

The future course of Japan's national security policy in the face of rising China
Tadahiro Yashima
Visiting Fellow, East Asia Program, The Henry L. Stimson Center
Ministry of Defense of Japan

Introduction

There was a period in the early 1990s when some had said that the Japan-US alliance had drifted. Looking back onto the history of the Japan-US alliance in the last 15 years, however, Japan and the United States seem to have gotten over such crisis. While some say that the Japan-US alliance has evolved into a mature partnership, the alliance seems to have begun to drift yet again of late. In Tokyo, absence of attention in national security affairs has been clear: Diet deliberations prioritize domestic issues over a broader discussion on Japan's national security interests or its role in the global community. Politicization of national security for domestic political maneuvering even suspended the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean for a few months.

Of course, Japan being a democratic nation, the national security policy should be conducted based on the support of the public and with appropriate oversight by the Diet. In the past, however, the debates on security policy have been reactive: the discussion usually will not start until some situation occurs, and the debate will not intensify until the US government pressures the Japanese government to take action. I believe that today's security environment surrounding Japan demands that the Japanese government address Tokyo's security concerns proactively.

This text is neither an exquisite policy analysis nor an academic thesis; it is just one essay, about the future course of Japanese security policy for the next decade, with attention paid to the current state of US-China relations, written in a limited time and an ability that the author possesses.

Further, it is clear from the contents, but the views state in this essay are my personal opinion and are not endorsed by the Ministry of Defense, the Self Defense Forces or the government of Japan.

Chapter 1 US policy toward China

Section 1 Process and future course

During his 2000 presidential election campaign, President Bush intensely criticized the "engagement policy" of the Clinton administration as too soft, insisting that China was not a partner but a "strategic competitor" and proposed a change of the US and China partnership policy of the Clinton administration (in fact, the Clinton administration also criticized the engagement policy toward China of the Bush Sr. administration, but Clinton's linkage policy with human rights was given up with the sudden growth of the Chinese economy). The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in 2001 mentioned that "the possibility exists that a military competitor with a formidable resources base will emerge in the region." It was very clear that it had China in mind and was expressing wariness to a Chinese rise (note 1).

But in March 2001, a Chinese fighter had a minor collision with US surveillance plane EP-3E in the Hainan Island, and EP-3E was forced to emergency-land on the Chinese island. It is thought that the communication between China and the US during this crisis might have shown the Bush administration the necessity of a more realistic approach and beyond only a strong posture against China (note 2). In addition, the Bush administration's understanding of China had definitely changed because of September 11th.

President Bush and Chinese President Jiang Zemin conferred on the telephone on September 12th, the day after the attacks, criticizing "violence including terrorism" severely and called for the unity of the international society to eliminate terrorism. Moreover, the common pace of the China-US counter-terrorism measures was set during the APEC summit in Shanghai in October. China changed from "a strategic rival" into a partner that "constructive relations" could be built with. The US National Security Strategy of September 2002 emphasized not only cooperation with China on the war against terrorism, but also stability of the Korean peninsula, China's entry into the WTO, economic interests, and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, Chapter 8 of the NSS is the one which clearly denies a Chinese threat, stating that "the United States relationship with China is an important part of our strategy to promote a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region," and, "there are, however, other areas in which we have profound disagreements. Our commitment to the self-defense of Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act is one. Human rights is another. We expect China to adhere to its nonproliferation commitments. We will work to narrow differences where they exist, but not allow them to preclude cooperation where we agree"(note 3).

The voices which urged a strengthening of China-US economical cooperation also began to be heard. US inclination to engage China while not overlooking security and other concerns can be described best by the phrase that the former Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick used at his speech in September 2005. He stated that China will be expected to become a "responsible stakeholder" in the future, calling on China to emerge as a responsible big power to cooperate with the United States in order to maintain the international order. The Chinese side took the remarks favorably (note 4).

This attitude seemed to have been buttressed by strong US business interest in the Chinese market. China, with continued rapid economic growth, has become a vital place for US trade and investment. But on the other hand, Chinese rapid economic growth also means a rise of Chinese power. The fact that the defense budget of China has seen continuous double-digit growth since the middle of the 1990's has been a source of worries for the United States. The continuous increase in the defense budget has also been the grounds of the "China threat" among hardliners in the United States. In other words, because the United States maintains vigilance vis-à-vis the rise of China, the Bush administration toward China has not only aimed at engaging but also hedging China (note 5).

In other words, China is placed as a stakeholder, based on both cooperative and competitive aspects of US-China relations, maintaining and strengthening the cooperative side possible on the one hand, while the US prepares for unstable contingencies related to a Chinese rise (note 6).

Even Zoellick mentioned in his September 2005 speech that “many Americans worry that the Chinese dragon will prove to be a fire-breather. There is a cauldron of anxiety about China,” and that “China’s actions – combined with a lack of transparency – can create risks. Uncertainties about how China will use its power will lead the United States – and others as well – to hedge relations with China. Many countries hope China will pursue a “Peaceful Rise,” but none will bet their future on it” (note 7).

In addition, US concerns for China’s growth is also expressed in the 2006 QDR, which, while stating that “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,” also stated that “the choices that major and emerging powers make will affect the future strategic position and freedom of action of the United States, its allies and partners. The United States will attempt to shape “the choices of countries at strategic crossroads” in ways that foster cooperation and mutual security interests. At the same time, the United States, its allies and partners must also hedge against the possibility that a major or emerging power could choose a hostile path in the future.” It must be China who is supposed to be cautious about “the choices of countries at strategic crossroads.” The QDR also pointed out that “of the major and emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States,” and, “since 1996, China has increased its defense spending by more than 10% in real terms in every year except 2003” (note 8).

Thus, it seems that the US policy toward China has been advancing in a sort of fixed range from the cooperative or engagement to the threatening as if a pendulum can swing in each occasion. So, in short, US policy toward China began as one that looked at China as a strategic competitor. Its position then shifted to emphasize cooperation with China and expanded trade, based on the policy of supporting economic growth on the one hand while hedging against the future that comes from China’s uncertainty on the other.

The China that was assumed to be "a strategic competitor" before the inauguration of Bush administration had been asked to be in a "constructive relationship" since the 9/11. (note 9). In fact, it isn't easy to use armed force directly against suspected nuclear proliferating countries like North Korea and Iran, so there is no choice but to emphasize a solution by diplomatic negotiations—cooperation with concerned nations such as China, Russia, EU countries, Japan, and South Korea is becoming more important for the United States.

No matter what people say, the biggest diplomatic concern and its priority for the US for some time to come is the Middle East, specifically Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. However, the stable development of the Asia Pacific region continues to be extremely important for the US as well. The US continues to be engaged in Asia although it will likely avoid decisive confrontation and aim for maintaining the status quo on security matters. This way, US economic profit in the Asia Pacific region is not affected, and the US can expect no changes in the present conditions. Such a posture has already been seen in US policy regarding North Korea that is the greatest pending issue in the East Asia, and the US policy to China will primarily focus on maintaining the cooperative relationship overall, even if the tension may sometimes rise regarding issues such as human rights and trade. Still, as the economic growth and the military expansion of China will continue, US concerns for the Chinese rise will also grow. This will force continued US hedging against future uncertainties.

Section 2 Assessment of China's military modernization and China's future

China had been shocked by the result of the advanced revolution in military affairs that the Gulf War, the air raid in Kosovo, and the anti-terrorism war in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown off. It drove China to intensify its military modernization efforts that had started while Deng Xiaoping was still in power; at the same time, however, China needed a peaceful and stable international environment in order to continue its current economic growth. Therefore, prioritized coexistence with the United States and cooperation with an international society was placed as the basic principle of its foreign policy. (note 10).

As previously described, September 11th led to U.S.-China cooperation and the possibility of US and China opposition first passed away, at the same time, it is conceivable that Chinese threat to the United States would be stirred because the United States Armed Forces invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. The invasion of Iraq occurred over the objection of all the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council except not only China but also the UK, and Chinese political leaders would be aware of the backwardness of a military technology of their country by Baghdad's having been suppressed in only about three weeks. Above all, the new war aspect that the US and UK forces had shown off in Iraq in 2003 showed that "computerization" became an important factor; the superiority of information and the reinforcement of C4I(Command, Control, Communication, Computer and Intelligence) function were indispensable to win a war under "computerization" conditions. Also, it showed that the practical implementation of outer space resources such as precision guided weapons, reconnaissance, and communication was important. China must have recognized the reality that their own military power lagged (note 11).

Lack of transparency in China's defense expenditure continues to be a concern for the United States. So, the United States, with other countries, have for many years urged China to increase transparency in defense spending, and will continue to do so in the future. China's official defense budget has continued to grow at double-digit increase. Moreover, it has often been said that China's actual defense spending is two or three times the announced budget. The *ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008* said that the US Department of Defense, many think tanks and academic institutions in the United States produce a wide range of analyses of Chinese military expenditure. Although these analyses may disagree about the exact amount of military expenditure, most arrive at the same conclusion: Beijing significantly under-reports its overall defense expenditures (note 12).

Then, how does the US assess China's military power? China's defense modernization cannot be said to have already produced the expected results given that the defense budget of China has been indicating double-digit growth since the end of the Cold War. In fact, it can be said that the current state of the sea power of China is still at a far stage from the level by which it can oppose the U.S. aircraft carrier force in the west Pacific Ocean (note 13). The 2008 *ANNUAL REPORT* also quoted the Chinese government's report, *National Defense in 2006*, saying that "China pursues a three-step development strategy in modernizing its national defense . . . The first step is to lay a solid foundation by 2010, the second is to make major progress around 2020, and the third is to basically reach the strategic goal of building informationized armed forces and being capable of winning informatized wars by the mid-21st century" (note 14). In fact, the 2008 *ANNUAL REPORT* showed that 70 percent of its surface combatants, 60

percent of its submarine force and 80 percent of its fighter jets are still considered to be outdated, also reporting that “the U.S. Intelligence Community estimates China will take until the end of this decade or longer to produce a modern force capable of defeating a moderate-size adversary” (note 15). It is thought that the achievement level of the Chinese military modernization is still modest. On the other hand, China continues to invest heavily in its military. There are signs that its investment is beginning to pay off, particularly in its naval forces, including its goal to acquire an indigenous aircraft carrier and strategic missile-equipped submarines. Its development of a power projection capability beyond its borders as well as its focus on “informationized war” certainly deserve constant watchfulness, although it will take a while for China to possess a deterrent capability that will be a serious concern for the US (note 16).

Concerning the Taiwan issue, in the short term China cannot suppress Taiwan though little by little the military balance between China and Taiwan will change. A missile strike from mainland China would not possess enough power under the present conditions to work, a suppression of Taiwan through military power would also be considerably difficult, and it is difficult to get political legitimacy of achieving national interest through such use of armed force. In that sense, it is thought that the cost of a military intervention is extremely huge. The probability seems to be low that China in the transition period of rapid economic growth would take the risk of being isolated from the global community under the principles of the nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries. On the one hand, it would be necessary for the United States to maintain cooperation with China and to expand trade with China to support the economic growth of the US; it would also be indispensable for China to cooperate with the international society including the United States because China cannot help but to depend on foreign capital in order to maintain rapid growth and ease domestic anxieties. As long as such a cooperative relationship exists between China and the US, China wouldn't force itself to move on the Taiwan issue and the US would tend to avoid unnecessary intervention. The US wouldn't expect any extreme change in present conditions, such as Taiwan independence or the unification of China and Taiwan, because the U.S. interest is not to violate economic profit in the Asia-Pacific region (note 17).

In addition to the concerns on China's military modernization, there are other sources of concerns that raise questions about China's future. Various contradictions in the society such as the widening income disparity, the unfairness of the distribution and the leaving of the poor to their fate have been actualized in China along with economic development. These challenges have put the Chinese government under pressure from the public to make steady progress toward the goal of “building a moderately prosperous society in all respects” in order to satisfy the will of the people. In concrete terms, this means that Chinese political leaders have been pressured to develop China into a stable and more equitable society, finding solutions for its domestic problems such as the income disparity, corruption, unemployment, an aging society, and environmental problems. In the medium to long-term, the growth of the political middle class and the increasing pressure for democratization will also become a challenge for the Chinese government (note 18).

Richard L. Armitage's second report, *THE U.S.-JAPAN ALLIANCE Getting Asia Right through 2020*, said that “China has massive internal challenges that include an aging society, a weak social safety net, large and growing disparities in development, and systemic corruption—all of which have resulted in social unease. China's leaders also

are faced with growing labor unrest, a weak banking and financial system, lingering ethnic disputes, environmental problems almost unimaginable to Westerners, and vulnerability to epidemic disease. Together, these challenges have caused Chinese leaders to focus internally, thereby putting a premium on external stability. China seeks a stable, peaceful international environment in which to develop its comprehensive national power” (note 19).

It is absolutely certain that China considers pursuing military modernization as one of its most important priorities. China considers the outside security environment still unstable, and it therefore recognizes the US as hegemonic and as its greatest threat. China is also likely to build up its military capability in the areas where they can avoid an international tension and maintain cooperation with the international society. This is because China’s leaders have been under pressure to sustain the nation’s economic growth and stable social development. It is also because the majority of China’s GDP is dependent on foreign trade. Yet its military is still not at a place where it can effectively fight in 21st-century warfare. Therefore, China which has been continuing rapid economic growth is likely to continue to need a peaceful international environment as a whole, even if the tension may sometimes rise in the international discussions of issues such as human rights or trade(note 20).

Of course, it is absolutely certain that the Chinese military modernization is obviously making progress, particularly in its naval force and in its power projection capability .These must be closely watched. The uncertainty of China’s intention and its capability would not only cause serious concerns for the Asian security environment, but also can lead to the exaggeration of a Chinese threat. China as a responsible stakeholder needs to take measures to improve on its military transparency. If done, the possibility that China becomes a threat to the United States and Japan will remain low for at least the next decade. But in the longer term, evolution in Chinese military capabilities and the potential shift in military balance in East Asia that may occur as a result will require much closer attention from Japan and the United States.

Chapter 2 Future course of Japan’s national security policy

Section 1 Response to international environment surrounding Japan

As seen in the preceding chapter, the United State, which after its experience in Iraq accepts the necessity of international cooperation, will have a stronger tendency to avoid decisive confrontations and strive for the status quo on security matters in the Asia-Pacific region in order to put its priority on Middle-East affairs. As a result, it is conceivable that the presence of the United States in the region would decrease relatively. It would be more likely for the United States and China to maintain cooperation with each other and to create a stable peaceful international environment as a whole, both hoping to support economic growth and expansion of trade and investment. On the other hand, it would also be more necessary for the United States to carefully observe China’s rise due to China’s uncertainty.

For the United States, it will be Japan and the US-Japan alliance that plays the hedging role against such Chinese uncertainty. The expectations of the United States for Japan are naturally different from those for China. The United States requests Japan to make the alliance stronger and to expand Japan’s role and burden because the United States seems to recognize Japan as a predictable actor (and is easier to control). The US

charges Japan with the role of towing the profit in the Asia-Pacific region for the United States, and Japan is considered the most cooperative in the region. On the other hand, the United States seems to recognize that it will be necessary to think about how to react to China if China became the military power and began to take a policy against the United States (note 21).

Therefore, the argument of emphasizing only “Japan Passing,” which is highly focused on the aspect that United States values China, is not always thought to have shot the mark. Anyway, these trends of the United States’ policy toward China would not change fundamentally in the foreseeable future.

When I turn my attention to the international environment surrounding Japan, although the likelihood of full-scale invasion of Japan has declined and is expected to remain modest in the foreseeable future, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, international terrorist activities, the situation on the Korean Peninsula, and cross-Taiwan Strait relations are unpredictable and the outcomes remain uncertain. Also, rising China 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. Those certainly deserve constant watchfulness. It goes without saying that it will be the presence of the United States and the US-Japan alliance that plays a role for the security of Japan and its hedge against such uncertainties, and maintaining and expanding the close and cooperative relationships between Japan and the United States is necessary. Based on the facts of China’s military modernization and little transparency about its intentions and capabilities, Japan, not just the US, should hedge against the Chinese uncertainty.

But, at the same time, the argument must not be aimed at only maintaining the Japan-U.S. alliance, for instance, just doing the passive viewpoint from beginning to end, without planning the international environment surrounding Japan and the way that the Japan-US relations should be at all, and always thinking of only relying on or being called by the United States. It would clearly be requested that Japan should be engaged in the stability in Asia-Pacific region more positively, that is, it is not that Japan should just replace entirely the role of the United States which would relatively decrease its presence and interest in the region, but Japan should make its presence expand relatively, take the role of mediating between China and the US, and encourage China to be responsible stakeholder that cooperates with the United States. At the same time, it would also be more indispensable for Japan to develop a strategy and preparedness that hedge against the uncertainty of Chinese future whereabouts or unstable factor with Chinese rise.

Therefore, it would be necessary for Japan to pursue policies to maintain and strengthen coordinating aspects between Japan and China that will bring short-term mutual benefits. It would be useful to promote cooperation between the two countries in a number of the various fields, such as the economy, technology, the environment, and disaster relief, without falling into narrow-minded nationalism based on history. That said, Japan must understand that recently China sometimes must take a stronger attitude externally regarding the history dispute to quell domestic dissatisfaction. It would be extremely indispensable for Japan to make relations with China more stable and would be in the United States’ interest as well. The defense exchange with China advanced in recent years deserves recognition, but too often the confidence building stops at the entrance stage because they express only their defense policy. It is highly

necessary to encourage China increase its transparency of the defense policy and defense budget, and also would be highly useful for Japan to consider cooperating with China in fields such as the PKO and disaster relief activities.

At the same time, from the point of view of balancing against China, it would be important for Japan to strengthen the relationship with India and Australia and to promote multi-lateral cooperation that includes the United States, as well as to reinforce the relationship with Southeast Asian countries, in particular focusing on geopolitically-important Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation.

It is exclusively important to secure the sea lines of communication which are indispensable to Japanese stable development because Japan depends almost entirely on imported natural resources. The destabilization of the international community by events such as regional conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and international terrorist attacks would directly affect its own peace and security. Therefore, Japan should encourage as much cooperation as possible with countries in the Asian-Pacific region including cooperation in dispute settlement and peace building, antiterrorism measures, measures for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, anti-piracy measures, large-scale natural disasters and epidemics, environmental protection, energy saving, and development education. By being engaged in regional peace and stability and making steady efforts for the expansion of its presence in international peace cooperation activities, such as Peace Keeping Operations of United Nations and Official Development Assistance, Japan can bring about security and prosperity. Therefore, it goes without saying that it would be important to maintain and develop Japan's economy and advanced technology.

Section 2 Basic course of desirable future defense policies and the domestic political situation

While it is anticipated that a peaceful, stable international environment will continue at least on the surface, that the presence of the United States in Asia-Pacific region would decrease proportionality, and that the threat of an all-scale invasion against Japan is increasing unlikely, how should Japan shape its defense policy for the next decade?

Furthermore, in considering Japan's security, we have to take into account that Japan's vulnerabilities resulting from a high population density, the concentration of population and industry in urban areas, and a large number of important facilities in coastal areas, so a defensive war fought on the mainland would be difficult to defend against. Therefore, more priority should be given to improve the deterrent by maintaining and improving such capabilities that are backed up by high technology, enable us to deal effectively with situations further from mainland, and make it possible to keep the direct damage to the mainland to a minimum. It is exclusively important to secure the sea lines of communication which are indispensable to Japan's stable development because Japan is surrounded by the sea and depends almost entirely on import of natural resources. Moreover, it is important for Japan's peace and stability to prevent or improve any destabilization of the international community by events such as regional conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and international terrorist attacks. If I try to summarize these things in a simple or brief word, we should put higher priority on encouraging "a nation pursuing sea power and international peace and cooperation."

Therefore, it is essential to establish permanent legislation that would include all temporary elements concerning international peace cooperation activities, bringing together temporary laws like the Peace Keeping Operations Law, the Antiterrorism Special Law, and the Iraq Special Measures Law, this would allow for the dispatch of the Self Defense Forces for multinational operations more positively. Then, the scope of the activities should be as wide as possible. We should include in the legislation not issues of cooperating a regional conflicts settlement and peace building, international counter-terrorism measures, but also measures for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction such as PSI, large-scale natural disaster relief, as well as surveillance for antiterrorism measures and piracy precautions for the mainly Maritime Self-Defense Force's vessels and airplanes. To make those activities more effective and smooth, it is also important to reduce the restrictions on the use of weapons by troops in pursuing more reasonable guidelines which take into account the situation, and allow for the same level of weapon-use as other countries. Although the use of weapons is strictly limited under the current legal framework, it still needs to be hashed out further in its relations with Article 9 of Japanese constitution.

In addition, we should encourage the introduction of ballistic missile defense systems through close and cooperative coordination with the United States; we should also strengthen the technological research and development, as well as reinforce the Maritime Self Defense Forces, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The MSDF should take a more important and wider role in dealing with new threats and diverse situations. The concept is: "making them more multifunctional, longer distance and range, and higher mobility." Taking the concept into account, we should push forward the introduction of the vessels and aircrafts and the establishment of a necessary defense force structure. Moreover, we have to consider whether we should hold a part of the power projection ability.

When considering matters of national security and defense, domestic politics play a large role. In addition to resources being strictly limited given Japan's budgetary environment, it is unfortunate that security issues cannot be discussed sincerely and positively, because ruling and opposition parties are intensely at odds with each other due to the opposition camp's control of the Upper House in the divided Diet. This is because a lot of voters who have uneasiness about the future have more serious concerns about their usual daily life, such as pensions, social security, unemployment, the social gap and price increase. Conventionally, Japanese people tend to have no interest in the issue of security. If they had a little interest in it, they would have been obsessed with arguing only a constitution and the defense budget in the past. At the beginning of this century from 1990's, the discussion and the policy concerning national security such as the Law about the Peace Keeping Operations of the United Nations, the Law concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan and Ship Inspection Operations Law, the establishment of the legislation on the Armed Attack Situation Response, the Antiterrorism Special Law, and the Iraq Special Measures Law, has progressed greatly enough to be unlike anything in the past. The progress is due largely to the fact that Japan had faced both real, definite threats and changes in the international environment surrounding Japan such as the Gulf War, the incident of ballistic missiles launch by North Korea, the unidentified vessel incident, the September 11 attacks and so on, even though national opinion has been more matured than the past.

With strong leadership supported by many voters, Prime Minister Koizumi had pushed forward reinforcement of the Japan-U.S. alliance and was showing posture that moved forward a discussion about the issues of the constitution and right to collective self-defense, but recently Japan seems to be turning back to old Japan. Japanese politicians and the people have recently become more “inward-looking,” as the result of the recent public opinion poll about the extension of the Antiterrorism Special Law and the Iraq Special Measures Law showed that the opposition was not small. Moreover, the Self-Defense Forces have recently faced various criticisms because of a succession of scandals. My personal opinion is that if the approval rate of Cabinet is low and an opposition party is more offensive, it would be more difficult to achieve large reforms such as the revision of the constitution or the law amendment concerning national security through cooperative and positive discussion in the Diet, as long as Japan doesn't face a crisis.

Therefore, it would be more important to think about more feasible policies and fix their order of priority appropriately after taking into account not only the future trend of the US-China relations and the international environment surrounding, but also the real situation of domestic policy. I never intend to say that there is no need to consider unfeasible policies and I strongly support the idea that Japan should do every efforts to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of bilateral security and defense cooperation and improve interoperability of Self Defense Forces and US forces as outlined in the October 2005 SCC document. However, I'm afraid I cannot expect remarkable progress on the difficult tasks that need greater political leadership, such as increased cooperation between relevant ministries, agencies and local governments.

Section 3 Policy recommendations

First and foremost, the close US-Japan alliance will continue to be a central factor not only for the security of Japan but also for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, Japan should maintain and expand the close relationship with the United States. When it comes to China, I think Japan and US share a common strategic objective. Japan and US both see the need in developing a cooperative relationship with China, welcoming the country to play a responsible and constructive role. At the same time, they share concerns regarding China's lack of transparency in its military spending and other military affairs, and feel necessary to hedge against China. This will make closer policy coordination between Japan and the United States on China a logical policy choice for both countries. Secondly, Japan, while maintaining coordination with the United States, needs to also develop its own policies toward China that balances between maintaining a cooperative relations while continuing to hedge against uncertainties. It would also be useful to promote security cooperation between the two countries in the fields of PKO and disaster relief. Thirdly, the destabilization of the international community by events such as regional conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international terrorist activities, and large scale disaster would affect our own peace and security. Therefore, Japan should proactively participate in the efforts to improve the international security environment, particularly in Asia. Such efforts include peace building, antiterrorism measures, cooperation for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, anti-piracy measures, and cooperation for large-scale natural disasters and epidemics.

All that said, how should we think and deal with the tougher and important issues, such as the revision of the constitution, that are necessary to promote the international cooperation activities? Given the present political situation, it would be too hard and

inappropriate to face these difficult problems. These are very important topics, however many Japanese voters should put their priority on the policies that might improve their usual daily life and alleviate their uneasiness about future life.

Therefore, I think it would be more realistic or practical to give the impression that our objective is just to cooperate with the international society and deal with the things that affect our own peace and security, which could be more acceptable to many voters, and to adopt “a gradual progress approach,” which could clear the hurdle as high as possible. The more the problems can be cleared, the more the SDF can take an active part in international operations. Because both the Liberal Democratic Party and the Democratic Party recognize the necessity for establishing the legislation as a whole, only the specific contents and timing would be the unresolved issues.

The contents of the legislation shouldn't be only made up into a bundle, the activities should be as wide as possible, and for example, should enable vessels and airplanes of the Maritime Self-Defense forces to do surveillance constantly under normal circumstances apart from the peace-keeping operation, the antiterrorism measures, and precautionary measures against piracy. I think these wider activities would be the key for us to increase Japan's presence in Asia as “a nation pursuing sea power and international peace and cooperation.” Through these active and constant roles, the SDF could acquire more practical education and training and could be given more effective and beneficial experience. When we modernize the MSDF and ASDF while considering and hedging against China's future, it would be necessary to explain another reason, that is, a sort of pretext because we cannot explain officially the exact reason that we are reacting to the China's military modernization.

On the other hand, about the timing of the establishment of the legislation, it would take longer if the contents of the law are more comprehensive. It might be difficult to establish the legislation before the expiration of the special law authorizing the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, and the discussion about the expiration would have an effect of the rising interest in the imperativeness of the legislation.

And even though we cannot currently engage in many international activities because of the lack of a special law authorizing the missions, in the meantime, as well as the Maritime Self-Defense Force participating in joint exercises with many countries in Asia, I think Japan should consider dispatching the SDF to East Timor again in order to be engaged in Peace Keeping Operation to maintain public order, reconstruct buildings, or fix the roads under cooperation with the Australian forces. In addition to these activities, I think it would be significant for the increase our presence in Asia if the vessels and aircrafts of MSDF would be active in orders to rotate the GSDF troops and transport goods and materials from Japan to East Timor by sea regularly. East Timor would be the appropriate training field of the GSDF because it is near Japan and much safer than Iraq or Afghanistan.

In order to pursue these goals, the restructuring of the SDF would be essential. In particular, we are in the period of decreasing defense budget. Although everyone agrees that it is problematic, we still have to work with the reality that increasing the defense budget in the near future is unlikely. This makes efficient use of limited resources all the more important, and for that reason, I think it is very important for the Japanese Defense Ministry and the Self-Defense Forces to reexamine existing organizations, enhance our efficiency, and redesign the appropriate allocation of limited resources.

Although Japan ranks in the top five in the world in gross defense expenditures, it is number 134 in the world in terms of defense budget as a percentage of GDP, so from that point of view, the budget increase would be hoped. However, such a discussion would never be accepted and supported in Japan (note 22).

To put it bluntly, one of the issues that deserves serious consideration is the reducing of the personnel size of the Ground Self-Defense Force, considering that the likelihood of a full-scale invasion of Japan has declined and is expected to remain modest in the foreseeable future. I think the Ground Self-Defense Force is excessively large because they have been highly intent on domestic disaster relief and been stationed in depopulated areas because of their lack of any other local industry. Therefore, we could deal with the new and future situations if we thoroughly carry out a reform of the SDF in order to improve efficiency and enhance our integrated functions by decreasing the GSDF tanks, main artillery and units or bases scattered in the Hokkaido area, as well as streamlining the organization by merging and closing down bases throughout the SDF. At the same time, we should focus more on and encourage the modernization and buildup of the MSDF and ASDF in terms both of its quality and quantity, the introduction of ballistic missile defense systems, the international peace cooperation activities, the technological research and development, and the holding of a part of the power projection ability. I do not intend to suggest that we should be willing to reduce our forces. These recommendations enable and force us to explain the necessity to hedge against China's uncertainty or to reform by ourselves in order to focus on the international cooperation activities and ballistic missile defense.

Also, we have to take into account political situation about security matters. We certainly have to be mindful of severe criticism from the public and the strictly limited budget resources in recent years. Given the international environment surrounding Japan, basic direction for desirable future policies, and the domestic political situation, I think we should put priority on modernization of MSDF, ASDF, response to new threats and international activities, which will have to be done while facing the fierce resistance of GSDF and its supporting politicians.

Conclusion

Given the changing regional and global security environment, it is clear that Japan should maintain and expand the close relationship with the United States. That said, its geographical location necessitates that Japan, while hedging against uncertainties, seeks to develop a cooperative relationship with China, particularly in security issues. Japan should proactively engage in the efforts to improve international security environment in general so that it can facilitate creating a stable security situation for Japan. Finally, in its own defense policy, Japan should seriously consider ways to reallocate its limited resources, so that it can invest in what is necessary for the defense capability required for the future. That may mean political leaders will have to make difficult and politically unpopular decisions to shift resources away from the existing programs, organizations and facilities.

The efforts Japan attempts to make in any of these areas will meet various challenges domestically. There would be still questions about the constitutionality of taking legal measures to enable smoother and more effective SDF overseas operations. Within the JSDF itself, as well, fundamental reposturing of the JSDF that includes the reduction of

the GSDF to allow room for enhancing MSDF and ASDF will no doubt meet serious resistance in Japan

Considering such challenges, broad political support and a much stronger political leadership would be imperative in order to facilitate more serious discussion on national security policy in the Diet; however, it is vital for Japanese people to realize the importance of discussing Japan's national interest as well as Japan's strategy and policy to protect and promote such interests. Only passively responding to external demands or resting on the laurels of the present US-Japan alliance may have worked until now, but will not in the future. Japan should face up to the reality of its security and seriously tackle challenges that await the nation.

Footnote

- (note1) Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, September 30, 2001, p.4. Go Itou, *9・11 gonobeichuutaikankei-chuugoku "kyouiron" to "katuyouiron" no hazamade* (US-China-Taiwan relationship after September 11 between China's threat and its strategic use) (kokusaimondai, 2004 February) P33. Go Itou, *Beichuukankeiniokeru "1972 nentaisei" nohenyou-"stakeholder" and "rising peace"* (The change of 1972 system in the relationship between China-US, " stakeholder" and "rising peace") (kokusaimondai, 2007 March) P15. Hideki Kan, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P18.
- (note2) Hideki Kan, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P18.
- (note3) The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 20, 2002. Go Itou, *9・11 gonobeichuutaikankei-chuugoku "kyouiron" to "katuyouiron" no hazamade* (US-China-Taiwan relationship after September 11 between China's threat and its strategic use) (kokusaimondai, 2004 February) P32-34. Hideki Kan, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P18.
- (note4) Robert B. Zoellick, "Wither China: From Membership to Responsibility?" remarks to National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, New York City, Sept. 21, 2005. Go Itou, *Beichuukankeiniokeru "1972 nentaisei" nohenyou-"stakeholder" and "rising peace"* (The change of 1972 system in the relationship between China-US, " stakeholder" and "rising peace") (kokusaimondai, 2007 March) P15.
- (note5) Hideki Kan, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P18-19.
- (note6) Tuyoshi Sunohara, *Japan hand* (Japan hand) (bunshunsinsho, 2006) P94-102.
- (note7) Robert B. Zoellick, "Wither China: From Membership to Responsibility?" remarks to National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, New York City, Sept. 21, 2005. Hideki Kan, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P19-20.
- (note8) Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, February 6, 2006. Hidenori Suga, *Bushseikennotaigaiseisaku-sonorinentoaproach* (Foreign policy of Bush administration-its doctrine and approach) (kokusaimondai, 2006 April) P19-20.
- (note9) The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March, 2006. Shigekatsu Kondo, *Beikokunokokkaanzenhoshousenryaku-kokusaiterotonotakaitominshushuginokakudai* (US National Security Strategy-the war against international terrorism and the expansion of democracy)

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- (note10)Satoshi Amako, *Chuugoku/Asia/Nihon-taikokukasurukyoryuuhakyouika*(China, Asia and Japan-Is rising dragon a threat?)(chikumashinsho, 2006)P106-112. Tatuo Akaneya & Koutarou Ochiai, *Nihonnoanzenhoshou*(Japan's national security)(yuuhikaku, 2004)P180-187. Junichi Abe, *chuugokutohigashiasianoanzenhoshou*(National security of China and East Asia)(meitokushuppansha, 2006)P18-30.
- (note11)Tatuo Akaneya & Koutarou Ochiai, *Nihonnoanzenhoshou*(Japan's national security)(yuuhikaku, 2004)P204-207. Ikuo kayahara, *chuugokunokokuboukindaikawomegurutenkanten-kaigunsenryakutokuubohoyuu*(Turnabout in China's military modernization-naval strategy and possession of aircraft carrier)(kokusaimondai, 2008 January and February)P47. Koichi Sato, *chuugokunotaiASEANKankeitoAmerica-chiikishugiwomegurukokusaiseiji*(China's relations with ASEAN and US-international politics about regionalism)(kokusaimondai, 2007 March)P34-35.
- (note12)Office of the Secretary of Defense, ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008.
- (note13) Ikuo kayahara, *chuugokunokokuboukindaikawomegurutenkanten-kaigunsenryakutokuubohoyuu*(Turnabout in China's military modernization-naval strategy and possession of aircraft carrier)(kokusaimondai, 2008 January and February)P51-52. Satoshi Amako, *Chuugoku/Asia/Nihon-taikokukasurukyoryuuhakyouika*(China, Asia and Japan-Is rising dragon a threat?)(chikumashinsho, 2006)P72-75. Tatuo Akaneya & Koutarou Ochiai, *Nihonnoanzenhoshou*(Japan's national security)(yuuhikaku, 2004)P205-207.
- (note14)Office of the Secretary of Defense, ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008.
- (note15)Office of the Secretary of Defense, ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008.
- (note16) Ikuo kayahara, *chuugokunokokuboukindaikawomegurutenkanten-kaigunsenryakutokuubohoyuu*(Turnabout in China's military modernization-naval strategy and possession of aircraft carrier)(kokusaimondai, 2008 January and February)P47-56. Junichi Abe, *chuugokutohigashiasianoanzenhoshou*(National security of China and East Asia)(meitokushuppansha, 2006)P25-44. Go Itou, *Beichuukankeiniokeru "1972nentaisei" nohenyou-"stakeholder" and "rising peace"*(The change of 1972 system in the relationship between China-US, " stakeholder" and "rising peace")(kokusaimondai,2007 March)P17-18.
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(note19)Richard L. Armitage & Joseph S. Nye, THE U.S.-JAPAN ALLIANCE Getting Asia Right through 2020, CSIS REPORT, February 2007.

(note20) Ikuo kayahara, *chuugokunokokuboukindaikawomegurutenkanten-kaigunsenryakutokuubohoyuu*(Turnabout in China's military modernization-naval strategy and possession of aircraft carrier)(kokusaimondai, 2008 January and February)P46

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