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FROM THE VIEWS FROM THE NEXT GENERATION SERIES

Japan-Taiwan Relations

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Edited by Yuki Tatsumi and Pamela Kennedy

Japanese
Foreign Policy

Japan Program

STIMSON

Japan-Taiwan Relations

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Preface

It is my pleasure to present the latest publication from the Stimson Center's Japan Program. *Japan-Taiwan Relations: Opportunities and Challenges* is the eighth volume of *Views from the Next Generation*, an annual collection of policy briefs that offer recommendations for the most significant challenges facing Japan and its partners today. In this volume, articles by four Japanese authors examine the current state of Japan-Taiwan relations and look for creative ways to bring these partners closer together.

The authors each explore complexities and limitations of the Japan-Taiwan relationship, focusing on pressing issues such as economic and security cooperation, technological advancements, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, COVID-19, and crisis-related preparedness. The two partners have a strong relationship built on shared values and affinity and so the authors emphasize bilateral cooperation and offer practical recommendations for policymakers in Japan and Taiwan. At a time when transnational challenges are becoming more severe, deepening cooperation and integrating Taiwan into international solutions is ever more important. This volume is an important contribution to the public conversation on Japan-Taiwan relations and efforts to strengthen their partnership.

Once again, I am thankful to Yuki Tatsumi for leading this project as a cornerstone of Stimson's work on Japan. Yuki's insights and analysis on Japan's international cooperation have steered this series for eight years, demonstrating her dedication to facilitating a valuable discussion across the Pacific. Finally, I am grateful for the continued support and guidance from our friends at the Embassy of Japan.

Brian Finlay
President and CEO
The Stimson Center

Acknowledgments

Japan-Taiwan Relations: Opportunities and Challenges is the product of a great team effort. First and foremost, I would like to thank our contributing authors, Dr. Madoka Fukuda, Mr. Takahisa Kawaguchi, Ms. Yuka Koshino, and Dr. Kayo Takuma, for producing high-quality policy essays. I deeply appreciate their commitment to meeting various deadlines for drafts and revisions under relatively short writing and editing schedules.

I am also grateful for the encouragement and collaboration of the Embassy of Japan since the inception of this project. This series would not be possible without their consistent support, and I very much look forward to continuing this partnership. I am especially thankful to Mr. Michiru Nishida for his consistent support and for making the management of the project as smooth as possible.

As always, my gratitude goes to my Stimson colleagues for their support and assistance. Brian Finlay, Stimson's president and chief executive officer, continues to be tremendously supportive of the Japan Program's efforts, including this project, to broaden the intellectual exchange between American and Japanese scholars beyond familiar names and faces. I am thankful for Stimson's Communications team and our talented graphic designer Lita Ledesma, who made the publication process seamless. I am also deeply grateful to Research Analyst Pamela Kennedy, Research Assistant Jason Li, and Research Intern Darlene Onuorah for taking on the labor-intensive details of our preparation for publication. In particular, I am grateful for Pam, who is a rising star in the field of US-Japan and US-Taiwan relations herself, and took on the lion's share of the work to complete this volume, including taking the lead in writing both introduction and the concluding chapter for this volume.

The year 2020 was one of confusion, uncertainty, and disruption as the world grappled with the impact of COVID-19 on our lives. The challenges posed by the need for social distancing and other restrictions for meetings required fresh thinking about how we can continue our mission. A year later, my team and I have a renewed sense of commitment to our efforts to not only produce our own timely analyses but also continue to cultivate the fresh perspectives of emerging security policy experts from Japan.

Yuki Tatsumi
Co-Director, East Asia Program
Director, Japan Program
March 2021

Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| 5G | Fifth generation broadband cellular technology |
| AI | Artificial intelligence |
| AIT | American Institute in Taiwan |
| APEC | Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| CDC | Centers for Disease Control (Taiwan) |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus disease 2019, SARS-CoV-2 |
| CPTPP | Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership |
| DPP | Democratic Progressive Party |
| DSR | Digital Silk Road |
| EPA | Economic partnership agreement |
| EU | European Union |
| FIJ | FactCheck Initiative Japan |
| FOIP | Free and Open Indo-Pacific |
| FTA | Free trade agreement |
| GCTF | Global Cooperation and Training Framework |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |
| JSI | Joint Statement Initiative |
| JTETC | Japan-Taiwan Economic and Trade Conference |
| KIX | Kansai International Airport |
| KMT | Kuomintang |
| LDP | Liberal Democratic Party |
| METI | Ministry of Trade, Economy, and Industry |
| MIC | Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications |
| MJIB | Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau |
| MOU | Memorandum of understanding |
| ODM | Original design manufacturer |
| OEM | Original equipment manufacturing |
| O-RAN | Open radio-access network |

| | |
|------------|--|
| R&D | Research and development |
| RAN | radio-access network |
| ROK | Republic of Korea |
| TECRO | Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office |
| TSMC | Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company |
| U.K. | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| U.S. | United States |
| USCYBERCOM | United States Cyber Command |
| WHA | World Health Assembly |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

Introduction

PAMELA KENNEDY AND DARLENE ONUORAH

Japan and Taiwan, celebrating their warm relations in the lead-up to the tenth anniversary of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake, highlighted their friendship by illuminating Tokyo Tower and Taipei 101 in January 2021. President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, giving remarks via video at an event on January 23, said, “We want the world to know that we have long been good neighbors with close ties. ... The warm personal ties between people in Taiwan and Japan have fostered a deep bond between us. This is called *kizuna* in Japanese, and it is the major driver of Taiwan-Japan relations.”¹

In addition to the positive impressions the people of Taiwan and Japan have of each other, the ties between the two are also built on decades of practical cooperation, shared values, and mutual security interests. Though the unofficial nature of the relationship presents a challenge at the political level, as Japan officially recognizes the People’s Republic of China but does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, there is still strong cooperation across multiple policy areas — cooperation that, in fact, has grown over the years through efforts to find creative avenues for engagement. The cooperation may be unofficial, but it has been effective in working towards several important tasks: raising Taiwan’s international profile and integrating Taiwan into the international community, demonstrating the benefits of deepening cooperation for both partners, as well as sharing expertise and assistance on critical traditional and nontraditional security concerns. Also important is the goodwill between two key partners of the United States in East Asia.

One of the main platforms for Japan-Taiwan cooperation, the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, is increasingly known for its flexibility and pragmatic approach to connecting experts from Taiwan, the United States, and Japan — a full partner in the program since 2019 — with counterparts from other countries. The broad range of the initiative’s workshops in 2021, from public health to renewable energy among others, shows the variety of areas where cooperation between Taiwan and Japan is relevant beyond the bilateral, or trilateral, relationship.² Especially at a time when Taiwan’s efforts to participate in and contribute to pressing international issues, like the coronavirus pandemic, are hindered by objections from Beijing, Japan’s support for Taiwan’s presence in the international community is important. This includes supporting Taiwan’s bid for World Health Assembly observer status, as well as recognizing Taiwan’s own steps to participate, such as through face mask aid packages.

Likewise, cooperation with Taiwan brings significant benefits for Japan. Taiwan faces many of the same challenges as Japan, from supply chain resiliency to

disinformation to public health, and through its own experiences Taiwan has expertise to share with Japan, and vice versa. This is especially true in areas where the two democracies have similar conundrums, such as how to combat disinformation without stifling freedom of expression, or how to craft pandemic policies that save lives without restricting movement and privacy. In addition, as islands accustomed to natural disasters, Japan and Taiwan can also pool their knowledge on disaster preparedness and relief.

The United States looms large among both Taiwan and Japan's international partners, as an unofficial partner of Taiwan and as an ally of Japan. U.S. partnership might seem to overshadow the Taiwan-Japan relationship in terms of the number of bilateral activities or cooperative measures, but the United States can also be seen as enhancing this relationship, serving as a useful third partner that benefits from Japan and Taiwan's friendship and close cooperation. The United States often has a role to play in areas where Taiwan and Japan cooperate, such as the Global Cooperation and Training Framework. By encouraging and facilitating Japan-Taiwan relations, the United States supports the strengthening of a bilateral relationship that in turn promotes shared values and interests in the region.

Despite the strength of the Taiwan-Japan relationship, there is always room for further creative cooperation and deepening of ties to face new and ongoing challenges. In this volume, Stimson's Japan Program has sought out the voices of rising stars in Japanese scholarship to explore the current state of Japan-Taiwan relations and make recommendations for further developing the cooperative relationship in four areas: the unofficial relationship in general, public health, disinformation, and the digital economy. By examining these shared challenges from a Japanese perspective, the four authors find many ways in which Japan and Taiwan can support and progress their ties.

In **“Recent Developments in Japan-Taiwan Relations,”** Dr. Madoka Fukuda (Professor, Department of Global Politics, Hosei University) surveys the historical relationship between Japan and Taiwan since 1972, the foundation of the close economic and cultural exchange today, and the impact of recent developments, particularly the pandemic, on the relationship. Highlighting several unstable factors in Japan-Taiwan relations, Fukuda examines the challenges of balancing Japan's China policy in the context of relations with Taiwan, as well as impediments to broader economic cooperation such as a bilateral trade agreement. In her recommendations, Fukuda urges Japan and Taiwan to clarify their priorities in trade talks to move towards a consensus on the importance of a trade deal, and to find ways to cooperate to deter Chinese provocations in the East and South China Seas.

In **“Japan-Taiwan Cooperation for Facilitating Future Public Health Preparedness,”** Dr. Kayo Takuma (Professor, Graduate School of Law and Politics, Tokyo Metropolitan University) examines how the COVID-19 pandemic

has necessitated Japan's cooperation with Taiwan on future preparedness. Discussing the challenges of weakened U.S. global leadership, tensions with China, and Taiwan's isolation from the international community, Takuma asserts that Japan should establish a cooperative system with Taiwan to help strengthen bilateral, regional, and global solidarity. Taiwan's success in appropriately responding to the pandemic, and its health aid contributions to struggling countries, emphasizes its importance within the global cooperative system. Takuma offers recommendations such as the exchange of Japanese and Taiwanese medical researchers, as well as the establishment of an information-sharing and early-alert system to boost cooperative preparedness for the future.

In **“Japan-Taiwan Cooperation against Disinformation in the Digital Age,”** Takahisa Kawaguchi (Principle Researcher, Tokio Marine and Nichido Risk Consulting Co.) explores ways in which Japan and Taiwan can counter the cybersecurity risks that they face within the realm of disinformation. In order to protect against influence operations targeted at national elections, government entities, private messaging and social media platforms, as well as the general public, Kawaguchi assesses the vulnerabilities of both Japan and Taiwan in accurately responding to foreign and domestic state actors. Through bilateral and multilateral recommendations, Kawaguchi emphasizes the need to build coalitions with other like-minded democracies, identify and consider different adversarial forms of disinformation, and overall increase society's resilience against unreliable information.

In **“Japan-Taiwan Cooperation Towards an Open, Interoperable, Reliable, and Secure Digital Economy,”** Yuka Koshino (Research Fellow for Japanese Defense and Security Policy, International Institute of Strategy Studies) assesses the current state of cooperation on digital technologies, services, and governance. Situating the discussion amid the larger context of U.S.-China strategic competition and the impact of China's domestic digital economic developments, Koshino explores the policies that Tokyo and Taipei have pursued to ensure security of the digital economy, build and strengthen its rules and norms, and cooperate with international partners in this burgeoning economy. Her recommendations stress the demand and the need for closer cooperation to ensure resiliency of Japan and Taiwan's networks, joint R&D projects, stemming the outflow of technology and talent to China, and helping Taiwan participate in multilateral institutions.

With these four articles, we hope that readers will take away a deeper understanding of the nature of *kizuna* between Taiwan and Japan, how this unique relationship thrives on both sides with a determination to support each other, share experience, and find policy solutions for mutual concerns and challenges.

Endnotes

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Recent Developments in Japan-Taiwan Relations

MADOKA FUKUDA

Key Takeaways

- Japan has progressed its relationship with Taiwan by taking full advantage of the ambiguity of the political agreements in the Japan-China Joint Communiqué of 1972. Since the 1990s, three factors have had an influence on Japan-Taiwan relations: 1) regional politics, especially with China, 2) enhancing economic and cultural exchanges, and 3) people's sentiments in each society.
- Over the four years of President Tsai Ing-wen's first term, it was questionable whether the Abe and Tsai governments could deepen their relationship to the degree both expected at the beginning with changes in international and internal factors surrounding Japan-Taiwan relations, although substantial exchanges have enhanced the relationship.
- The COVID-19 outbreak and the changes in international relations caused by the pandemic have brought a new phase to the relationship. Japan's policies toward China and Taiwan partially changed, and substantial exchanges between Japan and Taiwan will become more frequent in post-COVID-19 international politics.
- Japan and Taiwan have already signed several practical agreements in the last decade. However, it has been politically difficult to improve remaining agendas, such as Taiwan's participation in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the conclusion of a bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) or economic partnership agreement (EPA), or cooperation against China's growing military presence.

Historical Context and Background: Three Dimensions¹

Japan-Taiwan relations since the mid-1990s have continued to improve, though the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the Kuomintang (KMT) in Taiwan have criticized each other regarding their relations with Japan.

After Japan normalized relations with China in 1972, Japan and Taiwan have limited their relations to the economic and cultural sphere, with robust economic ties.² Unofficial political dialogue through the Japan-Republic of China Diet Members' Consultative Council (known as the Nikkakon) has supported this interaction.³ Taiwan's democratization led to deepening of Japan-Taiwan ties, as public opinion expressed strong favorability towards Japan and President Lee Teng-hui called for closer Japan-Taiwan relations.⁴ At the same time, the 1989 Tiananmen Incident and the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis prompted Japan to reconsider China as a potential threat and to regard Taiwan's democracy more highly. These factors contributed to greater awareness of the importance of cooperation with Taiwan.⁵

Over the past 25 years, factors that improve or worsen Japan-Taiwan relations have become increasingly clear. There are three factors: regional politics, especially with China, enhancing economic and cultural exchanges, and people's sentiments in each society towards the other.

First, the progress of the relationship between Japan and Taiwan has been consistent with the political agreements of the 1972 Japan-China Joint Communiqué and its results. Under the 1972 regime, although Japan-Taiwan relations were limited to an "unofficial relationship" in the area of economic and cultural exchanges, there remained ambiguity as to what level of interaction "unofficial relations" specifically meant, and what range of activities the "economic and cultural field" specifically included. Japan has progressed its relationship with Taiwan by making full use of these ambiguities. However, it is undeniable that the cooperation has been occasionally dependent on the reaction of the Chinese government, which reflects Japan-China relations and the cross-Strait relations of the time.

Second, on the contrary, the disadvantage of having no official diplomatic relationship has been declining in the context of deepening social interaction between Japan and Taiwan. This is because Japan and Taiwan share common values, such as an advanced economy and liberal democracy in a modern society that is becoming increasingly borderless. In recent years, each government tends to play a role in approving existing relations between the societies; the dialogues and agreements significant to the people of Japan and Taiwan have not been on matters of power politics and security, but in the areas of the economy, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. This aspect of Japan-Taiwan relations tends to intensify when either Japan or Taiwan faces a crisis, such as a natural disaster or an epidemic. Even during the COVID-19 crisis, Japan-Taiwan relations are driven by practical activities, such as mask supply support between local governments, facilitation of business deals, and virtual tourism led by private companies.

Third, because of close economic, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges between Japan and Taiwan today, the domestic politics on both sides have complicated the relationship in recent years. Each government faces issues that require them to understand perspectives from the other society. In Taiwanese politics, political agendas related to Japan tend to become controversial issues, because

historical and maritime territorial issues with Japan vividly reflect the different political attitudes between the DPP and the KMT. However, the damages incurred by these debates are relatively small when compared to controversial issues involving the United States.

Snapshot of the Current Situation: Changes under the COVID-19 Crisis

During Tsai's first term, substantial exchanges enhanced the relationship between Japan and Taiwan. Economic relations, such as trade and investment, were stable, the number of travelers from Japan to Taiwan exceeded two million, with the number from Taiwan to Japan nearly five million in 2019, and exchanges between local cities increased.⁶ According to opinion polls conducted by each side's representative offices, in recent years, 70 to 80 percent of people consistently have friendly feelings towards each other.⁷ However, with the changes in international and internal factors surrounding Japan-Taiwan relations, it was questionable whether the Abe and Tsai governments could deepen their relationship to the degree both expected in 2016.

The Abe administration expected Tsai to maintain close relations with Japan. When she visited Japan as the DPP's presidential candidate in October 2015, although Abe and Tsai did not announce their meeting, it was no secret that they were in the same restaurant at the same time.⁸ The Japanese government welcomed her election with an official message on Japan-Taiwan partnership, a high point in the relationship.⁹

Tsai signaled that she viewed relations with Japan as a high priority by appointing DPP heavyweights to lead the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan and the Association of East Asian Relations, which is equivalent to the Taiwan Council for U.S. Affairs. On the policy side, she succeeded in moving from her predecessor's hard stance on the maritime territorial issue and launching the Japan-Taiwan Maritime Affairs Cooperation Dialogue in 2016. However, she failed to ease the ban on food imports from Fukushima and surrounding prefectures in Japan, which had been prompted by the Great East Japan Earthquake and the nuclear meltdown at Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant, with continuing domestic opposition. In particular, at the end of 2016, she was compelled to give up her plan on partly lifting the ban because of the opposition movement supported by the KMT, and this caused Japanese senior officials to lose trust in her leadership.¹⁰

Though the Japan-Taiwan relationship temporarily cooled because of the food ban issue, it kept up the momentum to make some political breakthroughs despite protests from the Chinese government, until the first half of 2017. In January 2017, the Interchange Association, which is equivalent to the American Institute in

Taiwan, changed its name to the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association. In May, its counterpart, the Association of East Asian Relations in Taipei, changed its name to the Association of Taiwan-Japan Relations.¹¹ Those changes, with the inclusion of the names ‘Japan’ and ‘Taiwan,’ constituted the most significant political breakthrough in the relationship since 1972. Moreover, in March 2017, Japanese Senior Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Jiro Akama visited Taiwan to attend a Japanese tourism fair. He was the highest-level government official to do so since 1972.¹²

Although Tsai called upon Abe for many other areas of cooperation which Japan and Taiwan could have improved, especially in economic and maritime issues or economic cooperation in South and Southeast Asian countries, the opportunity to deepen Japan-Taiwan relations quietly disappeared in the latter half of 2017.¹³ In the context of international politics, with the recovery of Japan-China relations and the intensification of China-U.S. competition and cross-Strait tension, the political cost of deepening the relationship rapidly increased. China had protested against the Japan-Taiwan political breakthroughs in the first half of 2017, and for several years aimed to issue a so-called fifth joint statement with Japan, which would confirm Japan’s retention of its “one-China” policy.

In the context of internal politics, as the November 2018 local elections approached, the KMT successfully included the question of retaining the ban on Japanese food imports in the referenda held on the same day of the local elections. This was referred to as the ‘nuclear food referendum’ by Taiwanese media, and was adopted with 7.79 million affirmative votes.¹⁴ The Japanese government expressed its disappointment with this result, especially Foreign Minister Taro Kono, who suggested it might have a negative impact on Taiwan’s future application for the CPTPP.¹⁵ In interviews with Sankei Shimbun, Foreign Minister Joseph Wu called for a security dialogue with Japan in June 2018, and Tsai called on Japan for further economic and security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region in February 2019.¹⁶ However, the Abe administration only responded to this by reiterating that it would “maintain unofficial practical relations” with Taiwan.¹⁷

It may be logical to consider that the Japan-Taiwan relationship in Tsai’s second term could not improve significantly, considering the trends in her first term. However, following Tsai’s landslide victory in the 2020 election, the COVID-19 outbreak and the changes in international relations caused by the pandemic have brought a new phase to the relationship. The rest of this section examines how the great changes resulting from COVID-19 will affect the three factors mentioned above.

First, regarding the international politics determining the trilateral relations, the COVID-19 epidemic can be expected to partially change Japan’s policies toward China and Taiwan. At the beginning of the outbreak, the Japanese government fell behind other countries’ timelines on the restriction of travelers from China, considering the original schedule of Xi’s official visit to Japan and the 2020 Olympics

in Tokyo.¹⁸ The Abe administration's attitude towards China has deteriorated since the postponement of these two events. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, China is engaging in a propaganda campaign and aggressive politico-military operations in the region. In contrast to the heightened concerns over China's behavior, the Japanese government's appraisal of and confidence in Taiwan's epidemic prevention policy and its support for other countries have increased. Regarding Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA), the Japanese government repeatedly voiced support for Taiwan's attendance, despite the obstacles raised by China.¹⁹ Though it is unlikely that Japan will assume as hard a line on China as the Trump administration had in post-COVID-19 international politics, it will be interesting to observe how the Japanese government will keep its distance from China, while growing closer to Taiwan.

Second, in post-COVID-19 international politics, there is no doubt that substantial exchanges between Japan and Taiwan will become more frequent. Even before the pandemic, Japan-Taiwan business cooperation among private companies has been promoted, and Japanese and Taiwanese businesses located in mainland China since the latter half of the 2000s have been shifting their operations elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific region in recent years. The economic ties between Japan and Taiwan will strengthen in the context of deepening economic interdependence among free and mature economies in the Asia-Oceania region, due to their success in slowing the spread of the pandemic, compared to countries in other regions. After the ongoing travel restrictions are lifted, it is expected that travel between Japan and Taiwan will rebound, and with it the friendship and goodwill between the two societies — especially as they work together to fight COVID-19.²⁰ As a result, the governments of both Japan and Taiwan may need to cooperate more closely in the area of business or tourism, reflecting the reality of close exchanges.

Third, regarding the possibility that the two governments can build a creative relationship, it will be critical for each to control their complex domestic factors. The Taiwanese ban on food imports from Japan has returned as an issue for the two governments since the autumn of 2020. As the Taiwanese referendum is legally valid for two years, there are strong voices in Japan calling on Taiwan to lift the ban, following the removal of the ban on U.S. pork with ractopamine.²¹ However, this will be difficult for the Tsai government, because the issue of U.S. pork has already significantly reduced the government's approval rating, and importing "nuclear food" from Japan will cause further opposition. It is hoped that the leaders will find a compromise that satisfies both civil societies, and that they will enter the next phase of cooperation that will include Japan's support of Taiwan's participation in bilateral or regional EPAs.

In September 2020, when the COVID-19 crisis had not subsided, Abe resigned due to his physical condition after nearly eight years, and Yoshihide Suga took office as Japan's new prime minister. Although Suga does not have a strong personal tie with Taiwan like his predecessor had, it is possible to find out his friendly position

on Taiwan from some of his actions before arriving at the cabinet chief position. His perspectives on Taiwan are probably related to his political mentor Seiroku Kajiyama, who was known as a politician who stated that the Taiwan Strait was included in “the areas surrounding Japan” mentioned in the 1997 Japan-U.S. defense cooperation guidelines.²² It is also noteworthy that he appointed Nobuo Kishi as Minister of Defense, as he is Abe’s younger brother, and has recently interacted with Taiwanese politics as the Secretary General of the Nikkakon.²³ However, it is not yet known how much priority the Suga administration will give to developing relations with Taiwan, taking into consideration the context of regional politics, especially Japan-China relations, and voices from other politicians in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Challenges for Deepening Cooperative Japan-Taiwan Relations After the COVID-19 Crisis

During the COVID-19 crisis, challenges and opportunities in Japan-Taiwan relations for the near future have been clarified. Japan-Taiwan relations are supported by close economic relations, people-to-people interaction, and good feelings toward each other. There are no reasons for both leaders to damage the existing stable relations, although the foreign policy of Suga’s new cabinet has not yet been fully developed as the COVID-19 crisis continues. Moreover, after the pandemic, opportunities for cooperation will increase between Japan and Taiwan, which, as neighbors, have in common mature economic and technological capabilities, as well as values of freedom and democracy.

There are, however, some remaining unstable factors between Japan and Taiwan. In regional politics, although Japan’s policy towards China was slightly revised during the COVID-19 crisis, its foreign policy still aims to maintain good economic relations with China, while also keeping good relations with the United States. Meanwhile, Taiwan is strengthening its cooperation with the United States, even as its lack of sufficient communication with China continues. As a result, it is expected that China’s opposition to the improvement of Japan-Taiwan relations will increase. In addition, public opinion trends on both sides regarding the food ban issue and maritime territorial and historical issues may hinder the development of Japan-Taiwan relations.

Japan and Taiwan have already signed a number of practical agreements in the last decade, and it has been politically difficult to improve remaining agendas, such as Taiwan’s participation in the CPTPP, the conclusion of a bilateral FTA or EPA, or defense cooperation against China’s growing military presence.²⁴ Although the Tsai government has called on Japan to improve this cooperation in recent years, the Japanese government has not shown clear responses yet, repeating that it will maintain its “unofficial relations” with Taiwan. These agendas are more likely to be watched closely by China than previous practical agreements. In addition, the

domestic discussions on the necessity of and concrete steps to improve cooperation are not sufficiently mature at this stage. For the first step, it is important to further share ideas about these agendas among leaders and civil societies in both Japan and Taiwan.

Policy Recommendations

Build strong consensus on a bilateral economic agreement and Taiwan's participation in regional economic partnership.

Looking back on the history of FTA discussions between Japan and Taiwan, the two have had an annual conference, the Japan-Taiwan Economic and Trade Conference (JTETC), hosted by both representative offices since 1976. At the Shanghai Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) in 2001, both Economic Ministers agreed to study the possibility of a bilateral FTA. Although the study group made a closed-door policy report, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs took a passive attitude towards it because Taiwan's tariff rates were already low.²⁵ In 2014, the JTETC agreed to organize a follow-up meeting named the Japan-Taiwan Economic Partnership Committee to discuss their new agendas, including a bilateral FTA or EPA. However, the third meeting was suspended due to the 2015 food ban issue.²⁶

It is clear that the food ban issue has inhibited the discussion on the bilateral FTA/EPA or Taiwan's participation in the CPTPP. However, it is also important to first clarify Japan and Taiwan's priorities from economic or political perspectives. In the process, Taiwan needs to consider how to lift restrictions on food imports from Japan; for example, the government could guarantee a more reliable indication of the origin of Japanese food in the domestic market. Japan needs to consider if there are options that would not require the issue of food imports as a precondition for improving economic partnership with Taiwan. Then, from the procedural side, relations with existing agreements, priorities between the CPTPP, bilateral FTA or EPA, and necessary steps for each to take should be discussed more between the two governments. To improve domestic discussions, both governments and business communities should be able to appeal the importance of the bilateral FTA or Taiwan's participation in the CPTPP beyond domestic opposition.

Strengthen participation in regional security within the framework of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the U.S.'s Taiwan Relations Act.

Although Japan-Taiwan relations in the area of security and defense is the most sensitive issue, considering the possible opposition from China, cooperation against the rise of China is improving in various contexts. In the context of the Japan-U.S. alliance, after the Cold War, Japan and the United States have strengthened their defense cooperation in the region, revising the U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation Guidelines twice in 1997 and 2015, for example. Although the defense

of Taiwan is not a public agenda, it is certain that Japan would be involved in possible military conflict in the Taiwan Strait. In the context of bilateral relations, Japan-Taiwan unofficial defense exchanges still occur at a low level, such as Track 2 dialogues and exchanges of retired Self-Defense Force officials. In the context of multilateral cooperation, Japan recently joined the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, which serves as a platform for Taiwan to share its expertise with partners around the world in nontraditional security.²⁷

As mentioned above, in defense and security, Japan is a passive actor in the region. However, facing China's recent provocative behaviors in the region, Japanese debate on possible Taiwan Strait crises or conflicts is increasing. If Japan strengthens its participation, it should be within the framework of the alliance with the United States. As another issue, Japan and Taiwan each face China's gradual change of the status quo by force, the so-called salami slicing strategy, in the East and South China Seas. Dealing with this common issue, Japanese and Taiwanese defense officials can share more information about China's military capabilities and behaviors. As a prerequisite for such cooperation, it is important for both governments to continue their maritime dialogue on the Senkaku Islands and the surrounding waters and dispel mutual distrust. Furthermore, it can be expected that Japan and Taiwan will tacitly cooperate in deterring China from continuing such behaviors. For example, both governments can consider aligning the tone and timing of claims against China, based on shared information.

Deepen understanding of Japan-Taiwan ties among Diet members and civil societies.

In addition to the Cabinet's leadership, the role of the Diet is also important for improving Japan-Taiwan cooperation. Although legislator exchanges are frequent and bipartisan in recent Japan-Taiwan relations, there are still many voices of caution in the Diet on strengthening political ties with Taiwan. For example, when Nobuo Kishi talked about the possible Japan-Taiwan defense cooperation in the Japanese magazine *Seiron* in January 2020, he mentioned that it was most important to improve other LDP members' understanding of strengthening ties with Taiwan, as many LDP members were still hesitant about Japan-Taiwan relations drawing China's strong opposition.²⁸ So, as mentioned above, it is important to further share ideas for and the necessity of Japan-Taiwan cooperation among leaders and civil societies in Japan.

Similarly, it is desirable that Japanese people deepen their understanding of Taiwan's modern history and international status and have more discussions on what kind of relations they will have with Taiwan. Although Japanese people's affinity for Taiwan and Taiwanese people is stable in recent years, many people are interested in sightseeing or eating out in Taiwan, and they rarely discuss Japan's political or economic relations with Taiwan.²⁹ Japanese experts in Taiwan studies are able to provide simple and clear explanations or analyses of Taiwan's complex

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Endnotes

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Japan-Taiwan Cooperation for Facilitating Future Public Health Preparedness

KAYO TAKUMA

Key Takeaways

- Global health governance around the World Health Organization (WHO) is now being overhauled, making regional cooperation more important.
- Despite Taiwan's potential role as a critical player in global health, its full participation in international organizations such as the WHO remains a challenge.
- Japan should look for ways to engage Taiwan in this area so that it can complement ongoing U.S. support for Taiwan.

It has been almost a year since the COVID-19 pandemic commenced, but the spread of the disease persists. Some countries, such as the U.K. and Japan, have once again declared a state of emergency or have enforced a nationwide lockdown. Early estimates predicted that most major economies would see a loss of 2.4 percent of their 2020 gross domestic product (GDP).¹

However, the situation in Taiwan differs significantly in comparison to the general global landscape. Taiwan's economy grew at its fastest pace in over two years during the third quarter of 2020 after a steep contraction earlier in the year. The pandemic's impact on Taiwan's economy was eased owing to the strong global demand for the island's tech exports and the return of consumer confidence. Taiwan has been a remarkable success story in the fight against COVID-19, largely due to its early screening of passengers from Wuhan and aggressive contact tracing of patients who tested positive. This paper examines the need for Japan to cooperate with Taiwan and explores how this cooperation can be achieved.

Background: Increasing Politicization of Global Health Issues

Pandemic in the Globalized World

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, tensions between China and the U.S. have intensified. In April 2020, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he would halt funding to the WHO, after accusing the organization of being extremely close to China and mismanaging the COVID-19 crisis. The U.S. also formally notified the United Nations (UN) of its withdrawal from the WHO.² China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, argued against the action, stating that China had made serious efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus. Additionally, he criticized the U.S. by saying that "some figures insisted on politicizing the outbreak and defaming the WHO."³ In sum, the "my country first" policy and lack of leadership have been characteristic of the response to this unprecedented global crisis.

It is important to consider why politics and the management of epidemics are so inextricably linked. A century ago, the regulation of an epidemic was regarded as a non-political and highly specialized issue. For example, both Germany and France attended the International Sanitary Conference in the late 19th century to devise the International Sanitary Regulations, although the conference was held just after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71.⁴

Conversely, the response to infectious disease has become quite political recently. This is because the spread of infectious diseases is no longer merely a threat to public health. Rather, it is a global crisis that can paralyze the world economy and impede development. In this globalized age, where the world is closely connected through travel, trade, and the internet, an infectious disease can rapidly spread worldwide and leave a lasting impact. The control of infectious diseases has thus been redefined as also being a threat to national security. This is evidenced by the extremely political global responses to public health emergencies such as the spread of HIV/AIDS and the Ebola virus. For example, a world summit was convened in 2014 under the auspices of then-U.S. President Barack Obama to address the Ebola virus outbreak. During the summit, the UN Security Council agreed to establish the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, which managed the epidemic in collaboration with the UN Mission in Liberia.⁵ The Ebola virus epidemic concluded after about a year under U.S. leadership through global solidarity among various actors — the WHO, the UN, the World Bank, and Doctors Without Borders. This is a good example of leadership in addressing a pandemic.

However, the response to COVID-19 has lacked both global solidarity and U.S. leadership. Instead, U.S.–China tensions have made matters worse. At the beginning of February 2020, President Trump expressed his complete support for

China's efforts to control the epidemic during a teleconference that he held alongside Chinese President Xi Jinping. However, President Trump's attitude changed once the number of COVID-19 cases in the U.S. began to increase. Owing to his preoccupation with the U.S. presidential election, Trump scapegoated China and the WHO to evade any criticism from the public.

Current Power Game with Respect to the Global Cooperative System

Given the unfavorable prevailing circumstances, the challenging task of reforming and strengthening the global cooperative system needs to be performed. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, three pillars of the contemporary global health framework have been at odds with each other. These pillars are as follows: the U.S., which damaged the WHO by withdrawing from the organization; China, which is keen to extend its influence during the U.S.'s absence from global leadership; and Germany and France, both of which are keen to preserve the existing norms of governance and consolidate global solidarity. The last pillar has been the most influential and has led the charge against COVID-19 in 2020. For example, French President Emmanuel Macron hosted an international video conference in which the participants agreed to a public-private partnership to facilitate the development and supply of test treatments and vaccines for COVID-19.⁶ Additionally, President Macron, the European Commission, and other partners, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, launched the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator — a “global collaboration to accelerate development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines.”⁷ Furthermore, Germany and France proposed the WHO reform plan, in which they suggested that the WHO should be given early access to areas where an outbreak occurs.⁸ The Biden administration is expected to collaborate with the European nations in their effort to reform the WHO. However, conflict between China and Western countries will continue to exist, particularly regarding the WHO reform and the virus origin investigation, which will be conducted in January 2021. Thus, there is much uncertainty about the future of global health governance.

The Necessity of Regional Cooperation

Therefore, regional cooperation will be necessary in the post-COVID-19 era. Article 52 of the UN Charter states, “[N]othing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action,” which indicates that regional and international arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security are mutually complementary. The same applies to pandemic preparedness. It is impossible to

know when and where the next pandemic will occur, and the global cooperative system is far from perfect. Therefore, why not develop a regional cooperative system? In the post-COVID-19 era, the need for regional cooperation will increase. In fact, the European Union (EU), which has previously been reluctant to cooperate on public health issues, recently moved forward to establish the European Health Union.⁹ Such a regional cooperative system would significantly benefit countries' preparedness for future crises. In addition, these regional cooperative systems would compensate for the shortcomings of the aforementioned global cooperative system.

Countries in Asia should also strive to establish a cooperative framework to increase their future preparedness. Collaboration among neighboring countries would have multiple effects. First, the collaboration would undoubtedly improve the preparedness of each country. Second, it would help the countries share their experiences with each other. Finally, it would also secure multilateralism in the region. Thus, Asian countries should utilize existing frameworks such as the Tripartite Health Ministers' Meeting, the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Summit Meeting, or the ASEAN+3 framework. In 2008, Japan, China, and South Korea established the Tripartite Health Ministers' Meeting, wherein they discuss and establish cooperative measures on infectious diseases in Asia. They held a special session in May 2020 to address the COVID-19 crisis. In this session, they reaffirmed their shared commitment to strengthening their solidarity and enhancing their cooperation and mutual support to contain the spread of the virus.¹⁰ It generally takes time to establish new organizations; therefore, the realistic solution is to utilize existing frameworks to facilitate a dialogue on pressing issues. Thus, convening the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting in early 2021 is a desirable measure, as it would pave the way for the establishment of a cooperative framework through which they can exchange researchers and share disease-related information and experience.

Taiwan and Global Health

Participation in the WHO

In the long run, Asian countries need to design an inclusive cooperative framework within the Asia-Pacific region, and incorporating Taiwan into such a system would be desirable. However, given the present relationship between China and Taiwan, this would be difficult to put into practice. In fact, Taiwan has been excluded from the global cooperative system since 2016.

Since 2009, Taiwan has attended as an observer under the name "Chinese Taipei," based on an agreement between the government of then-President Ma Ying-jeou, the government in Beijing, and the WHO, which was led at the time by Margaret Chan, a Hong Kong national. Proponents of that arrangement

hoped that Taiwan would gradually be included in the network of WHO committees. Unfortunately, it came to light that WHO chief Margaret Chan had instructed her staff and member organizations to refer to Taiwan as a “province of China.”¹¹

In 2016, when Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party was elected the new president, Taiwan was not invited to the World Health Assembly (WHA), as Beijing wanted to send a not-so-subtle signal to the Tsai administration. Since then, Beijing has blocked Taiwan’s participation in the WHO and continues to claim that both territories belong to “one China.”

Both the U.S. government and members of the EU insisted that the WHO invite the new government in Taiwan to attend its meetings as an observer. However, there were several issues, one of which was the name under which Taiwan can participate. The previous Taiwanese government accepted the name “Chinese Taipei,” which the new administration did not accept. On May 8, 2016, the Tsai administration announced that it did not accept the conditions proposed by the WHO secretariat.¹² Since then, Taiwan has been excluded from the global cooperative structure.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, Taiwan’s successful response to the pandemic, combined with international concern about China’s initial response, has led to growing support for Taipei’s participation in the WHA. In May 2020, the U.S. Senate approved a bill supporting restoration of Taiwan’s observer status in the WHO. Other nations such as New Zealand and Japan have also backed Taiwan’s re-inclusion in the assembly.¹³

Despite the aforementioned efforts and the fact that Taiwan participated in the WHO expert meeting on COVID-19 in 2020, Taiwan remains excluded from the global cooperative system. At the WHA held in November 2020, member countries agreed to set aside the issue of Taiwan’s observer status to work on the immediate challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the WHO reform. This agreement occurred despite a growing push by the U.S., Japan, and others for a bigger role for Taipei in the WHO.¹⁴

Taiwan’s Efforts to Foster Cooperation

Although Taiwan has been excluded from the WHO, it has remained enthusiastic about international cooperation. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, countries worldwide have faced severe shortages of masks, because they depend on China, as the global mask manufacturer and supplier, for their supply. Taiwan rapidly increased its face mask production in response to the pandemic. In April, Taiwan announced that it would send 10 million face masks to countries in need, as well as future donations, since its domestic supply was secured. It sent masks to the U.S., Japan, Europe, and its 15 diplomatic allies.¹⁵

U.S. and Japanese Support Is Crucial for Taiwan's Effort to Expand Its Role

American Support

Given the existing circumstances, support from other countries is crucial for breaking the present deadlock. Among all countries, the U.S. and Japan would be the most reliable partners for Taiwan. In August 2020, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen to confirm the cooperation between the U.S. and Taiwan and their shared values. Azar also met with Health and Welfare Minister Chen Shih-chung and members of the Taiwan Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to discuss Taiwan's response to COVID-19 and sign a statement reaffirming their cooperation to address health challenges including COVID-19.¹⁶ The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand upon U.S.-Taiwan collaboration on health issues.¹⁷ The AIT is the *de facto* U.S. embassy in Taiwan, due to the absence of formal ties between them, while the Taiwan Council for U.S. Affairs serves as the headquarters for TECRO in the U.S., which is the AIT's counterpart.

This was the first MOU to be signed between the two health ministries, particularly in emerging infectious disease response and dengue vaccine research. The statement indicated that it would lead to greater bilateral cooperation in areas such as global health security, digital health, infectious disease prevention, and vaccine development. Collaborative efforts under the MOU's framework would be conducted through science and research projects, personnel exchanges, training, consultations, and workshops and conferences. It would also strengthen ongoing cooperation related to global health security, the investigation and control of infectious diseases, research, the prevention and treatment of chronic disease, and the development of drugs and vaccines.¹⁸

Japan and Taiwan Should Develop the Existing Cooperative Framework into a More Intensified One

U.S. backing represents a solid step forward for Taiwan's participation in the global health framework. From another perspective, however, the U.S.-Taiwan approach may be understood in the context of U.S.-China confrontation. Since 1972, the U.S. government has refrained from contact with Taiwanese governmental officials, in deference to the Chinese Communist Party. However, the Trump administration broke the rule, and Secretary Azar became the first cabinet-level official from the United States to visit Taiwan since 2014. On January 9, 2021, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the U.S. government had lifted the guidelines for unofficial relations with Taiwan.¹⁹

Thus, U.S.–Taiwan cooperation does not necessarily offer a model for Japan–Taiwan cooperation. On the other hand, Japan would unquestionably be another key player in including Taiwan in a global health cooperative scheme. Besides Taiwan and Japan’s friendly relationship, Japan is expected to subsume its cooperation with Taiwan within a wider cooperative framework that Japan will establish with neighboring countries.

According to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020 Bluebook, Japan and Taiwan “share fundamental values, such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and the rule of law, and enjoy close economic relations and people-to-people exchanges.” In the area of global health, Japan has supported the participation of Taiwan as an observer in the WHO General Assembly and backed its participation in May 2020 as well.²⁰

Japan’s National Institute of Infectious Diseases has hosted the Japan-Taiwan Symposium on Infectious Diseases every year since 2004. The symposium has been organized in accordance with the “Memorandum on Collaborative Studies by the Interchange Association, Japan and the Association of East Asian Relations on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), etc.”²¹ During the 17th symposium, which was held in 2020, researchers from both nations discussed their response to COVID-19 and avenues for collaboration with respect to the development of a treatment and vaccine.²²

By consolidating the existing connection between the two nations, Japan should seek to establish a cooperative system with Taiwan, which has most effectively managed the COVID-19 crisis. Of course, it is impossible for Japan and Taiwan to engage in any official form of cooperation due to the former’s diplomatic relationship with China. However, Japan and Taiwan have fostered a substantive unofficial relationship. Taiwan gave 25 billion yen to aid in the relief efforts after the 2011 East Japan Earthquake. Additionally, Taiwan offered 2 million masks to Japan in the summer of 2020, which further consolidated their relationship.²³ To be more concise, Japan and Taiwan can foster cooperation in aspects such as the exchange of researchers and the establishment of an information-sharing or early-alert system through Japan’s National Institute and Taiwan’s CDC. Furthermore, they can collaborate in developing medicines or vaccines for future possible diseases.

Such efforts would not only benefit Japan’s preparedness but also reinforce the global cooperative system. Japan’s early response to COVID-19 was unsatisfactory. Japan did not impose a travel restriction early in the pandemic, since January is the busiest season for Japan’s tourism, which allowed the virus to spread within Japan’s borders. In that regard, Japan is quite a stark contrast to Taiwan, which imposed a travel restriction and controlled the virus as soon as Taiwan confirmed the emergence of the new pneumonia.

Policy Recommendation

Volatile international relations will inevitably impact the global cooperative system, thereby rendering its future to be increasingly uncertain. The best possible way to strengthen the system would be to ensure regional solidarity, to which Japan should commit. To compensate for the shortcomings and uncertainty of the global cooperative system, regional cooperative systems should be developed. In Asia, Japan should lead the establishment of such a system by using existing frameworks such as the Tripartite Health Ministers' Meeting, the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Summit Meeting, or the ASEAN+3 framework. Japan can also be expected to connect Taiwan to the regional cooperative framework. Japan and Taiwan can foster cooperation in aspects such as the exchange of researchers and the establishment of an information-sharing or early-alert system. In that attempt, they should use the existing cooperative framework. Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases and Taiwan's CDC can convene or host a seminar, exchange program, or training program, including a greater variety of experts, in addition to convening the annual symposium. Alternatively, Japan's National Institute and Taiwan's CDC can set up an information-sharing system or early-alert system using the existing cooperative framework. Furthermore, they can collaborate in developing medicines or vaccines for future possible diseases. Such efforts would not only benefit Japan's preparedness but also reinforce the regional and global cooperative system.

History indicates that times of crisis have provided opportunities to strengthen cooperation and institutionalize cooperative frameworks. The cholera pandemic in the 19th century led to the creation of the International Sanitary Conference by European nations. Further, the various epidemics during the First World War paved the way for the creation of the League of Nations Health Organization and its Eastern Bureau in Singapore. The COVID-19 pandemic has given Asian countries the chance to develop an effective cooperative framework. This task will not be easy, given the various political and diplomatic problems that plague the continent. However, several Asian nations agreed to establish the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. This suggests that a similar agreement can be reached to improve the continent's pandemic preparedness as well.

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Japan-Taiwan Cooperation against Disinformation in the Digital Age

TAKAHISA KAWAGUCHI

Key Takeaways

- Disinformation has a detrimental effect and scale in the digital age, putting open societies and liberal democracies at stake.
- Disinformation, which in this paper refers to the usage of unreliable information by foreign governments to politically influence other countries, is not necessarily false information; entirely accurate information may be used as a “narrative.” Its purpose is to sow distrust in the democracy and amplify public discourse.
- Taiwan was exposed to notable amounts of unreliable information during the strong typhoon that hit the Kansai International Airport of Japan in September 2018, the Local General Election in December 2018, the Presidential Election in January 2020, and the COVID-19 crisis since January 2020. As a result, Taiwan has made remarkable strides in responding to disinformation with regard to relevant legal reform and fact-checking. On the other hand, disinformation has not been grasped as a serious threat in Japan, and it is doubtful that Japan can detect it effectively.
- Democracies, such as Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S., must combat disinformation, while at the same time maintaining openness of society and robustness of democratic processes, without violating rights and freedoms.
- The three democracies should promote close government-to-government cooperation with a coalition of democratic nations and encourage the private sector’s efforts, including digital platforms’ responses and fact-checking bodies’ measures.

Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. are all open societies and liberal democracies and therefore are extremely vulnerable to disinformation conducted by foreign state actors. As epitomized by the interference with national elections and the spread of unreliable information on COVID-19, there have been growing concerns over the scale and effect of influence operations carried out by foreign governments and agencies using cyberspace. This paper gives an overview of disinformation and explores issues and policy recommendations for Japan and Taiwan.

Background of Disinformation

The term “disinformation” has no clear-cut and indisputable definition. This paper defines disinformation as the usage of unreliable information by foreign governments to politically influence other countries. It is not necessarily false information; entirely accurate information may be used as a narrative.¹

The purpose of disinformation is to sow distrust in a democracy and amplify public discourse. Perpetrators focus on existing tensions and contradictions, which in this paper mean the underlying problems and issues of a target entity, such as a nation, society, or a specific group.² For instance, the Internet Research Agency, an internet “troll firm” in Saint Petersburg, Russia, posted a large amount of content about the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Most of the posts (92.9% of posts on Facebook, 81.9% of posts on Instagram, and 94.0% of posts on Twitter) did not mention “Clinton” or “Trump,” but instead focused on controversial issues in the U.S., such as race, gun control, abortion, LGBT rights, and immigration.³

Disinformation targets groups not only to achieve strategic goals, but also to simply divide citizens and worsen the rifts within society. With regard to disinformation as election meddling, perpetrators intend not only to demean certain candidates or political parties, but also to undermine the democratic process and sow distrust in the election.⁴ Additionally, a report titled “Russia” by the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament of the U.K. also observes that “the spreading of disinformation is not necessarily aimed at influencing any individual outcome; it can simply have broad objectives around creating an atmosphere of distrust or otherwise fracturing society.”⁵

Snapshots of the Current Situation

Disinformation has a long history as a means of influence operations by foreign state actors. The expansion of the digital space and the emergence of social media, however, have significantly changed the scale and effect of disinformation. Moscow’s meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election has revealed the risk of disinformation in cyberspace, and the same concerns are growing in European countries, Taiwan, and Japan. Besides, some state actors are spreading unreliable information on COVID-19 and its responses.

Typhoon Evacuation Incident in Japan in September 2018

Compared to Japan, Taiwan has been exposed to notable amounts of disinformation and is making remarkable progress. One of the contemporary origins of Taiwan’s responses to false information is deeply related to Japan.

On September 4, 2018, the Kansai International Airport (KIX), located on an artificial island in Osaka Bay, was closed due to Typhoon Jebi. The bridge between the

mainland and KIX was impassable, and thousands of tourists, including Taiwanese and Chinese, were stranded in the airport. Under the circumstances, a post went viral on social media, saying that the Chinese Consulate dispatched buses to rescue Chinese travelers, and they were successfully evacuated preferentially. Praise for the responses taken by the Chinese government and its embassy, as well as criticism against the Taiwanese government and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan, erupted on social media in particular. And, most regrettably, the head of Taiwan's Representative Office in Osaka committed suicide.

Although the post was later confirmed to be inaccurate,⁶ it was not confirmed how the uncertain information originated and went viral. According to an investigation by Taiwanese authorities, the criticism against Taipei and its Osaka office began with a post on a large message board popular in Taiwan, the PPT Bulletin Board System, which was written by a Taiwanese university student. At the same time, however, it was also true that the Chinese state-affiliated media outlets promoted the above “narrative,” declaring that Beijing could evacuate Chinese citizens from the disaster, whereas Taipei could not. This story demonstrates that it is quite difficult to make a clear distinction between unreliable information spreading spontaneously and disinformation disseminated by foreign agencies.

Beijing's Interference in the Taiwanese Elections

Concerns for disinformation in cyberspace mounted at the time of the Taiwanese local elections in December 2018. In her 2019 New Year's Day address, President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) said, “We must honestly face all threats and risks to our national security, especially China's attempts to use the openness and freedom of our democratic system to interfere in Taiwan's internal politics and social development. This has now become Taiwan's greatest challenge.”

Leu Wen-jong (呂文忠), the Director-General of the Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau (MJIB), which is responsible for Taiwan's public security matters and counter-espionage, testified at a hearing of the Internal Administration Committee of Legislative Yuan that the Bureau identified “election interference by foreign forces,” namely “mainland China,” during the 2018 local elections.⁷

Among the 2018 local elections, the mayoral election in Kaohsiung, a special municipality in southern Taiwan, may have had interference through the digital space. The Kaohsiung election, in an area which had been regarded as a stronghold of the Democratic Progressive Party, was won by Kuomintang candidate Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜), who had not previously been so popular. On social media platforms, such as Facebook and PPT, massive campaigns in support of candidate Han were identified. Some of the activities were unnatural processes and were likely the result of deliberate attempts to manipulate the movement supporting Han. Paul Huang, a journalist living in Taiwan, pointed out the link between Beijing and a

group that supported Han on social media with digital footprints.⁸

The problem is the source of the “deliberate attempt.” The meaning of this vitally changes depending on whether this movement is performed mainly by Taiwanese voters, or whether there was systematic involvement from mainland China. Attributing disinformation, for this reason, is a matter of paramount importance. Similar interference from Beijing has also been confirmed during the Taiwanese presidential and legislative elections in January 2020.⁹

Infiltration of Disinformation into Private Messages

It is peer-to-peer communication platforms, or private messaging apps, that are complicating the attribution problem. Although openness can vary depending on the publishing setting, Facebook and Twitter are open platforms in essence, and the content of posters is often freely accessible to third party users. On the other hand, communication apps like WhatsApp are basically closed spaces among individuals and are invisible to the outside world. Malicious users, however, can disseminate politically unreliable information and share links to websites with fabricated content to specific users or groups on communication apps.¹⁰ The more communication apps serve as a venue for political activity and election campaigning, the more they become the main battleground for foreign election meddling and disinformation.

The most popular communication tool used in Japan and Taiwan is LINE.¹¹ According to a 2019 survey by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) of Japan, about 82.3% of Japanese use LINE. In Taiwan, another survey shows that LINE is used by about 99.2% of Taiwanese, including seniors.¹² In fact, during the 2020 Taiwanese elections, political messages were exchanged among citizens by using LINE frequently.

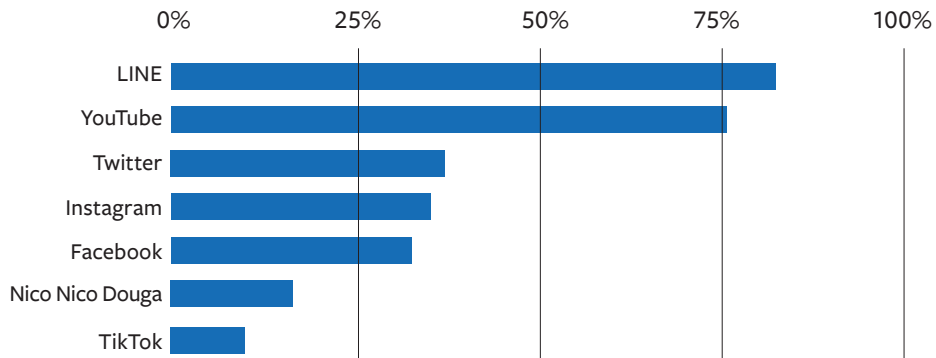
These messages are under the umbrella of privacy protection by service providers and operators, which makes it difficult for authorities and researchers to detect and respond to disinformation. According to Taiwanese security company TeamT5, LINE is the most vulnerable target for disinformation, as it is popular with communities of Taiwanese senior adults whose digital literacy is relatively low compared to that of young people. TeamT5 says it has confirmed a lot of false information favoring mainland China or the Kuomintang, which were transmitted by foreign companies located in Malaysia, Singapore, and China.¹³

Taiwan’s Responses under the Tsai Administration

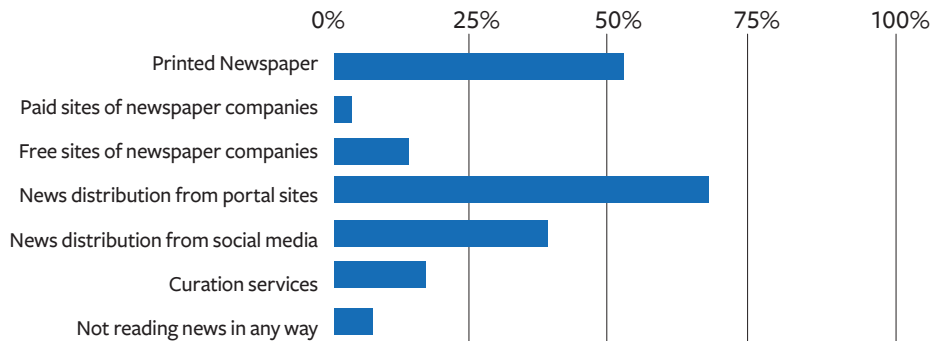
The Tsai administration has made significant progress in setting up measures against false information and disinformation since the KIX incident and the Taiwanese local elections in 2018. In terms of the improvement of relevant laws and regulations, the Tsai administration revised Article 41 of the Disaster

How are social media and news services used in Japan?

MAJOR SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATION USAGE



TEXT-BASED NEWS SERVICES USAGE



Both surveys targeted 1,500 men and women between the ages of 13 and 69, from 125 points nationwide, extracted by random location quota sampling. Source: The Institute for Information and Communications Policy, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, “2018 Survey on Time Spent on the Information Communications Media and Information Behavior” (September 2019), pp. 63-67.

Prevention and Protection Act, Article 90 of Presidential and Vice-Presidential Election and Recall Act, Article 63.5 of Social Order Maintenance Act, Article 104 of the Civil Servants Election and Recall Act, and Article 313 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of China. These reforms establish or strengthen penalties, including imprisonment and fines, for perpetrators who disseminate false information. In December 2019, just before the 2020 presidential election, the administration enacted the Anti-Infiltration Act (反滲透法), which prohibits election campaigns and political activities directed or funded by a “source of infiltration (滲透來源),” aiming to prevent “foreign hostile forces (境外敵對勢力)” from intervening in Taiwan’s politics.

Furthermore, under the Tsai administration, the Executive Yuan established a “Rumor Verification Center (謠言破解專區)” in July 2019, in partnership with news service provider LINE TODAY. If this center finds uncertain information, it will verify the facts within two hours and explain it in a text of 200 characters or less. In addition to the online measures, the Executive Yuan held workshops for citizens with little media experience, such as the elderly in rural areas, to provide judgment criteria for fact-checking.¹⁴ The national government and civil society collectively worked to address the issue.

Disinformation on COVID-19

Despite Taiwan’s and other nations’ responses, disinformation and unreliable information are still found everywhere today. Unreliable information on COVID-19, including the epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19, therapeutic medicines and vaccines, as well as responses by the WHO and governments, has been flooding online. The WHO refers to this situation as an “infodemic.”¹⁵

Under these circumstances, disinformation by foreign governments is highly suspected in the following areas: (1) the origin of SARS-CoV-2, (2) COVID-19 responses by governments such as Washington and Beijing, and (3) Taiwan’s WHO accession issues.

While there is much disinformation in which Beijing is deemed to have been involved, a particular message about “a two-week mandatory quarantine for the nation” that spread in the U.S. provoked a relatively strong response. On March 15, 2020, the White House’s National Security Council posted on Twitter that “Text message rumors of a national #quarantine are FAKE. There is no national lockdown.” *The New York Times*, based on interviews with six different U.S. intelligence officials, reported the Chinese authorities as the origin of the fake text message.¹⁶

It is evident that the main battlefield of disinformation regarding COVID-19 for Beijing is not only the U.S. but the entire world, including Japan and Taiwan. According to an analysis by Recorded Future, since mid-February 2020, pro-Beijing media outlets have avoided explicit mention of Beijing in discussing responsibility

for the pandemic, focused on the excellence of President Xi Jinping's leadership in response to the crisis, and sent out messages gradually shifting the topic from the initial epicenter of the pandemic to global leadership.¹⁷

Unreliable information and disinformation directly impacting Taiwan on COVID-19 are related to the issue of WHO membership and the feud with WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom. On April 8, 2020, Tedros told reporters that abuses and racist comments "came from some quarters and if you want me to be specific, three months ago this attack came from Taiwan."¹⁸ On the other hand, Chang Yu-jen (張尤仁), Cyber Security Office head of the MJIB of Taiwan, said at a press conference on April 10 that apologetic messages to Tedros for those discriminatory remarks have been posted online by someone seemingly posing as Taiwanese, from mainland China.¹⁹ However, he did not make it clear whether the source of the postings originating in the mainland had something to do with the Chinese government.

The Situation in Japan

So, how about Japan? Compared to Taiwan, Japan has not fully grasped the threat of disinformation in the digital space.

Aside from whether or not adversaries operate in the digital space, several countries are interested in and exert influence over Japan's national security issues. Okinawa is one of the focal points. Beijing-affiliated media outlet *Global Times* issued an opinion that Ryukyu (referring to Okinawa by the name of a past independent kingdom) is still undecided about whether or not it is included in Japan's sovereignty. Besides, some Chinese research institutes have been engaged in academic exchanges with Japanese organizations relating to this issue. According to the 2017 annual report by the Public Security Intelligence Agency of Japan, Beijing has a high interest in Okinawa and a "strategic aim to divide the Japanese opinion."²⁰ Missile deployment and defense in Japan is also a serious concern of neighboring countries. Hence, "a Kremlin official" leaked uncertain information to a local Okinawan newspaper about a plan for a U.S. intermediate-range ballistic missile deployment in Okinawa, allegedly communicated during U.S.-Russia negotiations.²¹

The influence operation over Japan in cyberspace is not obvious. There are large numbers of messages written in Japanese on social media by foreign government-affiliated media outlets. According to publicly available information, valid evidence of sweeping and organized disinformation by foreign governments targeting Japan via cyberspace has yet to be found. Though systematic campaigns on social media received a lot of attention during the Lower House election in October 2017 and Okinawa's gubernatorial election in September 2018,²² it has not been confirmed that the organized activities were linked to foreign governments.

It is not known whether there was, in fact, no digital meddling by foreign state actors, or if Tokyo has the ability to detect interference or disinformation in cyberspace but simply does not disclose them, or if Tokyo does not have such an ability.

Like other democracies, Japan is becoming increasingly concerned about uncertain information and disinformation in cyberspace. However, Japan's efforts tend to focus on "fake news," and have little consideration with foreign states' disinformation and its impact on national security.

MIC established an expert panel on digital platforms' services in October 2018, and the panel had examined how to deal with fake news and disinformation. The final report in February 2020 states that "in light of the importance of freedom of expression and other factors, we will first promote measures based on voluntary efforts by the private sector," and will propose fact-checking, IT literacy improvement, and "trust services," a mechanism to prevent spoofing or falsification of data at the source. The usage of disinformation by foreign governments and its impact on Japan's national security, however, is only mentioned in a very limited way in the report.²³

Challenges for Deepening Cooperation

While disinformation is one of the major threats that both Tokyo and Taipei face, there are underlying challenges to overcome when these two democracies cooperate closely to counter it.

Different Goals and Means of Adversaries' Disinformation

Different goals and means of adversaries' disinformation might make close and practical cooperation between the two democracies difficult. With regard to exercising influence, foreign adversaries have different policy goals, strategies, and tactics toward target nations. For example, the U.S. intelligence community judged that Beijing, Moscow, and Tehran interfered in the 2020 U.S. presidential election and that the intentions and methods used by these three adversaries were quite different.²⁴ Disinformation threats can vary widely depending on potential perpetrators.

Characterized recently as part of "hybrid warfare," Moscow's disinformation is based on a 100-year tradition of "active measures." On the other hand, Beijing's disinformation is part of "unrestricted warfare," or political warfare consisting of psychological, legal, and public opinion wars. Michael Rogers, former Commander of USCYBERCOM and Director of the National Security Agency, explained that China's disinformation is quite different from Russia's with regard to its goals, strategies, means and tools.²⁵ From Beijing's point of view, disinformation must not only be a means of international campaign but also the ultimate means of domestic control.²⁶

Even if focusing solely on China, Beijing has a different approach towards Taiwan, Japan, and the U.S. in respect to its goal, strategies, and tactics. Beijing has considered Taiwan, as well as Hong Kong, a target of “Chinese Peaceful Unification” and “United Front Work.” On the other hand, Beijing considers Japan a major rival in the region, and the U.S. a global competitor vying for supremacy. Beijing’s interference in Taipei with disinformation is nothing new, nor is it limited to cyberspace. On the issue of meddling with Taiwanese national elections, Beijing conducted a large-scale military exercise (so-called “武嚇”) prior to Taiwan’s 1996 general elections, and during the 2000 presidential election, it discouraged the Taiwanese pro-independence faction by making hardline political statements and denunciations (so-called “文攻”).

Besides, as “recipients” of disinformation, Taiwan, Japan, and the U.S. have different situations in all respects, including language used, human networks across the Taiwan Strait, popular social media and messaging apps, and pro-China political parties and TV media. Beijing cannot adopt the same approach for all three. Close cooperation between the two or three democracies needs to consider the dissimilarities between adversaries’ forms of disinformation and the situations of these democracies.

Concerns about “Freedom of Expression” and “Secrecy of Communication”

The ability to detect disinformation and respond to it depends on the legal situation as well as practical capabilities of each democracy. If any one of the three lacks such abilities and activities, information-sharing in “equivalent exchange” and close cooperation will not work well.

Foreign state actors, including the intelligence organizations, government-affiliated media outlets, counterfeit websites, and internet trolls, often spread “narratives” that have been reconstructed with a specific intent to highlight only positive or negative elements of facts. As the KIX incident showed, it is extremely difficult to distinguish between unreliable information occurring out of nowhere and disinformation unfolded as part of organizational maneuvering by foreign governments. Even if the origin or spreader of the unreliable information is found to be stationed on an adversary’s soil, it does not necessarily give a clear picture of the relationship between the source and the responsible governmental organization. Therefore, the ability to identify and trace the origin of unreliable information is indispensable in order to combat foreign adversaries’ disinformation.

However, in liberal democracies, such as Taiwan, Japan, and the U.S., matters related to surveillance and attribution capabilities might provoke a concern in the context of “freedom of expression” and “secrecy of communication.”

Regulating unreliable information without definite proof of the organized involvement by foreign governments may violate “freedom of expression.” Freedom of

expression is a fundamental right protected by the system of basic principles of liberal democracies, including Article 21 of the Constitution of Japan, Article 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. An open society or democratic nation guarantees citizens' right to criticize their governments and politicians and to express their beliefs, if their words and deeds do not violate the law, such as defamation.

On the other hand, if uncertain information is formed by foreign governments, regulating them could be interpreted as not violating "freedom of expression." Therefore, attributing disinformation is vital to contain it.

At least in Japan, attribution has brought about a problem with regard to the "secrecy of communication." Article 21 states that "no censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated." According to some experts, however, the secrecy of communications stipulated in Article 21 of the Constitution of Japan and in Article 4 of the Telecommunications Business Act is more strictly interpreted and applied than in other democratic countries, making it especially difficult for the government and telecommunications carriers to monitor packet communication.²⁷

If any democracy lacks the legal foundation to combat against disinformation, effective intelligence-sharing and close cooperation will not work well. Unfortunately, Japan seems to be lagging the most.

Policy Recommendations

Japan, Taiwan, the U.S., and other like-minded democracies facing similar risks and geopolitical challenges must cooperate to counter disinformation. Although there are many things each nation should do, this paper makes several recommendations focusing on bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

The recommendations are based on several principles. First, a two-stage approach is necessary because it is difficult to discern mere spontaneous unreliable information from disinformation. While considering "freedom of expression," it is essential to increase society's resilience against false or unreliable information in general, concurrently enforcing strict responses and containment against disinformation conducted by foreign governments.

Second, measures against disinformation must be developed considering the similarities and differences in geopolitical risks faced by Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. In other words, there needs to be continuous and systematic studies and insights into Beijing's approach to each of the three nations.

Third, these measures must be comprehensive. They should not only apply to governments, but to private businesses and civil societies as well; in addition to checking the facts, they must also verify "narratives," in both the digital space and physical space (though this paper focuses on cyberspace).

Fourth, most importantly, disinformation responses must not undermine the robustness of an open society and liberal democracy.

Cooperation among Governments Focusing on Disinformation

Japan, Taiwan, the U.S., and other like-minded democracies need to cooperate closely against disinformation in the digital space.

The three and other like-minded nations should further promote the exchange of intelligence on disinformation obtained through the attribution process, surveillance, and other activities in order to understand the reality.

Disinformation is an everyday threat; however, it is during an election that the effect is maximized. Even if it did not change the outcome of the election, the fact that there *might* have been interference will undermine the public trust in elections and the political system. It is necessary to disrupt the origin of disinformation targeting elections and democratic processes by way of preemptive and disruptive cyber operations. In other words, this corresponds to “Defending Forward” and “Hunting Forward,” which the U.S. Cyber Command is reported to have conducted during the 2018 midterm elections and the 2020 presidential election,²⁸ or the exercise of the “capability to disrupt opponent’s use of cyberspace for the attack,” which Japan’s National Defense Program Guidelines aims to achieve for crisis responses. Halting disinformation is akin to the missile defense. To successfully intercept a saturation attack of disinformation missiles, several nations need to work together in close coordination.

The “preemptive and disruptive cyber operation” is exercised in imminent situations, such as during the election period; on the other hand, the enforcement of sanctions is put into practice after a certain event. A typical case of the latter is criminal prosecution against foreign entities. This has a certain effect in that if the prosecuted perpetrator is in a country which concluded a bilateral extradition treaty, they could be detained. Other examples include naming and shaming, economic sanctions, and diplomatic sanctions. These can be coordinated among a coalition of the willing with policy collaboration.

In November 2019, Taiwan and the U.S. hosted a multilateral cyber exercise, in which Japan and Australia also reportedly participated. Besides, the Global Cooperation Training Framework by Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. was used to combat disinformation on COVID-19, becoming an important place for the three nations to deepen cooperation. The three countries should boost multilateral exercises and cooperation more than ever for the purpose of responding to cyberattacks and disinformation on specific crises and elections. The main participants might include not only the military but also intelligence organizations and internal affairs agencies.

With Beijing’s disinformation in mind, the three nations and like-minded democracies should build a common platform to provide information to their citizens.

“EU vs DiSiNFO,” a project of the East StratCom Task Force of the European External Action Service, could be a model for this. To counter disinformation by the Kremlin, the project analyzes data, monitors the media in 15 languages, and provides information to citizens.²⁹

Promoting Private Organizations’ Responses to Unreliable Information Including Disinformation

Tokyo, Taipei, and Washington need to promote private organizations to help them respond more effectively and robustly to disinformation.

Efforts by digital platforms, including the social media service providers, messaging app developers and operators, and news distributors, are among the most necessary approaches. Each company is determining the authenticity of the posted content, regulating political advertising, labeling foreign government-affiliated media outlets, as well as freezing and deleting suspicious accounts. Some of these efforts aim at cutting off foreign governments’ attempts to exercise influence. These efforts and “best practices” in certain countries should be applied and implemented in other democracies, considering the legal system of each nation. Governments need to encourage self-regulation by digital platforms to combat disinformation and unreliable information. If the voluntary-basis measures are not sufficiently effective and transparent, however, governments must consider the need for co-regulations and formal regulations.

Many fact-checking organizations around the world have been established to combat false information and disinformation. In Japan, for instance, FactCheck Initiative Japan (FIJ) has been functioning effectively, pointing out inaccurate or erroneous statements on the Okinawa 2018 gubernatorial election, as well as on COVID-19. Taiwan FactCheck Center (台灣事實查核中心), which played an important role in the 2020 Taiwanese presidential and legislative elections, has been promoting a collaborative relationship with FIJ since June 2018.

With the expansion of the digital space, the scale and effect of disinformation become ever more serious and painful. Disinformation is being deployed to deepen social division and rifts, exploiting the opportunity of national elections and the confusion of the COVID-19 crisis. Open societies and liberal democracies are inherently vulnerable to disinformation. If democracies cannot stand against disinformation, they will come to lose a cornerstone of democracy. At the same time, however, as Laura Rosenberger at the German Marshall Fund precisely portrays, “if they [democracies] are more proactive and aggressive in the wrong ways, they will risk mimicking the heavy-handed behavior of autocracies and creating the kind of rigidly controlled environment autocrats seek.”³⁰ Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. must counter disinformation disseminated by authoritarian states, while maintaining social openness and strengthening the democratic process.

Endnotes

1. An often-quoted definition in the study of fake news has made a clarifying distinction between the following three categories:

- Mis-information: “false” but “not malicious” information.
- Mal-information: “not false” but “malicious” information.
- Dis-information: “false” and “malicious” information.

Council of Europe. “Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.” Wardle, Claire and Hossein Derakhshan. (2017) 5. <https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-for-research/168076277c>. However, the above definition does not shed light on an important aspect of disinformation that it is also disseminated by foreign governments and agencies. Thomas Rid, professor at Johns Hopkins University, points out that “disinformation is not simply fake information—at least, not necessarily.” Some of the most successful disinformation in the history of covert intelligence operations over the past 100 years were designed to deliver entirely accurate information. Rid, Thomas. *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020. 10. Puma Shen (沈伯洋), assistant professor at the National Taipei University’s Graduate School of Criminology and the director of the DoubleThink Labs, also notes with Beijing’s disinformation in mind that “the majority of this kind of information operation isn’t fake news. It is primarily creating narratives. Or stories. These narratives may just be only focusing on the positives of something and not the negatives. Or focusing only on the negatives. Just there’s not any fake information inside.” Hioe, Brian. “Fighting Fake News and Disinformation in Taiwan: An Interview with Puma Shen.” News Bloom. January 6, 2020. <https://newbloommag.net/2020/01/06/puma-shen-interview/>.

2. Rid describes that the purpose of disinformation is to “exacerbate existing tensions and contradictions within the adversary’s body politic by leveraging facts, fakes, and ideally a disorienting mix of both.” Rid, *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare*, 7.

3. DiResta, Renee et al. *The Tactics & Tropes of the Internet Research Agency*. Austin: New Knowledge, 2018. 76. The report was presented to the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. New Knowledge changed its name and is now Yonder.

4. Moscow’s intention toward the 2016 U.S. presidential election can be interpreted as to increase both political distrust in “specific targets” (candidates and political parties) as well as in “general political system” such as the election itself and democracy in the U.S. Kawaguchi, Takahisa and Motohiro Tsuchiya. 「デジタル時代の選挙干渉とディストラスト—ロシアによる2016年米大統領選挙介入を例に—」 “Election Interference in the Digital Age and Political Distrust: The Case of Russia’s Interference in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election.” *Public Policy Studies*, No.19 (December 2019): 40-48.

5. Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament. “Russia.” July 21, 2020. 9. https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/20200721_HC632_CCS001_CCS1019402408-001_ISC_Russia_Report_Web_Accessible.pdf.

6. Liu, Yenfu. 「『中国人優遇』の偽ニュースはなぜ生まれたか 関空の中国人避難問題、一連の事実を検証」 “How was the fake news ‘Special Treatment to the Chinese’ forged? The evacuation of the Chinese from KIX—a series of facts verified.” *Toyo Keizai*. September 21, 2018.

7. The Legislative Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan). Official Bulletin. 92nd Committee Record. Vol. 107. October 22, 2018. 312-313.

8. Huang, Paul. “Chinese Cyber-Operatives Boosted Taiwan’s Insurgent Candidate: Han Kuo-yu came out of nowhere to win a critical election. But he had a little help from the mainland.” *Foreign Policy*. June 26, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/26/chinese-cyber-operatives-boosted-taiwans-insurgent-candidate/>.

9. Insikt Group. “Chinese Influence Operations Evolve in Campaigns Targeting Taiwanese Elections, Hong Kong Protests.” Recorded Future. April 29, 2020. <https://www.recordedfuture.com/chinese-influence-operations/>.

10. For more specific methods and details, see Puma Shen (沈伯洋)'s explanation in endnote 2.
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Japan-Taiwan Cooperation Towards an Open, Interoperable, Reliable, and Secure Digital Economy

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Executive Summary

- Today's rapidly evolving technological, economic, and geopolitical environment calls for more active and greater government coordination and cooperation between Taipei and Tokyo, two like-minded democracies in the field of digital economy.
- Geopolitical challenges from China's digital rise; economic security challenges from the U.S.-China strategic competition and COVID-19; and the diplomatic context to prevent Taiwan's isolation are contexts and drivers for cooperation.
- Tokyo and Taipei have stepped up in 1) ensuring security of critical network infrastructure; 2) boosting domestic technological and industrial capabilities; 3) building rules and norms in the digital economy; and 4) bilateral, trilateral, and plurilateral cooperation and coordination with the United States.
- Future areas for cooperation could include cooperation in promoting 5G open architecture, joint R&D in semiconductor design and manufacturing, assisting Taipei's participation in plurilateral and multilateral institutions to counter the spread of data protectionism, and protection of technology and talent outflow.

Background

Since 1972, when Japan decided to develop a non-governmental relationship with Taipei after its normalization with China, industries and businesses have played major roles in deepening bilateral economic relations. The Japan-Taiwan Economic and Trade Conference (JTETC) facilitated major economic agreements — the Private Investment arrangement in 2011, the MOU for industrial cooperation in 2012, the e-commerce agreement in 2013, and the tax agreement in 2015 — to support the expansion of business ties. As a result, Taiwan is Japan's fourth largest trading partner, and Japan is Taiwan's third largest trading partner after China and the United States as of 2020.¹ The geographic proximity and the highly skilled

labor in Japan and in Taiwan also allowed the two sides to grow complementarily and interdependently in the IT and electronics sector to play integral parts in the global supply chain for the high-tech sector — semiconductors, smartphone and electronic devices, and network equipment.

Today’s rapidly evolving technological, economic, and geopolitical environment, however, calls for more active and closer government coordination and cooperation between the two like-minded democracies. This is especially the case in the realm of the digital economy, which has emerged as the economic engine of the 21st century and the center of geopolitics. China’s rapid technological development and its expanding digital footprint in Tokyo and Taipei’s neighbors are raising security and economic concerns. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and social distancing measures have accelerated the speed of digital transformation. Moreover, it has challenged issues of supply chain resiliency in critical technology sectors, such as semiconductors, that undermine industrial security. As governments began to emerge as central players in responding to such geopolitical, security, and economic challenges, it is about time for Tokyo and Taipei revisit their existing cooperation to respond effectively to the common challenges facing digital technologies, services, and governance.

This paper will discuss the context and current state of and potential areas for enhanced policy coordination and cooperation between Tokyo and Taipei. The paper focuses on key digital infrastructure, technologies, services, and rules that are likely to shape the foundation of the digital economy in the coming decades. It will end with several policy recommendations for the two governments to meet common challenges and to promote an “open, interoperable, reliable, and secure”² digital economy in the 21st century.

Geopolitical Context: China’s Digital Rise

There are three major contexts for closer coordination and cooperation between Tokyo and Taipei.

First is the geopolitical context to meet the growing Chinese military and the economic influence of China in digital space. Indeed, Tokyo and Taipei have developed close economic relationships with China as their largest and second largest trading partner. However, China’s rapid military build-up over the past decades has raised significant security questions. Beijing’s asymmetrical development and use of cyber weapons have become increasingly concerning for the two governments, not only because of its implications for deterrence created by the U.S.’s armed forces and regional alliance networks, but also because of its ability to exploit government, civil, and commercial networks.³

Rapid development and expansion of Chinese digital network systems, e-commerce systems, and surveillance systems in Tokyo and Taipei’s important partners in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond are further adding concerns for stability

and prosperity of the world's most rapidly developing digital economies. Over the past decades, Chinese network equipment suppliers — Huawei and ZTE — and digital platform services companies, such as Alibaba and Tencent, have significantly expanded their presence in Southeast Asia to support digital connectivity and social development goals. In the case of 5G wireless network, which will serve as the backbone of future digital economy by bringing transformative impact to industries, Huawei secured the world's largest market share and 90 commercial contracts by the beginning of 2020.⁴

The fundamental problem of the spread of Chinese digital technologies is their close links to the Chinese state. The Chinese Intelligence Law enacted in 2017 requires firms to cooperate with the state's security activities when asked by the state agencies. Beijing's Digital Silk Road (DSR) project to develop a “community of common destiny in cyber space”⁵ and its massive government subsidies and lending practices to promote Chinese 5G, data centers, services, and surveillance systems further add concerns on the strategic intention. In fact, the Chinese authoritarian and protectionist model of digital governance has been spreading along with Chinese technologies.⁶

China's growing technological capabilities under the government's Made in China 2025 initiative is further raising strategic and economic concerns. Historically, Beijing had goals to increase self-sufficiency in critical technologies to reduce dependency on U.S. technologies, such as semiconductors and network infrastructure. Under Xi, Beijing has provided massive government funding for R&D projects and has accelerated the process.⁷ Chinese government subsidies and lending have the potential to undermine the rules-based free, open, fair, and reciprocal economic order in the digital economy. It has also caused new challenges of technology and talent outflow from Japan and Taiwan's technology centers.⁸ Furthermore, it raises long-term concerns over U.S. technological leadership.

Economic Security Context: U.S.-China Strategic Competition and COVID-19

Second are the economic security challenges. The most pressing challenge for Tokyo and Taipei is the economic “decoupling” unilaterally pursued by the Trump and Xi administrations amid the intensification of the U.S.-China strategic competition in the digital technology sector. Maintaining technological superiority over China was at the heart of the Trump administration's national security and economic strategy, and the administration actively strengthened measures to prevent the outflow of U.S. technologies with dual-use implications and to undermine the spread of Chinese digital infrastructure. One example was the revision of the export control act in 2018 that authorized the U.S. Commerce Department to establish controls on export, reexport, or transfer of “emerging and foundational technologies” with national security implications. The government subsequently

regulated, for instance, export and reexport of software using AI technologies to automate the geospatial imagery, which Japanese space firms have used for their satellites.⁹ On May 16, 2019, the U.S. government took further measures to add Huawei to the U.S. Commerce Department's Entity List to prevent critical technology sales to the company.¹⁰ Such measures were often taken unilaterally by the U.S. without partners like Taiwan and Japan, and both domestic and foreign smartphone and chip makers, such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), were hit hard by them. According to Bernstein Research, Huawei was the company's second largest customer after Apple, accounting for approximately 15-25% of the annual revenue.¹¹ In June 2020, the administration launched the Clean Network Initiative and expanded the scope of banning Chinese technologies through a series of regulations and executive orders to include apps, app stores, cloud services, and cables.¹²

Another challenge was the supply chain resiliency of the electronics industry that has become increasingly globalized. Vulnerabilities in the supply chain were revealed in the outbreak of the coronavirus across the world in 2020. The halt of production lines for smartphones and semiconductors had a critical impact on the Western electronics players and urged the need to reshore design, manufacturing, and assembly capabilities.

As a response to these challenges, Western governments pursued aggressive industrial policies to maintain competitiveness in critical technology sectors and to make the supply chain more resilient. Priority focus has been on the advanced chip processing and semiconductor industries, as these technologies have both industrial and military implications and as the U.S. sees advantage over Chinese technological capabilities. To ensure continued leadership in design, manufacturing, and assembly of cutting-edge semiconductors as a national security priority, the U.S. Congress passed the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act which provided billions of dollars in federal support for the U.S. semiconductor industry, most notably tax credits and grants for the construction of new domestic manufacturing facilities.¹³ The European Union has also committed to invest up to 145 billion euros in R&D in local design and production of processors and semiconductors to ensure technology sovereignty and competitiveness in the global market.¹⁴ Both the risk of relying on foreign technologies and supply shortages amid the coronavirus pandemic accelerated the EU's effort to reduce dependency on foreign firms.¹⁵ As Western liberal governments expand interventionist policies for national security purposes, there is growing room and need for Tokyo and Taipei to revisit their approach to follow such trends to maintain competitiveness.

Diplomatic Context: Preventing Taiwan's Isolation

Third is to prevent Taiwan's marginalization in global digital governance. There is a growing diplomatic movement to fill in the gaps of rules and norms in digital space through multilateral institutions and plurilateral forums. The UN Group

of Governmental Experts has been an important venue to set agreed norms of behaviors in cyberspace.¹⁶ The G7 and G20 Summits are also serving as venues for like-minded economic powers to discuss cybersecurity and data governance and to coordinate at e-commerce ruling negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO).¹⁷ Intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, are also setting principles and frameworks to tackle the ethical challenges of AI. The Czech Republic has hosted a plurilateral forum to discuss cybersecurity of 5G since 2019.¹⁸ Meanwhile, an authoritarian, exclusive, and protectionist model of digital governance has begun to expand in the region and around the globe with the spread of Chinese technologies. Because Taiwan is an important like-minded partner for Tokyo and its industries are integral in the regional and global digital technology supply chain, there is an increasing need to make sure Taiwan is not isolated from international rules and norms developed by these key institutions and bodies.

Snapshot of the Current Situation

To respond to these geopolitical, security, and economic trends, Tokyo and Taipei stepped up in the following areas: 1) ensuring the security of critical network infrastructure; 2) boosting domestic technological and industrial capabilities; 3) building rules and norms in the digital economy; and 4) bilateral, trilateral, and plurilateral cooperation and coordination with the United States.

Ensuring Security of Critical Network Infrastructure

Due to the awareness of cybersecurity risks of using Chinese network systems in domestic government and commercial networks, Tokyo and Taipei were swift to exclude and regulate the use of such systems. In Tokyo's case, it successfully and subtly excluded Chinese 5G network equipment both from government and commercial networks as early as April 2019, making Japan the world's first country to follow the U.S. ban on using Huawei equipment.¹⁹ Taipei also banned Chinese equipment both from public and commercial networks.²⁰

In terms of resiliency and security of the 5G network system, however, the two sides differ in domestic technological capabilities and the level of supplier diversity. In Japan's case, the four major operators have either secured or plan to achieve vendor diversity by combining Ericsson, Nokia, NEC, and Fujitsu's network components based on open network architecture in the radio-access network (RAN), or the base station.²¹ Taiwanese network operators, in contrast, are heavily dependent on two vendors, Ericsson and Nokia, leaving security challenges from the lack of vendor diversity.²²

Beyond securing domestic 5G networks, Tokyo further actively promoted its digital connectivity vision as an alternative to China's DSR in countries in the

Indo-Pacific region. Under its Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision — a diplomatic and economic strategy to uphold the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific first announced by former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in 2016 — Tokyo agreed on a set of priorities and tools with Washington to commit to an “open, interoperable, reliable and secure” 5G.²³ Since 2018, the Japanese and U.S. governments have enhanced coordination under the U.S.-Japan Policy Cooperation Dialogue on the Internet Economy, and the two sides have agreed to cooperate on digital infrastructure development in third countries and discussed exploring potential cooperation for open architecture.²⁴

U.S.-Japan cooperation under the FOIP also indirectly serves to prevent Taiwan’s isolation. An example is Japan, the U.S., and Australia’s joint project financing undersea cable projects for Taiwan’s diplomatic partner Palau, to counter the growing Chinese influence in the country.²⁵

Boosting Domestic Technological and Industrial Capabilities

Second, Tokyo and Taipei have both launched industrial strategy and large R&D programs to boost technological competitiveness in their respective areas. In Japan’s case, the Abe administration in 2020 launched its “Digital New Deal” and secured a series of R&D funding of more than 2 trillion yen from the end of fiscal year 2019 to 2021. The goals of the policy include reinvigorating Japanese global technological competitiveness in critical technology areas with national security implications — 5G, semiconductors, AI, and quantum computing.²⁶

One major focus area for the new deal is to reinvigorate the semiconductor sector in Japan to lead the industrial applications of 5G. Japan’s Ministry of Trade, Economy, and Industry (METI) has funded approximately 110 billion yen for R&D in advanced semiconductor design capabilities.²⁷ Given the lack of manufacturing capabilities of logic semiconductors critical for the post 5G-economy, METI has reportedly played a central role in engaging with TSMC to build production lines in Japan.²⁸ Tokyo has also put together an R&D strategy for emerging digital technology areas, such as AI and quantum computing.²⁹

Another major focus area is to restore Japanese mobile network equipment suppliers’ global competitiveness. Since the 3G era, major Japanese suppliers, such as NEC and Fujitsu, have struggled to compete globally, and primarily focused on domestic network supply.³⁰ However, the development of open RAN (O-RAN) network architecture and the U.S. anti-Huawei campaign have created room for Japanese suppliers to aim for global markets. O-RAN is made possible through the development of specifications for standardized interfaces between network components to allow a multi-vendor solution by industry consortiums.³¹ The Japanese government supported this effort by passing legislation to provide tax credits to operators and vendors adopting open standards.³² The government further funded R&D projects for operators and vendors to test the interoperability

between vendors and develop a cloud-native virtualized 5G network as an effort to invest in potential key technologies that sets standards for 6G.³³

Taiwan's current industrial policy dates to 2016, when President Tsai launched the “5+2 industrial strategy” to shift Taiwan's information and communications technology industrial model, which focuses on original equipment manufacturing (OEM) and original design manufacturer (ODM), higher up the values chain of the digital ecosystem. The strategy included, for instance, an ambitious Asia Silicon Valley project with funding of 11.3 billion NTD (350 million USD) to foster innovation, grow domestic talents and start-ups, and attract foreign investment to advance domestic technological capabilities.³⁴

Building Rules and Norms in the Digital Economy

In the rules-making aspect of the digital economy, both governments have addressed the need to set rules for e-commerce and data governance. Tokyo, under the Abe administration, led the regional and global standard-setting processes by concluding the Comprehensive Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which included an e-commerce chapter for the first time. He further signed the U.S.-Japan Digital Trade Agreement in 2019 and the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in 2019 ensuring cross-border flow. In 2019, as the chair of the G20 Summit, Abe launched the Osaka Track to call for cooperation in e-commerce negotiation under the World Trade Organization with the concept “Data Free Flow with Trust,” an inclusive vision to promote cross-border data flow with security.³⁵ The effort is continued under the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on E-commerce under the WTO, which both Tokyo and Taipei support.³⁶ In 2020, there was a growing momentum for Taiwan's potential participation in the CPTPP.

Bilateral, Trilateral, and Plurilateral Cooperation and Coordination with the United States

The level of alignment with the United States in countering China's digital rise differs between Tokyo and Taipei, but engagements through plurilateral forums are creating opportunities for trilateral cooperation. Tokyo, in principle, shares the security risks and concerns towards Beijing's strategic intent behind the DSR. However, it has not aligned with the United States at the tactical level. It has not called out specific countries or companies in government regulations.

It has also not publicly supported the Clean Network Initiative by the United States. In contrast, Taipei had little option but to align with the U.S. to continue receiving its security support. In August 2020, the American Institute in Taiwan and Taiwan made a joint declaration to deepen cooperation on 5G supply chain security and uphold the U.S.'s clean path.³⁷ On December 22, Taipei approved

TSMC's plans to build a new plant in Arizona with an initial investment of USD 3.5 billion, out of the initial plan of a USD 12 billion factory.³⁸ Taiwan is also attracting the world's leading semiconductor and semiconductor manufacturing equipment provider to produce locally to maintain strategic competitiveness over China as China rapidly expands investment in chips.³⁹

Close relations with the U.S. also facilitated Taiwan's participation in regional and global multilateral and plurilateral forums to enhance security with a rules-based approach to the digital economy. An example is the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF), established between the United States and Taiwan in 2015. Japan has taken part as an observer since the beginning, but formally joined in 2019. The GCTF is gaining importance as a forum to discuss cybersecurity, IT supply chain, and 5G security, and to support Taiwan's engagement with like-minded countries and partners on these issues. From 2015 to 2020, a total of 24 workshops have been held under the GTCF, attended by 700 government officials and experts from 39 countries.⁴⁰

U.S.-Taiwan cooperation in the GCTF has facilitated further trilateral cooperation. In October 2020, Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. held a virtual conference on trade secrets protection, digital piracy prevention, and a shared commitment to combating intellectual property theft in the digital economy.⁴¹ The three sides also hosted the Trilateral Indo-Pacific Security Dialogue.⁴² Though bilateral dialogues between Japan and Taiwan remain sensitive, there are several cooperation opportunities in a plurilateral format that enhance Taiwan's cybersecurity effort. In the industrial realm, Tokyo has hosted cybersecurity training programs with the United States since 2018, in which Taiwan took part.⁴³ In September 2019, METI and Industrial Cyber Security Center of Excellence (ICSCoE) also co-hosted with the U.S. government the U.S. Industrial Control Systems Cybersecurity Training.⁴⁴ This training program brought together 69 trainees and 35 participants from government agencies in 14 countries and regions, including Taiwan but mainly Southeast Asian countries. In November, Japan also took part for the first time in the biennial cyber offensive and defensive exercise hosted by the U.S. and Taiwanese governments.⁴⁵

Challenges for Cooperation

There are several barriers to cooperation. The first is political. Since Japan's normalization with Beijing in 1972, Japan has committed to building a non-governmental working-level relationship through representative offices in Taipei (the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association) and Tokyo (the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan). Thus, Tokyo does not have a legal or diplomatic obligation to support Taiwan's security, as opposed to the United States which is committed to support Taiwan's security through the Taiwan Relations Act. To some extent, the pro-Taiwan Diet member group in the Liberal Democratic Party has played a role in continuing the dialogue on important diplomatic and

security issues, but cybersecurity or the digital sector have not been major themes, at least openly.

Other major challenges include economic barriers and industrial issues. In the short term, despite the reality that Taipei is interested in hedging risks by diversifying the customer base of its semiconductor industry, whether its businesses could pursue such a strategy could depend on the Japanese government and Japanese industries' ability to create an incentive package. Fiscal challenges from the aging population and large spending for economic measures to fight the coronavirus pandemic are challenging Tokyo's ability to offer an attractive funding package to compete with massive funding availability of the U.S. and European governments. In the longer term, whether Japanese industries could utilize the massive industrial opportunities in the 5G economy will determine whether there is an attractive environment for Taiwanese electronics companies to invest in Japan.

Policy Recommendations

There is a growing demand for closer coordination and cooperation at the government level to meet the dynamic and complex geopolitical, economic, and industrial challenges Tokyo and Taipei face today. Cooperation between East Asia's two technology powers that play integral roles in the global digital technology supply chain is also essential for a stable and prosperous digital economy. Moreover, Tokyo and Taipei are like-minded liberal democracies with a shared interest in promoting an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure digital economy. The following are some recommendations to kickstart the conversation for closer coordination and cooperation:

For security and resiliency of future networks, jointly pursue 5G open architecture through joint R&D.

5G is an important pipeline for the data-driven economy and brings transformative impact on industries through low latency, high speed of data transmission, and massive simultaneous connections. Yet just three companies — Ericsson, Nokia, and Huawei — have nearly 80% of the global market share.⁴⁶ To ensure security and resilience of 5G, ensuring vendor diversity is critical, and promoting O-RAN architecture is key to achieving this goal. Both governments could promote O-RAN by supporting R&D to ensure the interoperability of a multi-vendor solution to create alternatives to vertical network equipment providers, such as the three companies mentioned above, to enhance network security.

Use legislative member groups to promote discussion on challenges in cybersecurity.

In recent years, the two governments have become increasingly aware of the demand for discussions on issues about cybersecurity and have increased contacts

through plurilateral and trilateral forums with the United States to discuss cooperation on economic, technology, and cybersecurity issues. However, direct bilateral dialogues could remain politically sensitive for Tokyo due to its diplomatic relationship with Beijing. Thus, the two sides could utilize exchanges between legislative groups supporting Japan-Taiwan relations to shape the debate on cybersecurity and to promote awareness at the public level.

Pursue joint R&D in advanced semiconductor design and manufacturing.

There is a growing demand and interest for Tokyo to reinvigorate semiconductor manufacturing capability as Japan and the world face semiconductor supply shortages driven by COVID-19 and the rising demand for electronics products. Attracting Taiwanese semiconductor manufacturing companies, such as TSMC, has been an attractive option for Tokyo, and it also is in the Taiwanese government's interest to facilitate investment in Tokyo to diversify its semiconductor industry's customers for economic security. The two governments have an essential role to play to ensure economic security of critical technologies by pursuing joint R&D on advanced semiconductors for 5G application.

Assist Taiwan's participation in plurilateral and multilateral institutions to counter the spread of data protectionism.

Assist Taiwan's participation in CPTPP. In November 2020, Japan's Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will "aspire for the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific" through the "steady implementation and expansion of the CPTPP" as the chair in 2021. Japan's representative in Taiwan has already stated his priority to assist Taiwan's participation in the CPTPP in December 2020.⁴⁷ Including as many like-minded partners as possible in the world's largest trade agreement with high standards in e-commerce is strategically important to prevent the spread of China's data protectionism. 2021 will be an opportunity for Tokyo to facilitate Taiwan's participation.

Tokyo and Taipei have also been cooperating under the WTO's JSI to promote rules-making on e-commerce, which supports the framework agreed at the G20 Summit in 2019, the Osaka Track. It is important for the two like-minded governments to continue to cooperate to make progress in 2021.⁴⁸

Protect technology and prevent talent outflow to China.

Promote information sharing on industrial espionage and acquisition of talent by the Chinese government as well as best practices on defensive measures by economic statecraft to prevent the outflow of high-skilled talent and critical technologies. The two governments, for instance, could discuss areas including export control, foreign investment screening, and increased transparency of foreign funding on academic research.

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Final Thoughts

PAMELA KENNEDY

The papers in this volume focused on various aspects of Japan-Taiwan relations, examining policies for how these two partners might continue to deepen their relationship. The areas for cooperation are inevitably focused on the most pressing concerns and opportunities that these two democracies have in common: the increasingly urgent matter of global public health, the chance to shape the norms and standards of the growing digital economy, the onslaught of disinformation in an age of constant communication, and the shared challenge of managing the unofficial relationship while balancing policies towards China. The common themes in the discussion of the challenges and the authors' recommendations illuminate key characteristics of the unique relationship between Taiwan and Japan.

The authors present a variety of evidence for the strength of the Japan-Taiwan relationship, based in shared values and interests, which manifests in multiple avenues for cooperation. The momentum for cooperation is built on people-to-people connections, economic ties, and cross-cultural interest. Fukuda notes the climbing numbers of tourists traveling between Taiwan and Japan before the pandemic, as well as the strong affinity between the two populations. As Takuma observes, this favorable outlook has contributed to aid in times of crisis, including mask shipments from Taiwan to Japan during the pandemic. On the economic side, Fukuda and Koshino discuss the numerous economic agreements that the Japan-Taiwan Economic and Trade Conference helped to arrange over the past decade, significantly expanding the opportunities for the two business communities to work together. While there are still obstacles in these areas of cooperation, in particular the food ban that has thwarted a trade agreement for so long, persistence from both sides may eventually bring about progress.

All the chapters also find that Japan has an important role to play in shining a light on Taiwan's international contributions and amplifying Taiwan's advocacy for its participation. This includes supporting Taiwan's inclusion in key international bodies, like as an observer in the World Health Assembly (WHA), and working to integrate Taiwan into regional arrangements, like the Comprehensive Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). But Japan's efforts go further, in groups that center Taiwan's expertise, like the Global Cooperative and Training Framework, which Japan's decision to join as a full member in 2019 signaled confidence in Taiwan. Koshino and Takuma recommended that Japan continue to support Taiwan's participation in frameworks like the GCTF — or even form new systems to better serve regional needs, such as Takuma's recommendation of a public health-focused cooperative framework.

Collaboration with the United States was also emphasized as a key part of how Taiwan and Japan interact. The United States is not present in every Japan-Taiwan cooperative effort by any means, but there is still a role it plays in deepening Japan-Taiwan relations. Methods of cooperation that the U.S. has developed with Taiwan, like the GCTF, can provide a platform and inspiration for Japan's collaboration with Taiwan, for example. Kawaguchi offered the example of a cyber exercise hosted by Taiwan and the U.S. which Japan joined. In addition, as Fukuda observed, there is room for Japan and Taiwan to participate in regional security through their relations with the United States, Japan within the U.S.-Japan alliance, and Taiwan through the security provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act. The stability and security of the region is in both Japan and Taiwan's interests, so cooperation with the United States is a way that both can help support, in Japan's words, a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Several authors also discussed the importance of deepening understanding of key policy challenges and the bilateral relationship itself, among both government and civil society. Fukuda observed that while there are Japanese Diet members who have worked for years on Japan-Taiwan ties, important work remains in sharing why Japan-Taiwan cooperation is useful and necessary. Koshino specifically noted a common interest in Japan and Taiwan in cybersecurity that could be transformed into legislative exchange discussions, helping to promote awareness of cybersecurity issues. Kawaguchi encouraged Japan and Taiwan, with the United States, to cooperate more closely at the government level on combatting disinformation, such as through a common platform. Recommendations like these demonstrate how emerging challenges — particularly in domains like cyberspace — provide new opportunities for deeper cooperation, if the political will to take the chance is there.

Finally, as the authors all discussed, an overarching challenge of the Japan-Taiwan relationship is cooperating within the context of Japan-China relations and cross-Strait relations. Under the “unofficial relationship” agreed to in the 1972 Japan-China Joint Communiqué, Japan and Taiwan have accomplished much, staying within the bounds of economic and cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties that are permitted. As the shared challenges and opportunities evolve into new areas for cooperation, however, Taiwan and Japan must build their ties carefully, cognizant of reactions from Beijing. Deepening cooperation while maintaining the balance with China will be an ongoing task for this unique relationship.

The decades of close cooperation across many fields between Taiwan and Japan give assurance that the challenges in the relationship can be overcome, positioning the two to expand their ties through substantial opportunities, together and with other like-minded partners. The benefits of Japan-Taiwan cooperation will continue to accrue not only within their relationship, but also in the region and across the world.

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Japan-Taiwan Relations

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The warm ties between Japan and Taiwan are built on decades of practical cooperation, shared values, and mutual security interests. Their cooperation may be unofficial, but it has been effective in working towards several important tasks: raising Taiwan's international profile and integrating Taiwan into the international community, demonstrating the benefits of deepening cooperation for both partners, as well as sharing expertise and assistance on critical traditional and nontraditional security concerns. In *Japan-Taiwan Relations: Opportunities and Challenges*, four Japanese scholars explore the current state of Japan-Taiwan relations and make recommendations for further developing the cooperative relationship in four areas: the unofficial relationship in general, public health, disinformation, and the digital economy. By examining these shared challenges from a Japanese perspective, the four authors find many ways in which Taiwan and Japan can support and progress their ties.

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