Joint Statement, the October 2005 *US–Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*, and the May 2006 *United States–Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation* (referred to as *Roadmap* hereafter).

This paper aims to evaluate the substance of the current SCC negotiations on the US force realignment in Okinawa by posing such central questions as: How will the agreement affect the US presence in Okinawa; and, will such realignments reduce the burdens on Okinawa? While it is difficult to accurately foresee the full significance of the current agreements, this paper seeks to illuminate key challenges and concerns relating to their eventual implementation. By offering an objective and balanced analysis of this complex situation, this paper offers a set of guiding principles that should be useful in improving the situation from the perspective of the Governments of Japan and Okinawa, respectively.

EVALUATION METHOD AND ASSUMPTIONS

Evaluation Framework

The following sections focus on evaluating the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the current agreements vis-à-vis the US Force realignment in

Okinawa to assess if they will be useful in attaining that ambitious goal. Relevance deals with the appropriateness of a certain agreement to the problem(s); effectiveness measures the contribution made by a certain agreement in achieving the original objective; and, sustainability assesses the likelihood that a certain aspect of the agreement will be successfully implemented. Such an evaluation would generally require comparing alternative approaches and their respective success. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to compare the SCC's final agreement with all of the options that they have considered. Therefore, this paper focuses specifically on the likely success of the SCC's agreement in its primary goal of reducing burdens on Okinawa.

Burdens on Okinawa

What are the burdens on Okinawa? In essence, these refer to the entire array of impacts caused by the physical presence of US bases and forces in Okinawa. Specifically, this paper defines the burdens on Okinawa as noise from aircrafts, environmental pollution, accidents caused by training and other military operations, incidents and crimes committed by US servicemen and their families, various constraints on sovereignty made by the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), restrictions on land usage, and the psychological and mental impacts of the US bases and forces on those Japanese citizens living near a base. Considering that noise, environmental pollution, the threat of accidents, and the associated stress are the sources of "burdens," one could conclude that given their location and noise levels, Kadena Air Base (AB) and the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma are the two greatest generators of burdens.

When people in Okinawa hear the word "burden," however, they tend to associate this term with the presence of the US Marine Corps personnel. Even though the Third Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) is the smallest among these forces in the US military and the number of Marines stationed at Okinawa has been reduced from 21,000 in 1998 to 16,000 in 2006, the Marine Corps constitutes the largest portion of US forces on Okinawa. With 16,000 Marines stationed at various camps in Okinawa, there are more Marines in Okinawa than at any other US armed service. Moreover, the majority of the US facilities in Okinawa, including Camp Hansen, Camp Schwab, and the Northern Training Area, belong to the Marine Corps.

The negative image of Marines has been confirmed and reinforced by a series of incidents and accidents including the 1995 rape incident of a local schoolgirl and the 2004 helicopter crash at Okinawa International University. Although crimes like the 1995 rape incident were not committed solely by Marines, the general antagonism of the local people toward Marines leads them to believe that the mere presence of the Marine Corps in Okinawa is one of their major sources of

concern. It could be said that the “proximity” of Marine bases and facilities creates the impression that the Marines are the prime source of burdens on Okinawa.

Of course, there are other potential measures to reduce the burdens on Okinawa, such as revising the SOFA, but this negotiation has focused more on reducing the Marine presence in Okinawa. Because of the perception that the Marines are the prime source of burdens on Okinawa, as specifically addressed in the 1996 Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) negotiation, the relocation of MCAS Futenma again became the most symbolic issue at the negotiating table.

Synopsis of the Agreement

Among the current set of agreements, items directly linked to Okinawa are as follows:

Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF):

- The FRF will be relocated to the Henoko-saki and adjacent water areas of Oura and Henoko Bays, with construction targeted for completion by 2014.

Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam:

- Approximately 8,000 III MEF personnel and their approximately 9,000 dependents will relocate from Okinawa to Guam by 2014 (units to relocate will include: III MEF Command Element, 3rd Marine Division Headquarters, 3rd Logistic Group Headquarters, 1st Marine Air Wing Headquarters, and 12th Marine Regiment Headquarters).

Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities:

- Following relocation to the FRF, a total or partial return of the following six candidate facilities located south of Kadena AB, including MCAS Futenma, will be examined: Camp Kuwae, Camp Zukeran, MCAS Futenma, Makiminato Service Area, Naha Port, and Army POJ Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1.
- Camp Hansen will be used for Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) training and the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) will use Kadena AB for bilateral training with US Forces.

In addition, there are other agreements that may affect the presence of Marines in Okinawa. The MCAS Futenma has three key capabilities, which can be summarized as: (1) base for the Marine Heavy and Medium Helicopter Squadrons; (2) base for the KC-130 squadron/Marine Aerial Re-fueler Transport Squadron; and, (3) base for contingency use. After the realignment, the KC-130 squadron will be relocated to MCAS Iwakuni with its headquarters, maintenance support facilities, and family support facilities, while the contingency use

capability will be relocated to the ASDF bases at Nyutabaru and Tsuiki. Although no specific reference was made in the 1996 SACO Final Report, the SCC made it clear that MCAS Futenma's contingency use capability would be relocated outside Okinawa.

EVALUATION OF THE AGREEMENT

Relevance of the Agreement

Futenma Replacement Facility

The Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) was insisting on either implementation of the 29 July 2002 Relocation Basic Plan (RBP), developed as a result of the SACO Final Report, or relocation of MCAS Futenma to a location outside of Okinawa. Former Governor Keiichi Inamine of the OPG did not accept the current plan because it did not include the civil–military dual use of the FRF, which he demanded be included in the 2002 RBP when he gave his consent. Inamine had also demanded that a “fifteen-year time limit” be set for military usage of the FRF, but this demand was not incorporated in the 2002 RBP.

In the current series of bilateral consultations on realignment of the USFJ, the two governments explored the possibility of moving MCAS Futenma to a location off the islands of Okinawa. Hence, the voice of Okinawans was indeed heard by the two governments, although this did not mean that all of their wishes were met. It was agreed that two of the three core functions of the MCAS Futenma would be relocated to alternative sites outside Okinawa; and, closely related to the decision not to relocate III MEF combat elements from Okinawa to Guam or elsewhere, basing for the helicopter squadrons will remain on Okinawa. The return or relocation of the MCAS Futenma had been sought because it is located in the middle of Ginowan City and all of the stakeholders reached consensus that the noise problems and risk of crashes, which were high due to the station's proximity to a residential area, had to be resolved.^{xxxiv}

With regard to the FRF at the Henoko-saki, one can argue that here too the local community's voice was incorporated into the agreement. The US and Japanese governments agreed to build two runways aligned in a “V” shape so that aircraft could avoid flying over the residential areas. This is one example that illustrates the two governments' efforts to address the issues of safety, noise, and environmental impact in the agreement. In the *Basic Agreement on the*

^{xxxiv} The major stakeholders include the US and Japanese governments, OPG, and Ginowan City.

Construction of Futenma Replacement Facility, signed between the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) and the two local communities (Nago City and Ginoza Village) on 7 April 2006, the parties agreed that aircrafts would not fly over the designated residential areas such as Henoko district, Toyohara district, and Abe district in Nago city and Ginoza village.^{xxxv} Furthermore, the JDA (now MOD) and OPG agreed on “eradication of the risks” in the “Basic Confirmation on the Realignment of US Forces in Okinawa” of 11 May 2006, which had been the primary driver behind the effort to fulfill the relocation of MCAS Futenma.

The fundamental positions among the major stakeholders on the issue of an acceptable FRF in Okinawa have not changed since the era of SACO. Nago City has always been supportive of the idea of hosting a helicopter port since the mayor accepted the government’s basic plan for an offshore helicopter port in 1998. On the other hand, the OPG has never accepted any plan that excludes functions other than the helicopter port capability at the FRF because former Governor Masahide Ohta rejected the government plan in 1998. Even under the Inamine administration, the OPG continued demanding revision of the government proposal and requesting that the FRF be built to accommodate the function of an airport for large commercial jet carriers so that it would be capable of serving a civil–military “dual use.” Nago City desperately needs the Northern Development Assistance (NDA) contingent to move forward with the FRF, whereas the OPG wants to increase its capacity to receive more commercial flights, which are perceived as essential for Okinawa’s economic growth. Hence, two distinct categories within the local community, i.e., Nago City and the OPG, have demonstrated opposite reactions to the government initiative. While it can be concluded that the current agreement will address the need for reducing burdens on Okinawa and is thus relevant to the primary objective, it fails to meet OPG’s need to expand its airport capacity for the commercial flights that are fundamental to Okinawa’s economic development.

Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam

The number of Marine personnel in Okinawa is likely to be reduced significantly because it was agreed that about 8,000 III MEF personnel (roughly one-half of the total number of Marines stationed at Okinawa), together with their 9,000 dependents, will leave Okinawa. The remaining units will be reorganized and will serve as the core components of the Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), which includes the Air–Ground Task Force elements that are often deployed outside Okinawa as part of routine exercises or overseas missions. Currently, 70 percent of the exercises of the III MEF are conducted

^{xxxv} As of January 2007, JDA was elevated to the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and became a cabinet ministry.

outside Okinawa, with more than seventy exercises carried out in Southeast Asia and Australia annually. Southeast Asia, which comes under the III MEF's area of responsibility, holds many potential hot spots and security concerns. Thus, III MEF has been busy in engaging the region through combined military exercises, such as *Balicopter* and *Cobra Gold* as part of "Theater Security Cooperation."

It can be assumed that this trend of holding combined military exercises in Southeast Asia will expand to a greater degree when the III MEF Command Element is relocated to Guam. After the move, the exercise of reassembling units, which has been conducted in Okinawa, will be carried out in Guam or elsewhere. The current agreement on the realignment of III MEF could cause a shift in the III MEF's training base from Okinawa to Guam, which may lead to some reduction of burdens on Okinawa. For example, with the shifting of its headquarters from Okinawa to Guam, the III MEF will be able to conduct numerous types of exercises in the Marshall Islands' training area near Guam. In addition, if operational matters such as training schedule, location, and frequency are coordinated with the local community, the agreement on force reductions and relocation to Guam can be more relevant to the goal of further reducing burdens on Okinawa. Also, the decision to relocate about 9,000 dependents of III MEF personnel from Okinawa to Guam will decrease the possibility of crime, thus lowering the potential risk of friction between US personnel and the neighboring community.^{xxxvi}

Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities

Because of the integration of various US facilities, six facilities south of Kadena AB will be returned to Japan. This will allow the area from Naha City to Okinawa City via Ginowan City—the central part of the Okinawa main island — to be realigned. The resulting impact on the industrial structure and economic activities of Okinawa Prefecture will be considerable. Because more than 80 percent of the population on Okinawa's main island resides in areas south of Kadena AB, many people will no longer have to live near the US bases after this agreement is fully implemented. Nonetheless, the agreement comes with a condition. For example, because each agreement constitutes an integral part of the "package deal," the land return requires that the FRF be constructed in the Henoko-saki. To fulfill all aspects of the agreements, the implementation process will be divided into several phases and when each phase is completed, the local community will be rewarded for its cooperation. Essentially, the force

^{xxxvi} Recent records indicate that crimes being committed by youths are increasing within the US community in Okinawa (See for example, the comment of the former Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi's remark in the 154th Foreign Affairs Committee on 26 March 2002, http://www.shugiin.go.jp/itdb_kaigiroku.nsf/html/kaigiroku/000515420020326005.htm).

reductions and land returns were identified as bargaining chips that would ensure the implementation of the FRF agreement.

On the other hand, the current agreements only deal with the US forces in Okinawa and do not include a comprehensive realignment of the SDF in Okinawa. If the current negotiations on the realignment of the US forces in Okinawa are regarded as the last chance to transform Okinawa in the near future, then a more drastic transformation should be attempted. For example, one alternative is to put all US military facilities on Okinawa under the control of the SDF and designate certain essential facilities as shared-use. If this were to occur, Camp Hansen and Kadena AB, both of which were identified as shared-use facilities under the current agreement, would be put under SDF control. Nonetheless, designating the shared use of these facilities could be the first step towards allowing the GSDF and the ASDF, now stationed at Naha City, to be stationed at Camp Hansen and Kadena AB, respectively. In fact, cooperation between the SDF and the USFJ could be strengthened as a result of such an agreement. If such a co-location alternative is feasible, then the return of SDF facilities surrounding Naha Airport also becomes feasible. If handled strategically, the concept of the SDF and USFJ sharing aspects of the various existing facilities is compatible with the goal of reducing burdens on Okinawa.

Of course, the current agreement does not eliminate all burdens on Okinawa and does not meet all of the expectations of the local community. It would be nearly impossible to find a solution that would satisfy all of the stakeholders, i.e., the US forces in Okinawa, the US and Japanese governments, the local community, including property owners, and the OPG and other local municipalities, many of whom have divergent interests in respect to the Okinawa base issue. While recognizing the challenge of this difficult circumstance, the relevance of the current agreement to the core objective—reduction of burdens on Okinawa—is very high. If the agreement is implemented, then some burdens on Okinawa will definitely be reduced.

Effectiveness of the Agreement

Futenma Replacement Facility

Construction of the FRF and the return of MCAS Futenma will directly result in a dramatic reduction of burdens on Okinawa, both symbolically and practically. The noise problem and risk of accidents, which are related to the location of MCAS Futenma in the middle of a residential area, will be eliminated. Those residents who have been annoyed by the noise from aircrafts and who have worried about the risk of accidents caused by aircrafts flying over their houses

will no longer have to suffer; and, educational and medical facilities located near MCAS Futenma will no longer have to function near a military airfield.

Ginowan City will be able to start an urban development plan when the MCAS Futenma is relocated. The city is the nexus between Naha City (the largest city in Okinawa) and Okinawa City (the second largest city in Okinawa). Hence, the return of the MCAS Futenma will facilitate the revitalization of an urban central Okinawa. Due to the presence of the MCAS Futenma in the middle of the island, Ginowan City has had to establish multiple public facilities such as fire departments, police stations, and city halls. The return of the air station and land will allow these public facilities to be consolidated and relocated in the most logical and advantageous manner. In addition, about 2,800 property owners will be able to decide how they will use their land. Local residents will also be free to visit their cemetery without seeking permission from the US military.

On the other hand, it could also be said that some burdens on Okinawa will increase because of the return of the MCAS Futenma. Currently, the annual rent for the land is about 6.3 billion yen and Ginowan City receives 1.4 billion yen as “base-related income.” When the base is returned, the local community will lose this considerable income. For those property owners who are heavily dependent on the rent for their survival, their land will be returned to them against their own wishes. Furthermore, local citizens who have been employed at the MCAS Futenma will lose their jobs. The local community must seek a consensus among the property owners and other stakeholders on the usage of the returned land. These, along with the other impacts of the return of the MCAS Futenma, may leave the local community with a host of new challenges in exchange for removal of the burdens that have stemmed from the US military presence over the years. Moreover, persons living in the Henoko and Toyohara districts will have to bear the burden of hosting the FRF, which may create an array of new problems, such as noise and accidents.

Nevertheless, the considerable reduction in burdens on Okinawa will be worth facing any new challenges caused by implementation of the current agreement. Of course, the return of the MCAS Futenma without having to replace it with a FRF, as some had hoped, would have been the best solution if it were feasible from the perspectives of both meeting security requirements and overcoming domestic political constraints. Still, it is fair to say that the two governments have negotiated the best possible solution for Okinawa, given the many constraints and conflicting interests. Thus, there should be no excuse for not adopting the plan that has been agreed upon.

Furthermore, the current agreement can be regarded as very practical because it will allow the MCAS Futenma to be relocated to a much less populated area (including Henoko, Toyohara, Kayo, Abe in Nago City, and Matsuda in Ginoza Village). The current plan also includes an agreement that the two governments will place a high priority on trying to reduce or minimize the noise and safety impacts on the local community when they build a runway and establish flight routes. If such an agreement is respected, then the current plan will be effective in reducing burdens on Okinawa.

As a result of the helicopter crash on the campus of Okinawa International University on 13 August 2004, the OPG has insisted on the urgency of mitigating the risks related to the MCAS Futenma. Unfortunately, the current agreement fails to sufficiently address this demand. In the *Roadmap* of 1 May 2006, no reference was made to the risks inherent to the MCAS Futenma. Instead, by arguing that “(t)he individual realignment initiatives form a coherent package,” the *Roadmap* places a higher priority on complete implementation of all realignment initiatives over removal of the danger of the MCAS Futenma as soon as possible and at any cost. The “Basic Confirmation on the Realignment of US Forces in Okinawa” exchanged between the Japanese Defense Minister and the Governor of Okinawa on 11 May 2006, however, stated that “the GOJ (Government of Japan) and the OPG held a common understanding that the removal of the danger of MCAS Futenma at the earliest occasion will contribute to the achievement of the original objective regarding this problem.”

According to the *Roadmap*, removing the risks associated with the MCAS Futenma will not be possible until the relocation is completed in 2014. However, the dangers stemming from the facility should be eliminated as soon as possible to maintain local support for the agreed-upon plan. Thus, both the GOJ and the OPG agreed that a special measure should be taken to eliminate the dangers of the MCAS Futenma before it is relocated. This may require the USFJ to either undergo some operational changes or agree to some provisional measures. Hence, the GOJ and the OPG will have to ask the USFJ to cooperate in considering and implementing such interim measures. No reference was made on this point in the bilateral agreement, however; the urgency and necessity for prompt action on this issue were only acknowledged in negotiations between the GOJ and the OPG. If such an important acknowledgement had been incorporated in the *Roadmap*, it would have been more effective in reducing burdens on Okinawa more promptly. At least the local community’s impression of the agreement’s effectiveness in reducing its burdens may have been more positive.

Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam

The reduction of the total number of III MEF personnel on Okinawa by one-half will be clear evidence to Okinawans that their burdens will be reduced significantly. The III MEF units remaining on Okinawa will be Marine Air-Ground Task Force elements, which include the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) whose personnel are often away from Okinawa for training and operation. During the military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, the 31st MEU and other combat elements in Okinawa were deployed to the battlefield and no combat elements of III MEF physically existed in Okinawa.

Under the realignment plan, the personnel that belong to the III MEF command elements and rear-support elements, as well as their families—those who actually live in Okinawa (unlike combat personnel that are constantly on the move)—will be relocated to Guam. Because so many of the combat elements already spend a significant amount of time away from Okinawa, a wise scheduling of routine overseas exercises may help create a condition in which the majority of Marines are not in Okinawa at the same time.

Such a dramatic relocation plan will not be feasible, however, unless construction of the FRF and the availability of new facilities in Guam are in sight. This means that Okinawans will not see the key benefit of the relocation until 2014. If Okinawans are unable to reap the benefit of the realignment and experience the tangible reduction of their burdens sooner, then the effectiveness of the current agreement will fade considerably. The local population's expectations of the proposed burden reduction plan are very high now. If Tokyo fails to address the time gap that exists between the agreement and its ultimate implementation, then that momentum will be lost.

Although the *Roadmap* treats the individual realignment initiatives as an integral part of a coherent package, short-term measures to alleviate negative impacts are required to win the hearts and minds of the local people. As pointed out, however, the effect of the force reductions will come slowly, and the relocation will require the expansion of hosting facilities in Guam, which will also take time. Hence, visible stop-gap measures should come from the land returns and shared use of existing facilities, which is the next item to be examined.

Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities

As part of the agreement on land returns, it was decided that either total or partial return of six candidate facilities south of Kadena AB be considered after relocation to the FRF (see Table 11-1).

Table 11-1: Summary of Land Returns in the Current Agreement

<i>Name of Facility</i>	<i>Total Returned Land</i>	<i>Number of Property Owners</i>	<i>Annual Rent</i>	<i>Number of Employees</i>
MCAS Futenma	481 hectares	2,842	\ 6,380 million	200
Makiminato Service Area	274 hectares	2,189	\ 4,446 million	1,152
Naha Port	56 hectares	1,014	\ 1,955 million	92
Camp Kuwae	68 hectares	545	\ 969 million	225
Camp Zukeran	643 hectares	4,231	\ 8,411 million	2,212
Army POJ Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1	16 hectares	NA	NA	NA

In total, 1,538 hectares (ha) will be returned to the Japanese government under the current plan. These facilities are located in central Okinawa, which is densely populated (as mentioned earlier, more than 80 percent of the people in Okinawa Prefecture live there) and plays a pivotal role as the center of the local economy and industry. The impact of land returns on the local economy and industrial development could be significant. On the other hand, the land returns agreed upon in the SACO Final Report were much larger because the agreement included ten facilities totaling 5,074 ha, although 80 percent of the returned land in this agreement came from returning one-half of the Northern Training Area (see Table 11-2).

Table 11-2: Summary of Land Returns Indicated in SACO Final Report

<i>Name of Facility</i>	<i>Land Returned in Hectares</i>
Northern Training Area	half return: 3,987 ha
Aba Training Area	end of shared use: 480 ha
Ginbaru Training Area	total return: 60 ha
Sobe Communication Site	total return: 53 ha
Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield	total return: 191 ha
Camp Kuwae	total return: 99 ha
Senaha Communication Station	almost total return: 61 ha
Makiminato Service Area	partial return: 3 ha
Naha Port	total return: 57 ha
Camp Zukeran	partial return: 83 ha

Although this set of agreements on land returns will be reviewed under the current realignment process, it is assumed that most of these will be implemented provided that they do not contradict the current agreement. In short, the current agreement will contribute remarkably to the reduction of burdens on Okinawa with regard to the matter of land returns.

Nevertheless, the agreement on the shared use of facilities in Okinawa between the SDF and USFJ remains unsatisfactory because it will not create any noticeable reduction in the burdens on Okinawa. Indeed, if the shared use of the facilities is to remain as stipulated in the agreement, it will not only fail to result in any change in the equation of local burdens, but it could also add to the burdens on residents living near the designated facilities. If the agreement were to be revised to include relocation of relevant SDF units to the designated US facility, the effectiveness of this agreement would increase significantly. In fact, the jurisdiction of all US facilities on Okinawa should be returned to the GOJ first and then essential facilities should be reallocated for shared-use with the USFJ.

All of the agreements on land returns and shared use of facilities can only be sustainable if the GOJ is successful in building the FRF and contributing to the cost of the III MEF relocation to Guam. In other words, land returns could be a reward for cooperation or an added incentive for supporting progress in implementing realignment, which preserves its deterrence effect. In sum, the GOJ will have to implement the agreement in good faith. In return, the OPG will need to cooperate with the central government if it wishes to remove the selected US facilities from the most populated part of Okinawa, which in turn will serve as a foundation for the reduction of burdens and the promotion of local economic development.

If the two governments want to increase the effectiveness of the current agreement on land returns, then the reversion of the six facilities south of Kadena AB should not be implemented in a piecemeal fashion as the final phase of the realignment of the US forces. Rather, it should be used in a contingent way as an incentive to maintaining the momentum and fostering the cooperation of the local community. The *Roadmap* stated that the two governments will “develop a detailed consolidation plan by March 2007.” This detailed plan should adopt a contingency planning aspect and include interim steps to more quickly reduce the burden on Okinawans so that they can sense that things are indeed improving. The most effective way of using stop-gap measures as an incentive for moving to the next stage in the implementation would be to introduce such measures before local elections.

Sustainability of the Agreement

With regard to the sustainability of the agreement, there are several key assumptions and preconditions. First, as the GPR continues, the realignment of the USFJ is inevitable. US forces in Okinawa, an integral part of the USFJ, will be realigned in accordance with changing US global and regional strategies. Furthermore, a strong commitment on the part of the US government (USG) to promote the GPR process continues even after Robert Gates succeeded Donald Rumsfeld as US Secretary of Defense. Of course, the impact of Rumsfeld's departure must be watched carefully. However, regardless of the leadership change at the DOD, no major change in US policy is anticipated.

Furthermore, unlike at the time of the implementation of the SACO Final Report, the GOJ seems determined to implement the current agreement by suggesting possible passage of a special law. Nevertheless, a similar concern regarding the sustainability of the agreement on the GOJ side also exists as former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who led the DPRI process, has completed his term in office and handed over the difficult task of implementation to his successors. Also, other key interlocutors, such as former Defense Minister Fukushima Nukaga and former Vice Defense Minister Takemasa Moriya, have also been replaced by successors.

In addition, the gubernatorial election was held in Okinawa on 19 November 2006. Governor Keiichiro Inamine was replaced by Hirokazu Nakaima, a former chairman of the Okinawa Electronic Company who was supported by the economic leaders in Okinawa. Opposition groups supported Keiko Itokazu, who was a member of the House of Councillors and opposed the presence of US forces in Okinawa. Nakaima won in all of the municipalities that host US facilities (except for Yomitan Village, a stronghold of Itokazu), indicating that the local population supports the spirit of the current agreement, which would not only reduce burdens on Okinawa, but also bring considerable financial aid from the central government to the local community. However, it is not certain whether voters will behave the same way in the next election. Indeed, the sustainability of the agreement is heavily dependent on the surrounding political environment as well as the agreement itself.

Futenma Replacement Facility

It was agreed that the individual realignment initiatives all make up a comprehensive package. In the context of Okinawa, this means that the return of the six US military facilities south of Kadena AB depends on completion of the relocation of III MEF personnel and their families to Guam. But this relocation cannot happen without some tangible progress being made on

construction of the FRF, as well as the financial contribution of the GOJ for infrastructure development in Guam. Hence, without progress on construction of the FRF, a reduction in the burdens on Okinawa cannot be expected. In this sense, Okinawa has a critical stake in the completion of construction of the FRF.

The current agreement states: “In principle, the construction method for the FRF will be landfill.” The FRF will be constructed on part of the land area in Camp Schwab and adjacent water areas. It is estimated that three years will be required for the environmental assessment, and five years for the actual construction.¹⁴⁸ This time, construction can start in the land area of Camp Schwab and then adjacent water areas can be filled gradually. Hence, it is argued that the feasibility of such a construction method is higher than that of SACO’s offshore plan.

The October SCC document *US–Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future* states that:

“Improved contingency use of civilian facilities for long runway operations that cannot be replicated at the FRF will also be provided for the US forces,” and the corresponding statement in the *Roadmap* reads, “Requirements for improved contingency use of civilian facilities will be examined in the context of bilateral contingency planning, and appropriate arrangements will be made in order to realize the return of MCAS Futenma.”

According to the *Roadmap*, the capabilities of the MCAS Futenma for contingency use are to be addressed by the facility improvements for contingency use at the ASDF bases at Nyutabaru and Tsuiki. Hence, the description of “civilian facilities” seems to imply the civilian airport facility at Shimoji Island. Although it is a separate issue, there is a plan to build a long bridge between Miyako Island and Irabu Island (Shimoji Island and Irabu Island are closely adjacent to each other and Miyako Island has a decent seaport). The location of Shimoji Island is attractive strategically because of its proximity to the Taiwan Strait. The contingency use of Shimoji Island could be explored in the context of the return of MCAS Futenma.

After the most recent gubernatorial election in Okinawa, the GOJ tried to overcome local communities’ opposition by clearly linking construction of the FRF to Northern Development Assistance (NDA). The Japanese government argued that the *Roadmap* would ensure the continuation of NDA, reduction of Marines by one-half, and the return of six US facilities south of Kadena AB. The result of the 2006 gubernatorial election showed that the people of Okinawa were very eager to reduce their burdens, as they voted for the candidate who was more likely to support construction of the FRF. Governor Hirokazu Nakaima,

the successor of Inamine, claims that with regard to base policy, the land returns associated with the six US facilities south of Kadena AB could serve as a main driving force in the future economic development of Okinawa. Nakaima maintains the position that, in principle, the FRF plan (including a V-shaped runway) will be acceptable in realizing the land returns, though his actual wording has been extremely ambivalent. In addition to the claim for immediate elimination of the danger of the MCAS Futenma, Nakaima makes three demands of the central government: (1) redevelopment of the returned lands, (2) recovery of the returned lands to their original condition, and (3) reemployment of the base-related employees.

According to the *Roadmap*, there are three critical local elections pending before the MCAS Futenma can be returned: the Ginoza Village chief election in 2008, the Nago City mayoral election, and the gubernatorial election of Okinawa prefecture in 2010. Essentially, the *Roadmap* process will face a local referendum every two years. If the current chief of Ginoza village, Hajime Higashi, who agreed to the *Basic Agreement on the Construction of Futenma Replacement Facility* with the central government on 7 April 2006, loses the upcoming 2008 election, the agreement may not be sustainable. This would also mean that the mayor of Nago City, Yoshikazu Shimabukuro, who also exchanged the *Basic Agreement* with the central government, will be placed in a fragile position by the loss of his ally in the fierce battle over the construction of the FRF. The candidates for the next gubernatorial election in 2010 will have to consider the results of these two preceding elections. Thus, if the two governments are serious about the relocation of the MCAS Futenma this time, then they will need to have a contingency plan in which tangible burden reduction measures are introduced either at or before critical junctures: the Ginoza village chief election in 2008 and the Nago City mayoral election in 2010. The voters will need to be convinced that the current agreement will benefit them. Otherwise, it may be impossible to implement the current bilateral agreement at all.

Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam

Three important elements of the current agreement on the realignment of the US forces in Okinawa are closely related to one another. The sustainability of force reductions and the land returns are dependent in part on construction of the FRF, as well as on the GOJ's financial contribution toward the construction of facilities and infrastructure in Guam.

With regard to the first condition, a force reduction program can be initiated when the environmental assessment is completed and actual construction of the FRF begins. According to the *Roadmap*, construction of the FRF is targeted for

completion by 2014, and the proposed III MEF personnel and their dependents will be relocated from Okinawa to Guam by that year. This implies that the force reduction program should begin before the completion of the construction of the FRF. In other words, various headquarters of the US forces on Okinawa, such as the III MEF Command Element, 3rd Marine Division Headquarters, 3rd Marine Logistics Group Headquarters, 1st Marine Air Wing Headquarters, and the 12th Marine Regiment Headquarters, will be relocated to Guam before 2014 as long as the relocation is able to maintain unit integrity. According to the report of the Joint Guam Development Group entitled, “Guam Integrated Military Development Plan (GIMDP)” of 11 July 2006, 9,700 Marines (including 8,000 Marines from Okinawa) will eventually be relocated to Guam, but the report estimates that the significant force arrival will begin no earlier than 2010. If the *Roadmap* maintains consistency with the GIMDP, then the relocation of the III MEF Command Element will begin after 2010 and be completed before 2014. As the GIMDP suggests, the relocation of Marines will require massive improvements to the infrastructure in Guam, and it is still not certain whether Guam will be ready to receive the Marines by 2010—the estimate of the earliest feasible target date for arrival. Furthermore, it is also unclear whether it will be technically feasible to complete the relocation of the III MEF Command Element and other headquarters in a manner that maintains unit integrity in only four years.

With regard to the second condition, the two governments agreed that the GOJ would provide \$6.09 billion, including \$2.8 billion in direct cash contributions, of the total \$10.27 billion needed for the III MEF to relocate to Guam. The current realignment of the USFJ will not stop at the III MEF relocation to Guam, though, as other massive projects are also being proposed, including construction of the FRF and the relocation of the air carrier wing from Atsugi Air Facility to MCAS Iwakuni. Vice Defense Minister Takemasa Moriya stated that, including the cost of relocating Marines to Guam, the total cost of the realignment of the USFJ is about 1.86 trillion yen over eight years.¹⁴⁹ In fact, the total cost that the GOJ is responsible for will be enormous, but officials and mass media in Okinawa have never rejected such a cost-sharing arrangement. It did not cause serious debate in Okinawa because the cost sharing was viewed as “part of the price” of Japan’s security, reflecting the OPG’s policy of asking the rest of Japan to also bear the burden for national defense.

It is still uncertain whether the general population will be convinced that such a cost-sharing arrangement is indispensable for the maintenance of peace and security in Japan, as well as for the reduction of unfair burdens on Okinawa. In addition, the USG will have to allocate \$41.8 billion toward the costs of the relocation and it is uncertain whether the US Congress will approve this amount.

However, in spite of the concerns and uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the agreement, the USG seems to have committed itself to the policy of turning Guam into a more prominent hub for its global military strategy. In short, the sustainability of the agreements relating to force reductions appears to be very high, despite the uncertainties in Japanese and US politics.

Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities

After the relocation of the III MEF to Guam reduces the number of Marines in Okinawa by one-half, the six US facilities south of Kadena AB will be integrated through the consolidation of US facilities in Okinawa. The premise of the agreement is, to put it simply, “no FRF, no land returns.” The expectation of the people in Okinawa for the land returns is high. The economic leaders of Okinawa are advocating that the land returns be directly channeled back into a revitalization of the industrial infrastructure in the central part of Okinawa.

Despite this hope, some obstacles exist in Okinawa. Land returns promised within the SACO Final Report have already proceeded as seen in Table 11-3.

Table 11-3: Current Status of the Land Returns in the SACO Final Report

<i>Name of Facility</i>	<i>Current Status</i>
Northern Training Area	under the environmental assessment
Aba Training Area	returned
Ginbaru Training Area	under consultation
Sobe Communication Site	under the relocation construction
Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield	will be returned as soon as the relocation of Sobe Communication Site is completed
Camp Kuwae	partially returned and Navy Hospital is being designed
Senaha Communication Station	under the relocation construction
Makiminato Service Area	under consultation
Naha Port	under consultation
MCAS Futenma	suspended

In the next few years, some of the land will be returned as soon as the relocation construction projects are completed. The local communities will then have to carry out the redevelopment of the returned land. In addition, when the current agreements are implemented, six facilities south of Kadena AB will also be returned and the local communities there will have to design feasible plans for redevelopment. As a result, the mood of the local communities toward the land returns has been ambivalent and ridden with some anxiety, despite their high expectations. The GOJ will be financially responsible for returning the lands to their original condition, and total reversion of MCAS Futenma may require

considerable cost and time, even after all of the functions of MCAS Futenma have been relocated to other facilities. Hence, it is doubtful that the GOJ will be able to secure sufficient funding for the land returns on Okinawa during the next decade.

Regarding the agreement on shared use of facilities, the local opposition argues that this arrangement has nothing to do with reducing burdens on Okinawa, but will instead only increase the burdens on communities located near designated facilities such as Camp Hansen and Kadena AB. As an integral part of the overall package, the shared use of facilities is linked to the land returns of the six facilities south of Kadena AB. The land returns are used as an incentive to foster construction of the FRF, but the relocation of the III MEF to Guam will not be feasible before 2014. Nonetheless, the shared use of Camp Hansen and Kadena AB has already started. Thus, an increase in burdens will become more visible before a significant reduction of burdens is possible.

Okinawans will not accept such a sequence of events. Of course, the shared use of the facilities between the SDF and the USFJ will enhance their operational integration and strengthen the Japan–US alliance. However, this reasoning alone will be insufficient to convince the people in Okinawa that such additional burdens on them are justified. Thus, it must be presented clearly to the local people that the shared use plan will ultimately reduce the burdens on them, or at least will lead to considerable reduction of burdens in other areas. For example, if the shared use of Kadena AB is linked to the plan for adding an extra runway at Naha Airport for SDF use and converting the existing civil-military runway into one designated exclusively for civilians, then the likelihood of the sustainability of the agreement in regard to shared use of facilities in Okinawa should be enhanced.

CONCLUSION

Table 11-4 summarizes the US Force realignment in Okinawa. The agreement has three core pillars: (1) Futenma Replacement Facility, (2) Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam, and (3) Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities. This paper examined the three elements of the agreement by using three measures of success, i.e., relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Table 11-4: Summary of the Evaluation

	<i>Futenma Relocation</i>	<i>Force Reduction</i>	<i>Land Returns</i>
<i>Relevance</i>	○	◎	○
<i>Effectiveness</i>	○	○	○
<i>Sustainability</i>	○	△	△

Legend:

◎	Yes
○	Somewhat
△	Maybe
×	No

Concerning the Futenma Replacement Facility, the current agreement is relevant to the effort of reducing burdens on Okinawa, although the OPG's desire to develop its capacity for accommodating more commercial flights was not met. The agreement will be quite effective, if implemented successfully, in reducing the burden on Okinawa, but it lacks the measures needed to rapidly eliminate the risk of accidents raised by the continued proximity of bases to residential areas. Despite the fact that the agreement will have to withstand the results of three local elections before Okinawans will begin experiencing its benefits, its sustainability can be regarded as high because the agreement is relevant to the core issues at stake and is effective in reducing burdens on Okinawa.

As for the Force Reductions and Relocation to Guam, the current agreement is relevant to the core issues at stake, and if properly implemented, will definitely reduce the burden on Okinawa. However, the effectiveness of the agreement is dependent largely on the timeliness of its execution, because the people in Okinawa are expecting to see quick and positive impacts. However, abrupt force reductions may have a strong negative impact on the local economy, which could also jeopardize the sustainability of the agreement. Also, for the agreement to be implemented, the facilities on Guam will have to be completed before the Marines can be relocated there, which may impose a burden on the USG.

Finally, in regard to Land Returns and Shared Use of Facilities, the land return agreement—which returns six facilities south of Kadena Air Base to Japan—is relevant to the reduction of burdens on Okinawa. However, the agreement fails to include measures that would allow the SDF to have shared use of US facilities in Okinawa and thus reduce burdens on Okinawa. Again, the effectiveness of the agreement is dependent on its timely execution because the land returns can be an incentive for the local community to cooperate with the government

initiative. The sustainability of the agreement is ambiguous because it allows for joint exercises between the US Forces and the SDF—which could be considered as an increase in local burdens—before the agreement can provide any tangible reduction in the presence of US Forces in Okinawa.

In short, the implementation of the agreement will face a series of challenges, but its potential relevance and effectiveness in terms of meeting the desired goal of reducing burdens on Okinawa is very high. Although Okinawa will face considerable economic challenges because of the extensive redevelopment required of the returned land, this should be regarded as an opportunity for revitalization and re-ownership, rather than as an obstacle.

OKINAWA'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE AND THE 2006 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

Robert D. Eldridge

This chapter explores the origins of the so-called “Okinawa Problem” and the political dynamics at work locally within Okinawa, particularly as both relate to the presence of US and Japanese Self-Defense Force (SDF) bases and Okinawa’s complicated relations with the mainland, and how these dynamics have affected essentially every major election in the post-reversion period (post-1972), including the gubernatorial election in 2006. The chapter is divided into eight sections, including this introduction; section two explores the background of the Okinawa Problem; section three describes the dynamics and levels of the problem; section four provides an overview of local politics; section five looks at post-reversion public opinion and the media; section six summarizes local views of the realignment agreement; and, section seven examines the election itself. Finally, the conclusion offers some thoughts for the future.¹⁵⁰

BACKGROUND

Located to the southwest of mainland Japan and east of China in the East China Sea, the hundreds of islands that comprise Okinawa Prefecture are situated at a strategic crossroads between Northeast and Southeast Asia on one hand, and East Asia and the Pacific on the other. Okinawa Prefecture is composed of three island groups, the Sakishima group, nearest to Taiwan, the Daito group, and the Okinawa group, in which the main island of Okinawa is located. The main island seats the capital city of Naha and is the most populated and developed. The entire population of the prefecture is 1,370,805 as of January 2007, of which more than 1.3 million live on the main island. Okinawa is the thirty-second most populous of Japan’s forty-seven prefectures, with a density of about 600 people per square kilometer, and has one of the highest percentages of population increase (due, in part, to people, attracted by the warm climate and unique culture, moving to the prefecture). Its land area, on the other hand, represents only 0.6 percent of the total area of Japan. Much of Okinawa’s land is hilly or mountainous and thus unsuitable for large-scale agriculture or other development.

A collection of smaller fiefdoms that were united in the fifteenth century, Okinawa was an independent kingdom known as the Ryukyu Okoku when it first came under Japanese influence in 1609. At that time, the well-armed Satsuma clan from Kyushu sent forces into the undefended Naha to access Ryukyuan trade ties with China. This event remains etched in Okinawan historical memory, as does the dissolving of the Ryukyu Okoku and its transition into first a domain, and then a prefecture of Japan in the 1870s, which became known as the *Ryukyu Shobun*. Subsequent events in Okinawan history, such as the Battle of Okinawa (1945), the Allied Treaty of Peace with Japan (1951), the Okinawa Reversion Agreement (1971), and even the 1996 Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) final report are referred to in this context—the disposition of Okinawa in favor of Japanese interests.

The rape of a schoolgirl in 1995 and its immediate aftermath was a microcosm of the Okinawa problem—a heinous crime committed by US personnel, the response by the Japanese government that was received as unsympathetic by the people in Okinawa, and the Okinawan response that demanded the revision of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).^{xxxvii} The result was Governor Masahide Ota’s announcement before the Prefectural Assembly that he was not going to cooperate in the forced leasing of land for military purposes. He did indeed fight the central government in court on this issue, albeit unsuccessfully.

The rape incident and the Japanese government’s handling of the aftermath outraged Okinawans as well. Their anger eventually led to the Prefectural People’s Rally on 21 October 1995, the largest protest gathering in the post-reversion period. Importantly, this rally, which called for a reduction in US bases, revision of the Status of Forces Agreement, implementation of stricter discipline, expeditious apologies, and compensation to victims of US personnel-caused crime, was significant because it was very inclusive in nature—every major group and political party was represented on the stage to express their outrage over the rape and the central government’s response to Okinawa’s demands. National and world attention was on Okinawa as it braced for the court battles and the holding of the first-ever prefectural wide referendum on the bases.¹⁵¹

Despite the court battle between Governor Ota and the central government over the forced leasing of land, belated attempts by the Japanese government to address the issues were initially successful, more because of the symbolism and sincerity of its efforts rather than the actual contents or results. Several

^{xxxvii} The Status of Forces Agreement, or SOFA, signed in 1960 and replacing the 1952 Administrative Agreement, remains a highly contentious issue. Both reformist and conservative administrations in Okinawa Prefecture have called for its revision.

committees and dialogues on Okinawa policy were established between the central government and Okinawa Prefectural Government and local communities, such as the *Okinawa Seisaku Kyogikai* (Okinawa Policy Council) in September 1996, and the prime minister and cabinet ministers began meeting directly and regularly with the prefectural governor. An ambassador for Okinawan affairs was assigned to Okinawa in 1996, something that had long been a desire of Okinawa. Numerous economic stimulus packages were announced, many of which were the product of a joint study group comprised of mainland and Okinawan scholars and government officials known as the *Shimada-kon* (Shimada Committee, named after Keio University professor Shimada Haruo).^{xxxviii}

Bilaterally, the Japanese and US governments created the Special Action Committee on Okinawa in November 1995 with a one-year mandate to find ways to reduce the burdens associated with the presence of US forces on the island. The SACO Interim Report, released in April 1996, called for the conditional relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma within the prefecture. The surprise announcement was positively received in mainland Japan and some parts of Okinawa, but much criticism was voiced locally to the effect that it was no more than a “shell game.”¹⁵² Eventually, when the waters of Nago’s eastern shore at Henoko were named as the site of the relocation, voters in Nago turned out to reject the relocation in a non-binding referendum held in December 1997. Nevertheless, then-Nago City Mayor Higa Tetsuo decided later that week to accept the relocation, and after reporting his decision to then-Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro, committed political *seppuku* (the form of suicide used to express the individual’s will of taking responsibility) by resigning.

The two-year honeymoon between the Okinawa prefectural government and central government ended in early 1998 when Governor Ota rejected the relocation within the prefecture while campaigning on behalf of an anti-base candidate in the by-elections for the Nago mayoral race. The Hashimoto administration immediately cut off ties with Ota and ignored him.

The 1998 gubernatorial race took place against this backdrop and the stalled plans to relocate Futenma Air Station to Nago City. Because it followed the prefectural referendum, the city-wide referendum, and the mayoral by-election (in which Higa’s deputy was elected), we can call the 1998 gubernatorial contest the “fourth plebiscite on the relocation.” Okinawans, fearing the effect that the standoff with the central government would have on the economy, voted with

^{xxxviii} The vice-chairman of the committee was Inamine Keiichi, later elected governor.

their pocketbooks and elected the conservative candidate, businessman Inamine Keiichi. Four years later, with the progressives divided and Okinawan voters still concerned about the economy, the conservative Inamine was reelected in 2002.

On the mainland, Hashimoto was succeeded by Obuchi Keizo, who had close ties with Okinawa and Inamine, and relations improved dramatically during the next year, which included Obuchi's announcement of Okinawa Prefecture's Nago City being the site of the 2000 G-8 Summit that Japan was hosting. Unfortunately, Obuchi died while in office, and his successor, Mori Yoshiro, who attended the summit, and the subsequent two prime ministers, Koizumi Junichiro and Abe Shinzo, were anything but interested in Okinawa. Thus, relations cooled dramatically following the G-8 summit, which had been seen as a *quid pro quo* for Okinawa (and Nago City) to accept the relocation of Futenma within the prefecture (a decision that had been reached in December 1999 between Okinawa, Nago, and the central government).

As discussed below, while the economy still remains the largest issue in the minds of Okinawan voters, the base issue is also important due in part to the unpopular agreement in May 2006 to proceed with the relocation of Futenma Air Station within the prefecture; this time, however, the station will be closer to the shoreline and present even more noise and safety problems than the previous siting proposal. Furthermore, the crash of a US Marine helicopter in August 2004 in the community of neighboring Ginowan has crystallized this fear in the minds of local residents. For Okinawa, the burden of the bases—their large presence in geographically small and dense Okinawa; the crimes, incidents, and accidents associated with them; the inability of their economy to develop and grow due to dependence on the bases; and other issues—was literally “brought home” again with this crash. Also, the crash occurred in the midst of the US transformation and planning process for the base realignment, adding new impetus to the need for Futenma to be relocated.

With the 2006 gubernatorial election being the first major contest after the crash, as well as after the announcement of the Final Report in May 2006 (discussed below), attention was on whether Okinawans would again make their voting decision based on their concerns for the local economy or instead be willing to surrender a bit of economic well-being for greater peace of mind. Throughout the election, they were constantly reminded by government officials that the economic stimulus packages were linked to acceptance of the bases. As a result of this pressure, Okinawans ended up, once again, feeling as though they were being taken advantage of and thus were victims—and so, the cyclical nature of the “Okinawa Problem” continues.

THE DYNAMICS AND VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE OKINAWA PROBLEM

When asked to define the so-called “Okinawa Problem,” many Okinawans actually have difficulty doing so, even though this expression is used routinely in the local media and by commentators.¹⁵³ Indeed, some Okinawans speak not of an “Okinawan problem,” but of a “Japan problem,” in which Japan traditionally pressures Okinawa to accept the “burden” of the bases through “carrot-and-stick” (*ame to muchi*) approaches, making Okinawans feel like second-class citizens and arousing much bitterness that only ends up affecting their collective memory. A homonym for *muchi* in Japan is the word with the characters that mean “ignorance.” This is another way to describe the government’s handling of the situation.

The Okinawan problem, however, is more complicated than that and is multi-dimensional in nature. The first aspect of the Okinawa problem is obviously related to the bases, which is described previously. The second one is economic, in which the bases are seen as preventing Okinawa from leaving its dependency on base-related income and developing into a modern and competitive economy. The third is socio-historic, in which Okinawa views its history in terms of being a victim and Japan as having taking advantage of it for the past 400 years, and the fourth is the lack of consensus and leadership in Okinawa.

The base-related aspect of the problem is the most well-known and visible, but it is not the only one. Indeed, all the aspects are inter-related. The Okinawan problem, in other words, is like a knot—when you try to pull on one of the strings or cords making the knot, it only becomes tighter. Little progress has been made over the years with the Okinawan problem because rather than taking the time to unwind the knot carefully, the measures adopted by those in far-off Tokyo or Washington, D.C., who do not visit there regularly, or at all, have been piecemeal in approach and only made the knot tighter. The realignment agreement of May 2006, which lacks a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the Okinawa problem, is the most recent example of knot-making, but there are many more examples through the years.

The fact that Okinawa lacks political leadership and a consensus on how to move forward is one of the biggest challenges that the prefecture, and thus the US–Japan–Okinawa relationship, is facing. Okinawa has not historically lacked leadership; there have been numerous impressive individuals from Okinawa—Waseda University President Ohama Nobumoto, Assistance Association for Okinawa and Ogasawara Director Yoshida Shien, Government of the Ryukyu Islands chief executives Higa Shuhei and Ota Seisaku, and Prefecture governors Yara Chobyō and Nishime Junji, to name a few from the 1950s through the

1980s at different levels of society—but the general quality of leadership has declined in recent years. Diet members elected from Okinawa, who rarely become members of the Cabinet despite spending most of their time in Tokyo, are seen as indifferent, or worse, irrelevant, in dealing with Okinawan issues. Local assembly members and mayors focus on the next election, and governors in recent years seem to believe in negative leadership (saying “no”) rather than positive leadership (if not saying “yes,” then at least introducing practical alternatives). Conservative politicians are seen as being beholden to special interest groups while “leftists” are too set in their ways.

Complicating this is the lack of consensus in Okinawa on how Okinawa as a prefecture should respond to the issues related to US bases in the prefecture. Differences between the northern, central, and southern regions, outer islands and the main island of Okinawa, communities that host bases versus those that do not—all tend to affect the average Okinawan’s perspective on issues and his/her involvement. For example, when one speaks of the “Henoko issue”—the relocation of the functions of the MCAS Futenma to the waters near Henoko village in Nago City—there are at least five different levels to the issue: First is the bilateral context between Japan and the United States. Second is the Japanese domestic context between Tokyo and Okinawa prefecture, with all of its historical baggage. Third is the intra-prefectural context or level between the prosperous south, which hosts the capital city of Naha and has few problems with the bases since they are not located there for the most part, and the poorer north that historically sees itself as the “garbage dump” of the prefecture, accepting projects that other areas of the prefecture do not want. The fourth level is within the City of Nago, divided between the city proper that is more populated and economically better off in the west, and the poorer communities over the mountain in the east near the proposed relocation site. Finally, in the village of Henoko, which is the main community of several in the area that will be affected, there have been bitter divisions during the past decade on whether to accept the various reincarnations of the proposed facility.

This summary does not even include the different views on what type of facility (and its location in the area of Camp Schwab) should be built, which are among the many “curve balls” that have been tossed out by the central government; most recently, a V-shaped runway design was proposed that had military planners and airport civil engineers laughing and in a state of disbelief. US Marines who are intimately familiar with the facility design described it to this author as a “political runway” and one that would be operationally unsound and dangerous. Moreover, this example does not even include the US perspective, which differs between those who think a new facility should be functional versus the political types in Washington (and Tokyo) who, eager to please their

impatient bosses, just want to reach any agreement regardless of its political, economic, military, and strategic costs.

Before this chapter describes how the history and dynamics of the Okinawa problem affected the 2006 contest, it is necessary to briefly review post-reversion Okinawan politics and public opinion to help place that discussion in a more complete context.

AN OVERVIEW OF POST-REVERSION POLITICS

Since reversion, Okinawa has held ten elections for governor, nine elections for the prefectural assembly, eleven Lower House contests, and twelve Upper House elections and by-elections. In addition to timely issues, like national scandals or consumption tax hikes, the debates in Okinawa have tended to revolve around the economy, the bases, and other socio-welfare related issues. Regarding the bases, in general, progressives have tended to call for “*tekkyo*” or removal, and the conservatives have called for less dramatic, more gradual approaches and the adoption of base-specific positions, such as “opposition to exercises that endangers residents,” or in Inamine’s case, “a fifteen-year time limit on use” of Futenma when (or rather, if) it gets relocated to Henoko.

Okinawan politics can be divided into four periods, which are characterized by either reformist (progressive) or conservative rule, not necessarily of equal duration. Okinawa politics, in other words, has witnessed four waves: reformist, conservative, reformist, and conservative. The current governor, Nakaima Hirokazu, is a conservative, as was his predecessor, Inamine.

In the thirty-five years since reversion (1972–2007), conservatives have led in twenty-one of them. If one begins with the year 1968, which is when Okinawans were allowed to elect the governor for the first time, then the progressive number is slightly higher at eighteen versus twenty-one. Looking at the numbers of governors from 1972, the figures are more equal: four progressive governors versus six for conservatives. With Okinawa being so small, people tend to keep score. Middle-of-the-roaders, in the public perception anyway, do not tend to do well. Former Lower House member Uehara Kosuke of the Social Democratic Party, for example, lost in 2000 after 30 years in office for having adopted a more moderate approach and switching parties, as well as for having publicly considered a run against incumbent Governor Ota in 1998.

The reality when discussing the stance of the governor, however, is that it is difficult to clearly state whether he (and it is “he” because socially conservative Okinawa has been hesitant to vote women into any office, let alone governor. It

was not until 2000 that the first woman was elected to the Lower House from Okinawa) is progressive or conservative because he is always forced to adopt the positions of the other side in governing or representing the people. The difficulty of this balancing act, as well as being caught between “public will” and the central government, has caused more than a few of Okinawa’s leaders to literally collapse and die. Mayor Kishimoto Tateo from Nago was the latest casualty, having died in early 2006. Chief Executive Higa, mentioned earlier, who died in the middle of the island-wide protests in 1956, was one of the first.

Many observers and government officials in both countries began to lament their earlier support of Inamine when he began to actually stick to the conditions he had raised during his campaign for accepting the relocation of Futenma within the prefecture. Ota, Inamine’s predecessor, was seen to have positioned himself so far to the left that he could only move to the right. Officials were not prepared for the same dynamic when conservative politicians have had to move to the center to govern. No one on the US side took Inamine’s pledges seriously and simply saw him as stubborn.¹⁵⁴ The current governor, who was elected with one of the slimmest majorities yet, has been more deft and not raised Inamine’s unfulfilled pledges, but it is likely that Okinawan voters have not forgotten them. Whether they think that these pledges can be fulfilled is another matter.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

There are no systematic studies of public opinion in Okinawa in the post-reversion period; however, the following five issues tend to be followed closely in newspapers and contracted polling agencies: (1) opinions on reversion; (2) opinions on the biggest challenges facing Okinawa; (3) opinions on the US–Japan alliance; (4) opinions on the presence of US bases within the prefecture; and, (5) opinions of the SDF. According to polls by the *Ryukyu Shimpo* conducted roughly every five years since the reversion, Okinawans have generally come to embrace reversion (87 percent in 2002, the thirtieth anniversary of reversion), the US–Japan alliance (56 percent in 2002), the presence of the bases as a key element to regional security (53 percent in 2004), and the SDF (59 percent in 2002). The bases have traditionally topped the list for being seen as the biggest challenge for Okinawans, but in polls taken in the late 1990s, the economy tied the bases and has since surpassed them, albeit slightly.

The Media: Reflectors or Shapers?

Napoleon once said that he “feared three newspapers more than a hundred thousand bayonets.” The same view may be shared by the central government (and sometimes US government and military representatives) when considering

the strong influence of Okinawa's newspapers, the *Ryukyu Shimpo* and the *Okinawa Times*, upon local (and some cases, national) thinking regarding the bases. Both newspapers control more than 98 percent of the local market, which means the remaining two percent is divided among the five mainland newspapers—the *Asahi Shimbun*, *Mainichi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, *Sankei Shimbun*, and *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*.¹⁵⁵

The *Ryukyu Shimpo*, created in 1893, is the older of the two, as the *Times* was founded in 1948.¹⁵⁶ During the war, the *Ryukyu Shimpo* was forced to merge with the *Okinawa Asahi Shimbun* to form the *Okinawa Shimpo* as a pro-war propaganda organ of the Japanese military. Reforming in July 1945 as the *Uruma Shimpo* and then in September 1951 as the *Ryukyu Shimpo*, the newspaper (whose sales were one-sixth of the more popular *Okinawa Times*) was generally pro-US until the early 1950s, when the pro-American editor died and base problems flared up. Today, it sells 220,000 copies daily. The *Times*, on the other hand, sells approximately 190,000 copies daily, and since its founding, has generally pursued an anti-base approach.

According to interviews by the author, the editorial staffs from both newspapers meet everyday after the papers are published to compare notes and comment on each other's stories and editorials, a practice not seen in mainland Japan. While such meetings can encourage an intense level of competition in an effort to distinguish oneself and outdo the other, it can also lead to sensationalism (with one newspaper focusing on one issue such as the SOFA, the other might choose to concentrate its attention on another issue and "blow it up"), as well as conformity, such as on the base issue, with a consensus or norm emerging on how to report about a particular issue. This may explain the criticism of Japanese and US government and military officials who say that the Okinawan newspapers never report the "good news" about the bases. Indeed, as one senior writer of the *Times* told the author, "it takes a lot of courage to make any differences clear."¹⁵⁷

With this said, it must be noted that Okinawa has a wide range of ideological views, from conservative to communist, as well as Ryukyuan nationalists who call for Okinawa's independence. Historically, the opinions have been lumped into two generic groups—the conservatives (*hoshukei*) and the reformists (*kakushinkei*). With two clearly divided groups, one would expect the existence of at least two newspapers: one with a strong conservative bent and the other with progressive (liberal) leanings. That has not traditionally been the case, however, perhaps because Okinawa possesses a shared sense of history and a common identity (*uchinanchu*), including shared criticism of the presence of the

bases, the handling of base operations, and the Japanese government's perceived cold attitude.

While both newspapers claim to reflect public opinion, another case could be equally made that they also try to shape it as well, that the editorials do not necessarily reflect a wider view but rather a view or outcome that they wish to see realized through issue-framing and agenda-setting. There is truth to both arguments. It is also true that there is a wide gap between the two island newspapers and the mainland press. Protected from competition geographically, Okinawa's media outlets, critics argue, have been able to promote their pacifist stance as encouraged by local labor unions, without readers having an alternative. This leads to the criticism that the local media are free to pursue their agenda against the bases and central government.

Younger reporters are said to be more open-minded (realistic) when writing about the bases or government decisions, but a common criticism heard from both Japanese and US officials is that the stories are changed by the older editors, who remember the days prior to reversion and thus are anti-US, anti-base, and anti-mainland. In this writer's experience and personal interactions for more than a decade with numerous writers and staff of the newspapers, they have always been willing to listen. Whether they agreed or not is another matter. In any case, the newspapers are a force to be recognized in Okinawa, and the national governments (waiting for the older generation to pass on) ignore the media at their own peril. Indeed, until the US and Japanese governments attempt to speak out to wider audiences and engage groups outside of their respective comfort zones (including business communities, the US consulate, and base functions), they will remain dependent on the media to transmit their story. Particularly troubling in this regard was the failure of the Japanese government to explain the realignment plans to people in the affected communities early enough and clearly enough to try and ease their concerns. While the "what" was spoken of, the "when," "why," and "how" were not.

OKINAWAN VIEWS OF THE REALIGNMENT AGREEMENT

On 1 May 2006, the United States–Japan Security Consultative Committee, composed of the US Secretaries of State and Defense and the Japanese Foreign and Defense Ministers, announced the "Roadmap for Realignment Implementation," the final report for the US base realignments in Japan that concluded more than two years of often-heated discussions and that started a new chapter in implementing the agreement.¹⁵⁸ The bulk of the realignments dealt with those in Okinawa Prefecture in light of the fact that Okinawa is the largest host (and Okinawans will say "involuntary" at that) of US exclusive-use

facilities in Japan. In short, the agreement called for the conditional relocation of approximately 8,000 Marines from III MEF to Guam, the conditional return of the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Henoko, the conditional return of other facilities in the southern part of Okinawa, and the combined use of some US and SDF facilities for training purposes. The US and Japanese governments tried to put a positive spin on the results, uncertain and conditional as they are, but reactions in Okinawa and elsewhere, like Iwakuni, were severe and consistent with earlier public opinion polls. Not only was the agreement itself poorly conceived in terms of content, with few experts voicing much more than lukewarm support, but the public also felt that it had been crafted in a non-transparent manner.

According to the results of a joint *Okinawa Times-Asahi Shimbun* opinion poll about the final report conducted on 13 and 14 May and released on 16 May 2006, 55 percent of the respondents opposed the final agreement, with only 27 percent in support of it.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, 69 percent of those polled expressed their opposition to the central government's plans for a new facility at Henoko (featuring two V-shaped runways to be built along the coast of Camp Schwab) to replace the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, which is both the centerpiece—and weakest point—of the “Roadmap,” just as it had been for the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) agreement ten years before.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, 66 percent believed that the bilateral agreement would do little or nothing to alleviate the “burden” in Okinawa, with only 30 percent positively appraising its contribution in addressing the “burden,” which was defined in the questionnaire as the physical presence of the bases. Finally, 46 percent opposed Governor Inamine's decision to sign a memorandum confirming his willingness to continue to discuss with the central government its plans for the new facility, although he denied that he had actually accepted the plan.

Expectations had been high in Okinawa that the realignment talks would lead to a reduction in the so-called burden. These expectations were fueled perhaps by the Japanese government's references to the burden in Okinawa and its indication that the talks would address this concern. In any case, they were based on a sense that little had improved on base issues since 1995. Due to this inflated expectation, the reaction to the so-called Interim Report was quite critical. Sixty-eight percent were “dissatisfied (*fuman*)” or “strongly dissatisfied (*hijo ni fuman*),” and only 22 percent expressed support for the report.

One of the main reasons for the discontent was related to the desire for the Futenma relocation issue, then almost ten years old, to be resolved. Eighty-five percent called for the relocation of the functions at Futenma to be outside the prefecture. Yet, the final decision of the two governments was for the relocation

to occur within the prefecture, despite the fact that most experts and government officials—the latter in private of course—do not think the plan is practical or wise. The increase in opposition to relocation within the prefecture was a result of the August 2004 Marine helicopter crash in Ginowan.

In addition to the desire to see the functions relocated in the first place, another reason for the strong opposition to the interim report had to do with the actual plan for moving Futenma Air Station to Camp Schwab's coastal area. Seventy-two percent expressed their opposition to the plan.¹⁶¹ Sixty-four percent expressed support for Inamine's public opposition to the proposal. Of those that opposed, 31 percent answered that their concern for the environment was the main reason, followed by 29 percent stating that it would not lead to a reduction in the bases. This was followed by 20 percent who believed that the decision was made without consulting the local people, and 15 percent who believed that there would be greater risks to the people by the addition of new functions. Of the 15 percent who expressed their support for the relocation to Schwab, the relative reduction of danger was the most common of the answers given.

Consistent with earlier polls, the questionnaire, conducted jointly by the *Okinawa Times* and *Asahi Shimbun*, found that 67 percent of the respondents desired gradual reductions and 23 percent called for immediate and complete withdrawal. Only 8 percent supported the *status quo*. Finally, the same poll found that only 13 percent of those questioned positively evaluated the government's efforts in the realignment talks.

THE NOVEMBER 2006 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

The gubernatorial elections were held against the backdrop described in the previous section. Although economic matters continued to be at the top of the list of issues (more than one could be chosen), according to a poll done by the *Ryukyu Shimpo* and *Okinawa Television*, voters were most interested in the bases: these ranked third overall, behind the 47.6 percent that stated economic stimulus (*keizai shinko*) measures and the 46.6 percent that called for health care and welfare issues (*iryō/fukushi seisaku*). The demand that base issues be addressed (at 28.4 percent) was three times higher than in a similar poll conducted at the time of the 2002 gubernatorial election. Moreover, the interest in economic issues was lower than in 2002 or in 1998. Thus, it could be argued that interest in the base issue was the highest that it had been in a long time among voters' priorities.

According to the same poll, regarding their desires for a resolution to the base issue and specifically the Futenma relocation, 35.4 percent of Okinawan voters

said they desired its relocation out of the prefecture and/or country and 18.6 percent said that they wanted the facility closed immediately and unconditionally. Only 4.2 percent expressed support of the Japanese plan for a V-shaped configuration of the facility. Another 20 percent said that they would support the facility in exchange for economic stimulus packages.

And so, once again, the main issues for voters were the bases or the economy. However, while the newspapers tended to report that Nakaima's victory was because of voters choosing their pocketbooks over the bases, it was not that simple since other local dynamics were at play.

After much internal "wheeling and dealing," the conservatives chose Nakaima Hirokazu, president of the Okinawan Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Okinawa Power and Electric Company, to head the conservative ticket over several other candidates from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Interestingly, Nakaima, a former official with the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, served as the vice-governor during the Ota administration between 1990 and 1993 and then later headed up Inamine's support group. Nakaima relied primarily on the business community, including his former company, and the organizational abilities of the LDP and Komeito coalition government.

Nearly ten years younger was his rival, Itokazu Keiko, the first female to run for governor. Itokazu, the candidate representing a less-than-united front of six opposition parties, had been a peace tour guide for more than twenty years before being asked by a local party, the Okinawa Social Masses Party, to serve in the Prefectural Assembly in 1992. After three terms there, she was elected to the Upper House in 2004, again as the first woman to serve from Okinawa in the Upper House. She relied on the labor unions, traditional progressive voters, independent voters, women, and young families.

Historically, one of the critical factors in Okinawan elections is the ability of the campaigns to unite. This is true not only for the progressives, but for the conservatives as well. Nakaima, whose candidacy was decided in mid-August amidst fairly good cooperation among the conservatives, had a one-month head-start on Itokazu, who was not chosen until well into September due to internal rivalries. Indeed, she did not want to run, but was seen as the best compromise candidate. Thus, the progressive camp lost precious time due to these internal issues, which ultimately slowed their organization and became one of the reasons she was defeated.

There were two other reasons she lost, in the opinion of this writer, beyond the “it’s the economy, stupid” view of the election.¹⁶² First, the internal dynamics kept her defeated rivals from fully campaigning on her behalf. Second, Itokazu did not make her positions fully known, nor did she capably attack Nakaima’s weaknesses. One of these weaknesses was running on the economic platform of Inamine by continuing his policies. Unemployment, which Nakaima promised to reduce by one-half, and in some cases, eliminate all together, remained basically unchanged during Inamine’s eight years. Inamine’s record was mixed, in other words.

Despite Nakaima’s head-start, he did not release his policy platform until 6 October.¹⁶³ Itokazu followed on 13 October, with the aim of developing a “peaceful Okinawa.” Both composed fourteen points and expressed their opposition to the government’s plan for Futenma, and both viewed the relocation of Futenma outside of the prefecture as the best option. However, while Itokazu said she would continue to oppose the move, Nakaima said that he would be willing to consider relocation within the prefecture and to enter into consultations with the central government. The condition was a set of economic stimulus packages: the central government in Tokyo explicitly linked the provision of economic stimulus with the prefecture’s cooperation in relocation at every occasion it could prior to the election. Tokyo also promised that the stimulus package would be forthcoming immediately after the election.

CONCLUSION

While the central government was relieved at the election of Nakaima, the difficult job of convincing Okinawa to support the plan still remains unrealized at the time of this writing and is expected to be an uphill battle. As this paper suggests, the base issue, and especially the relocation of Futenma, will continue to be an important problem in the eyes of Okinawa residents. If the central government continues with its non-transparent and uninformed manner of decision-making and “carrot and stick/ignorance” approach, Okinawans in the future may refer to the year 2006 as another negative episode in its long history of the Okinawa problem. The mishandling of the talks (and those relating to implementation) to date, both bilaterally and vis-à-vis local communities, promise to make the agreement a “Roadmap to Nowhere.”¹⁶⁴

— CONCLUSION —
THE WAY FORWARD

Yuki Tatsumi and Arthur Lord

This publication aims to provide a thorough analysis of the myriad challenges related to the US military presence in Japan from global, regional, bilateral, and local perspectives, specifically, the efforts underway to realign US forces to better meet security needs in the 21st century and also address local impacts stemming from Japan’s hosting of US troops since the end of World War II. The collective efforts in this volume demonstrate that the definite article, “*the*,” which is often attached to “The Okinawa Problem,” is somewhat misleading. Therefore, the volume seeks to illuminate the complexity and interrelationship of the various issues facing the divergent interests within the Governments of Japan and the United States, as well as Okinawa, when discussing the US military presence on the island.

As observed in the chapters by Kawakami and Tatsumi, the process leading to the release of the May 2006 Security Consultative Committee (SCC) document entitled, *United States–Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*, has not always been smooth. Despite this, the document offers a potential path forward in beginning to redefine the roles, capabilities, and missions of the US–Japan alliance so that it remains relevant in today’s shifting global security environment. The May 2006 SCC document, which provides a general framework for transforming the alliance “for the future,” contains 46 items of agreement related to the realignment of US forces in Okinawa, including the relocation of the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to the alternative facility (called the Futenma Replacement Facility, or FRF) and the relocation of the Marines to the island of Guam.¹⁶⁵ It is fair to say that the document contains the most detailed set of recommendations ever produced in the recent history of US-Japan negotiations in regard to the US force realignment in Japan. At the same time, however, the agreement has been over-shadowed by unfavorable responses from the citizens of Okinawa, as outlined by Eldridge and Uesugi in their chapters.

Two years have now passed since the release of the May 2006 agreement. How has the environment surrounding the US–Japan alliance cooperation evolved in

that time period, and how much progress has been made on the relocation proposal so far?

STATUS OF THE US FORCE REALIGNMENT IN OKINAWA

When President George W. Bush and then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met in April 2007, the two leaders renewed their call for continuing the efforts to help strengthen US-Japan security cooperation. The two leaders' commitment to bolstering the US-Japan alliance vis-à-vis cooperation on security was restated at the May 2007 meeting of the SCC when the two governments declared that "(t)he US-Japan security relationship is the bedrock of Japan's defense and the keystone of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region."¹⁶⁶ In addition to reaffirming the common strategic objectives shared by the United States and Japan, such as denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, encouraging China to act as a responsible international stakeholder, and strengthening the role of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the two nations discussed a number of important developments relating to implementation of the 46 elements agreed to in the May 2006 *Roadmap for Realignment*. As part of this dialogue, the managers of the US-Japan alliance spent considerable time in discussing the US force realignment. While they agreed that it was premature to assess progress on major benchmarks (such as creation of an FRF or relocation of elements of the III Marine Expeditionary Force to Guam), they did emphasize some progress that had been occurring under a number of working-level initiatives. One example was the establishment of a bilateral interagency mechanism in June 2006 to coordinate policy, operations, intelligence, and public affairs positions between the two governments in relation to the implementation agreements. The alliance managers also noted the successful commencement of aircraft training relocation programs in March 2007.¹⁶⁷

In relation to the US force realignment in Okinawa, in particular, the May 2007 SCC document acknowledged the progress in Japan's Diet on approving funding for the force realignment initiatives through the submission of legislation authorizing the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to fulfill Japan's financial obligations related to the relocation. The legislation was enacted on 23 May 2007.¹⁶⁸ In regard to the FRF, further logistical progress was also noted that includes detailing the engineering and technical design for the infrastructure of Camp Schwab, as well as initiating surveys in the waters around the camp. Lastly, alliance managers cited the US creation and funding of a Joint Guam Program Office to oversee preparations in Guam to host US forces, as well as the launching of an environmental impact assessment (using US federal criteria) as key indicators of progress in starting to relocate elements of the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) to the island.¹⁶⁹

In relation to land returns, alliance managers noted progress in the continuing efforts to return land, as stipulated by the 1996 final report of the Japan–US Special Action Committee on Okinawa, or SACO. The Governments of Japan and the US established the committee in November 1995 to reduce the burdens on the people of Okinawa and to strengthen the US-Japan alliance. Three examples of land returns include the return of the Senaha Communications Facility (September 2006), the Sobe Communications Facility (December 2006), and the return of Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield (December 2006) totaling 750 acres (300 hectares).¹⁷⁰

To date, the realignment of US forces, including those in Okinawa, is proceeding. In addition to the land return acknowledged in the May 2007 SCC document, the relocation of the training began in March 2007 with the transfer of the training at Kadena AFB to the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) bases in mainland Japan. The consultative committee addressing the land area south of Kadena AFB that is scheduled for return to the Okinawa prefecture has already met twice, first in September 2006 and next in January 2007; the committee is also working to develop a uniform plan for post-return land use. Realignments that involve the facilities in mainland Japan—including deployment of X-band radar in Shariki, relocation of carrier aircrafts in Atsugi to Iwakuni, relocation of KC-130 from Futenma to Iwakuni and other relocation of training facilities, and the study group convened on returning the airspace over Yokota AFB to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government—is also proceeding.¹⁷¹

However, progress on the largest relocation operation—that of the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma—has been painfully slow. In the two years that have passed since the May 2006 agreement on the implementation plan, the Japanese government has not been able to start the environmental impact assessment—the study required before construction can begin—of the site designated as the new home of the FRF. While the scheduled release of the environmental impact statement is still two years away, questions are being raised already as to whether the FRF construction and relocation of the Marine forces to Guam will be on schedule. For instance, the report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in May 2008 found that, “planning efforts for the proposed military buildup on Guam are in their initial stages, with many challenges yet to be addressed.” Particularly since construction of the facilities in Guam is not scheduled to begin until the environmental impact statement report is issued in 2010, the GAO’s report argued that some in the Department of Defense (DOD), as well as officials at Guam, believe that 2014 is “an optimistic schedule.”¹⁷² The GAO also noted that the infrastructure in Guam is not sufficient and that funding sources for additional development remain “uncertain.”¹⁷³

CHALLENGES FOR THE US FORCE REALIGNMENT IN OKINAWA

In the meantime, a number of incidents have raised questions about whether the realignment plan will be able to proceed as planned. First and foremost, the crimes committed by US service members in Japan continue to make headlines. One case attracted media attention when Staff Sergeant Tyrone Hadnott was arrested on 11 February 2008 by Japanese authorities for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl on the previous night. Hadnott was arrested and turned over by the US military to Japanese prosecutors on 12 February 2008. Charges were later dropped by Japanese authorities on 29 February after the girl rescinded her accusation, but Hadnott was court-martialed by the Marines Corps in late April for violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Hadnott was accused of raping a child under age 16, having abusive sexual contact with a child under age 16, making a false official statement, adultery, and kidnapping.¹⁷⁴ On 16 May 2008, a US Military Court sentenced Hadnott to four years in prison, followed by demotion and a dishonorable discharge.¹⁷⁵

Directly following the alleged rape, Okinawa officials and activists were quick to express outrage. The Hadnott incident, occurring weeks after the alleged rape of a 19-year-old woman by four service men in Hiroshima in December,^{xxxix} surely rekindled memories of the kidnapping and gang-rape of a 12-year-old schoolgirl by three service men in Okinawa in September 1995. "I can never forgive such a crime, especially when the victim is a junior high school student," proclaimed Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima at a press conference after the arrest on 12 February 2008.¹⁷⁶ The following day, the Okinawa and Chatan municipal assemblies adopted a joint resolution calling for a formal apology, compensation for the victim, and additional steps to prevent such an incident from happening again.

As in the 1995 case, civic groups like Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence again mobilized in protest to the alleged incident, sending a letter to US President George W. Bush and organizing demonstrations in Okinawa. Similar to 1995, the protesters and critics linked the incident to the need for reassessing the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) governing US forces in Japan. A former editorial writer of the Tokyo Shimbun even compared the current SOFA agreement to gunboat diplomacy in the 19th century, arguing that:

In the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate, U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry, leading a fleet of "black ships," opened up Japan with "gunboat diplomacy" and

^{xxxix} In December 2007, four service members based at Iwakuni were charged with raping a 19-year-old woman in Hiroshima. Japanese prosecutors dropped charges due to lack of evidence, but the US military subsequently charged the service members under the military code of justice.

had a hand in imposing an unequal treaty on the nation. After the end of the Pacific War, the U.S. imposed another unequal treaty — SOFA. The treaty is already 50 years old and it's time to revise it.¹⁷⁷

The central government in Tokyo moved quickly to diffuse the tension caused by this crime. The day after the arrest, Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura reportedly stated, “I feel like we’ve had enough. As far as the sentiment of local residents is concerned, the incident will undoubtedly have an impact [on the realignment of US bases].”¹⁷⁸ Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura added that, “we find it truly regrettable that a US serviceman has been arrested despite our repeated requests to the United States to maintain strict discipline and prevent recurrences of such crimes.”¹⁷⁹ Minister of Defense Shigeru Ishiba publicly stressed, “this is not just a crime involving an American soldier. This is an issue that will affect the basis of the Japan–US alliance. I think it will require more than just asking the United States to reinforce discipline and prevent a recurrence.”¹⁸⁰ And finally, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, appearing before a meeting of the US House of Representatives Budget Committee, described the incident as “unforgivable.”¹⁸¹ On 14 February 2008, Prime Minister Fukuda met with Governor Nakaima and reportedly promised that he would increase pressure on the United States to strengthen military discipline.¹⁸² In addition to responses from Tokyo, local authorities in Okinawa installed surveillance cameras and created patrols of the entertainment districts in areas near the bases in Okinawa.

Unlike the 1995 case, however, the US military was considerably quicker in responding to the rape allegation, delivering Hadnott to Japanese authorities on the day after the charges were filed. The United States exhibited an impressive campaign coordinated by its Departments of State and Defense and aimed at reassuring local communities that the US sincerely regretted the incident and took the allegation seriously. On 13 February 2008, Ambassador Thomas Schieffer traveled to Okinawa and met with Governor Nakaima, expressing concern on behalf of the United States and delivering a letter of sympathy to the woman and her family. He returned to Tokyo and, later that same day, met with Foreign Minister Komura to discuss the incident, telling reporters after the meeting that, “we just have no sympathy and tolerance for these kinds of actions,” and stressed the decision to review the effectiveness of the sexual harassment educational programs designed for service members in Japan. Lieutenant General Richard Zilmer, Commanding General of the III MEF in Okinawa, met with Senior Vice Minister Itsunori Onodera to discuss the incident on the same day.¹⁸³

On 14 February 2008, Lieutenant General Bruce Wright, Commander of US Forces Japan (USFJ), established a top-brass task force to review its sexual

harassment and assault prevention programs. A number of steps followed, including the announcement of tight restrictions on 20 February that essentially banned the movement of civilian and military personnel from the bases, with the exception of official business and travel to and from housing, to prevent service members from visiting nearby restaurants, bars, or nightclubs.¹⁸⁴ In addition to the strict curfew, all Marines were required to attend additional sexual assault prevention educational programs.¹⁸⁵ Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, visiting Japan on 27 February, also publicly decried the incident on behalf of President Bush, reportedly conveying “regret...for the terrible incident that happened in Okinawa.”¹⁸⁶ Clearly, neither Tokyo nor Washington were willing to underestimate the potential for the Hadnott case to cascade into a prefecture-wide or nation-wide issue, as happened in 1995, especially after the 6,000-strong demonstration that took place in Chatan on 23 March.¹⁸⁷

As it turned out, the fallout from the Hadnott case was significantly less than the reaction to the 1995 rape. Media reports covering the developing story noted that the protests were generally “low profile,”¹⁸⁸ especially compared to the intensity of protests that had occurred during the previous September, in which an estimated 110,000 Okinawans participated in the largest-ever demonstrations in the island’s history. Protesters were responding to the Ministry of Education’s decision to change the government-endorsed history textbooks in ways that many Okinawans believed was whitewashing the actions of Japanese soldiers in Okinawa during World War II.¹⁸⁹ It was also clear that the quick responses of both Tokyo and Washington to take concrete steps showing their willingness to address the situation helped to diffuse the tension. A member of the prefectural assembly and Liberal Democratic Party explained that, although there was anger and regret over the alleged rape, the general sentiment was that “this time, the government responded quickly.”¹⁹⁰

Still, the incident reminded those in Okinawa, Tokyo, and Washington about the vulnerability of the political underpinnings of the vast US base infrastructure in Japan. Although Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Powell, Marine spokesman in Okinawa, cited that only 1 percent of all crimes in Okinawa in 2007 were committed by US military personnel, which accounted for 3 percent of Okinawa’s population, both local and national perceptions of the US military presence were still largely negative. Even though the Okinawa Prefectural Police Department reported that the number of arrests of US service members and their dependents for felonies and serious misdemeanors fell from 133 in 2003 to forty-six in 2006,¹⁹¹ the media continued to stress the danger of foreign troops, reporting that even after the curfew, a marine was arrested for drunk driving and another was arrested for trespassing into a local house and passing out.¹⁹²

Also, on 16 March 2008, US airman Darius Brunson was indicted for beating and robbing a 55-year-old cab driver in Okinawa. Brunson was transferred to Japanese custody on 20 March and charged with conspiracy along with four teenagers—all sons of active-duty service members—to rob the cab driver in Okinawa city.¹⁹³ These incidents, together with reports of the crimes committed by US service members in other parts of Japan, contributed to creating an atmosphere that is not conducive to continuing the implementation of the US force realignments.^{x1}

Secondly, the Japanese government has been unsuccessful in finding ways to work with the Okinawa government to try and advance the relocation plan. As Eldridge discusses in his chapter, the relationship between Japan's central government in Tokyo and the prefectural government of Okinawa in Naha has been lukewarm at best throughout its 38-year-history since Okinawa reverted to Japanese sovereignty in 1970. During its post-reversion history, Okinawa's citizens have felt left behind in being able to partake in Japan's economic prosperity and believe that the central government in Tokyo has been largely indifferent to Okinawa's needs. This sentiment runs particularly high in the case of Tokyo's past response, or lack thereof, to Okinawa's plea to reduce its burden of hosting more than 75 percent of all of the US forces that are stationed in Japan.

In particular, the current realignment plan for the US forces in Okinawa has been the target of intense criticism in Okinawa from the beginning of that process. As discussed in Uesugi's chapter, the realignment plan that was agreed to in the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) is very unpopular. The political leaders in Okinawa believed that the agreement between Tokyo and Washington had been reached "over Okinawa's head" and therefore, they felt little ownership of the plan and thus the incentive to work with the Japanese government to implement it. Current Okinawa Governor, Hirota Nakaima, elected in November 2006, has indicated his opposition to the proposed realignment plan. While the consultative group for relocation in Okinawa resumed its discussion in November 2007 shortly after the Prime Minister took office, the Japanese government has not been able to bridge its differences with Okinawa, which continues to insist that the relocation plan should be modified to better reflect local concerns.¹⁹⁴

^{x1} On 3 April 2008, Olatunbosun Ugbogu (US-Navy), was charged by Japanese prosecutors with the 19 March murder of a cab driver near Yokosuka Naval base in Kanagawa prefecture. A service man based at Misawa Air Base in Aomori prefecture, moreover, was arrested on 2 May for charges of sexually assaulting a 19-year-old. In response to the string of crimes receiving national attention, the US Navy announced in late April that it would conduct a survey of the mental health of 20,000 military and civilian personnel in Japan, with the possibility of the Marine Corps, Air Force, and Army later following suit.

Finally, the absence of political leadership in Tokyo at the highest level of the Japanese government has made implementation of the realignment plan extremely difficult. The bilateral negotiations on US force realignment took place when Junichiro Koizumi was in the office. While Koizumi was perceived in the United States to be decisive and willing to use his political capital to push his agenda (as demonstrated in the case of anti-terror legislation and postal liberalization), Koizumi exercised his political leadership very selectively and the US force realignment was not among the issues on which he chose to exert his influence.¹⁹⁵ Shinzo Abe, who succeeded Koizumi, did not have the chance to either develop his interest or use his political capital in moving the realignment forward. While current Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda has indicated some interest in the issue, he is too occupied with urgent domestic policy matters (i.e., pensions, medical care for the elderly) to take the initiative needed to ensure that progress continues on the US force realignment process.¹⁹⁶

The political situation in Tokyo presents a particular concern for the alliance managers. The political developments in Japan following the July 2007 election for the House of Councillors suggest that the political climate in Tokyo has entered a period of great uncertainty. Fluidity in the political process could affect the management of some of the most fundamental issues in the US–Japan alliance. How the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) led by Ichiro Ozawa forced a temporary suspension of JSDF’s refueling mission in the Indian Ocean by taking advantage of its majority in the House of Councillors demonstrates that it is willing to politicize issues critical to the US–Japan alliance if it allows the DPJ to score political points. Also, the DPJ’s call for cutting the host-nation support for US forces in Japan not only is quietly gaining supporters inside the Japanese bureaucracy but also is resonating with a public that has grown increasingly skeptical of the US commitment to the defense of Japan, particularly after Washington shifted its North Korea policy. Such an atmosphere in today’s Japan, where the public is less and less certain about Japan’s steadfast support for US policy in Asia and elsewhere, makes opposing the government’s initiatives for the US–Japan alliance an attractive option for the DPJ. Even when US force realignment in Okinawa is not politicized by the DPJ, increasing wariness for the United States can negatively affect the public and political support for the US–Japan alliance and thereby slows the realignment process in Okinawa.

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The outlook for implementing the realignment plan for the US forces in Okinawa and other parts of Japan is not encouraging. 2008 is a presidential election year in the United States and the new administration taking over in 2009 will be preoccupied with the Middle East. Thus, it will likely be some time

before the new administration is able to pay attention to the US force realignment in Japan. And in Tokyo, the Fukuda government is bogged down in a number of serious domestic political issues and its future looks uncertain. Therefore, the US and Japanese governments are facing a considerable period of time in which there will be an absence of the concerted political leadership needed to advance the agenda of the US-Japan alliance. This prospect is further aggravated by the uncertain political situation in Tokyo which could work to weaken broad public and political support for the US-Japan alliance in general.

Despite the discouraging prospects for gaining political support from the leadership in the process in the near term, the US force realignment must continue. As Derek Mitchell outlined in his chapter in this volume, the Global Posture Review (GPR) aims to transform the nature of the US approach toward its force presence overseas. The GPR also aims to reexamine the Cold War-era divisions of roles between the United States and its allies to enhance both regional and global security, as does the DPRI. The agreed-upon force realignment plan—including relocation of the forces and training facilities, as well as shared use of US military and JSDF facilities—is undergirded by a global strategic rationale and a vision of the US-Japan alliance as a more equal partner than in past years. Thus, the success of the US force realignment in Japan is one of the important milestones for gauging the progress made by the US-Japan alliance in realizing such a vision.

In particular, the successful resolution of the long-time challenge for the US–Japan alliance—how to alleviate the burdens shouldered by Okinawa while maintaining the same level of deterrence to possible attack—is critical. Because Okinawa bears most of the burden for hosting the US military, the major relocation of US forces to Guam and other parts of Japan under the current realignment plan has implications beyond just the base relocation itself. It will also profoundly affect the way in which the US military and SDF cooperate in case of regional contingencies, thus impacting the ongoing discussions between the two governments on the newly defined role for Japan within the framework of the US–Japan alliance. In other words, progress on the US force realignment in Japan (including forces in Okinawa) will determine, in large part, the future dynamics and mode of security cooperation between the United States and Japan.

A realignment of large military forces is not easy or simple. Close coordination at many levels—both intergovernmental as well as within the country—will be required for its successful implementation. The US force realignment process in Japan began with a distinct disadvantage: The pre-existing mistrust between the Japanese government and local governments hosting the US military has prevented the parties from having open and constructive communications during the DPRI negotiations. This was particularly true in the case of Okinawa.

However, while the process has not gone perfectly, the agreed-upon plan—if fully implemented—would bring substantial benefits to Okinawa in terms of a reduced US military presence in the prefecture and the amount of land that is returned to Okinawa following the relocation. This leaves all of the vested parties—Washington, Tokyo and Okinawa—with no choice but to try and move forward with the plan.

But the DPRI process has left several important questions for the alliance managers still unanswered. First and foremost, it has not solved the enduring challenge of how to work with local communities in Japan to ensure a sustainable US military presence in Japan. When all is said and done, the local communities that host US forces in Japan, including Okinawa, were left with the uneasy feeling that the Japanese government had made an agreement with the United States on the force realignment plan without their substantive input or even tentative approval. Thus, for the most part, they feel that the terms of the US force realignment under the DPRI agreement were forced upon them, with their cooperation to plan intimately linked with the provision of the fiscal stimulus measures from the Japanese government.

As Eldridge and Uesugi discussed in their chapters, such a sentiment runs particularly strong in Okinawa where the people perceived that the Japanese government threw out the plan—carefully crafted between the Japanese government, US government, Okinawa prefectural government, and the local communities in Okinawa that are to be impacted by the relocation—and instead imposed another agreement on Okinawa. Even if the current realignment plan can be eventually implemented in full, such a bitter feeling left among the local communities may continue to impact their attitude toward the US forces that they host and their relationship with the Japanese government. As Flake and Heginbotham point out, Okinawa, for better or for worse, continues to be a critical strategic location for the US forces deployed in the Asia-Pacific region. It is imperative, therefore, that the force realignment in Okinawa occurs in a principled manner that pays due respect for the desire of Okinawa to reduce its burdens as the host community for US forces, while recognizing the military responsibilities and objectives of US forces based in the region.

More importantly, the US force realignment is only one piece of a complicated puzzle in the overall context of the Global Posture Review. Along with a realignment of US forces in Japan, a deeper and more comprehensive bilateral discussion needs to occur in regard to threat perceptions, the division of roles and responsibilities between US forces and the JSDF vis-à-vis a number of threat contingencies, and finally, how a realigned US force presence in Japan could bolster and advance the US–Japan alliance. Unfortunately, with the

political seasons now setting in both Tokyo and Washington, there is very little incentive to embark on such a far-reaching and substantive dialogue.

Also critical, the strengthening of the US–Japan alliance must be a bipartisan priority. With or without leadership attention, the alliance managers on both sides are advised to have quiet, ongoing discussions about common security concerns (including the potentially destabilizing impact of a Six-Party Talks’ failure on regional security as well as the global nonproliferation regime) so that the US–Japan alliance—as a key US alliance in the Asia-Pacific region—can be ready to respond to uncertainties. Such discussion does not have to and should not wait for an environment in which the attention of top leaders is required. In fact, it is often better to have serious discussions on sensitive security issues when the political leaders are paying little attention because it will help prevent the dialogue from becoming overly politicized.

During the Bush-Koizumi era, many in Tokyo and Washington praised the US–Japan alliance as one of the most accomplished security partnerships in the world. It is easy to claim that on paper. But is this really true? Whether the US force realignment in Japan can be implemented in full as agreed upon under the DPRI, and whether Washington and Tokyo can embark on a more serious discussion on their respective security roles in the Asia–Pacific region and beyond, will determine the answer to this question.

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