



Next Generation Thinking
about the U.S.-Japan Alliance:
Perceptions, Challenges, and Opportunities



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Based in Honolulu, the Pacific Forum CSIS (www.pacforum.org) operates as the autonomous Asia-Pacific arm of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. The Forum's programs encompass current and emerging political, security, economic, business, and oceans policy issues through analysis and dialogue undertaken with the region's leaders in the academic, government, and corporate arenas. Founded in 1975, it collaborates with a broad network of research institutes from around the Pacific Rim, drawing on Asian perspectives and disseminating project findings and recommendations to opinion leaders, governments, and members of the public throughout the region.

The Young Leaders Program

The Young Leaders Program invites young professionals and graduate students to join Pacific Forum policy dialogues and conferences. The program fosters education in the practical aspects of policy-making, generates an exchange of views between young and seasoned professionals, promotes interaction among younger professionals, and enriches dialogues with generational perspectives for all attendees. Fellows must have a strong background in the area covered by the conference they are attending and an endorsement from respected experts in their field. Supplemental programs in conference host cities and mentoring sessions with senior officials and specialists add to the Young Leader experience. The Young Leaders Program is currently supported by Chevron, the Henry Luce Foundation, and the Yuchengco Group, with a growing number of universities, institutes, and organizations also helping to sponsor individual participants. For more details, see the Pacific Forum CSIS website, www.pacforum.org, or contact Brad Glosserman, director of the Young Leaders Program, at brad@pacforum.org.

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Introduction

The U.S.-Japan security alliance is an integral part of U.S. engagement with Asia, especially in the face of new and diffuse threats, and both Japan and the U.S. state the alliance is central to their national security. However, doubts continue to plague the alliance with each side questioning the other's commitment. To explain these issues the Pacific Forum CSIS, in conjunction with the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency, conducted the U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue from February 8-10, 2009.

A select group of nine U.S. and Japanese Young Leaders joined two dozen security experts and officials to examine key challenges to the alliance. The Young Leaders looked at problems from the perspective of the next generation of security analysts who will inherit these issues. In the following report, the Young Leaders identify what they see as the major challenges to the future of the alliance, and ways in which their views differ from the older generation.

Themes that emerged repeated among the Young Leaders' essays include differences in how sides view the alliance, including a gap in threat perceptions. Two major issues explored were doubts about each partner's commitment, especially Japanese fears of abandonment and the importance of American concern, and the need to more clearly define ambiguous roles in the alliance. Several looked at extended deterrence, and how it factored into the issues explored. Young Leaders noted that unlike senior participants, they were less sensitive to conventional nuclear threats and less likely to think of the alliance's permanence as a given.

As these Young Leaders encourage more creative and forward-thinking policy initiatives, their voices will increasingly contribute to new thinking on regional security matters.

Japan Must Step Up

By Mike Bosack*

In February 2009, the Pacific Forum sponsored the second U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue, affording prominent security thinkers from both Japan and the U.S., as well as members of the Forum's Young Leaders program, the opportunity to discuss the future of the U.S.-Japan alliance and how to overcome present challenges. After the conference, my views of the alliance have not changed, but my understanding of what others perceive to be the most important issues in alliance management has broadened. The conference also highlighted generational differences in ideology on a few issues, particularly the perception of nuclear threat, elements of extended deterrence, permanence of the U.S.-Japan alliance, and future roles of the allied partners.

As evidenced by many discussions, the younger representatives at the conference tended to be more desensitized to conventional nuclear threats. Perhaps it is that young peoples' primary interactions with the notion of nuclear holocaust are through movies, not the news. This relevance of the nuclear threat created a difference in thinking between older and younger participants of the conference. This disparity colored prioritization, and while many of the younger representatives focused on emerging non-nuclear threats, the conference discussed at-length issues including denuclearization, the proper number of nuclear weapons in the U.S. arsenal, and Japan's perspective on nuclear issues. Still, as important as this topic was in the conference, Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), a possible alternative to nuclear weapons in establishing extended deterrence, was relatively undiscussed.

This relative absence of BMD in the extended deterrence debate was surprising. Of course, missile threats were addressed, but BMD represents a significant development in the construction of an extended deterrent. BMD is a relatively new technology that is still being crafted and perfected, and many, even in the defense communities, do not understand its capabilities or potential. Though the technology has not been perfected or battle-tested, the mere probability of its success in countering missile threats contributes significantly to extended deterrence. Still, this program is at risk of ending in both the U.S. and Japan amidst economic crisis and politicians' uncertainty about the BMD program's effectiveness. This should have sparked an important debate at the conference. Instead, the sole American criticism was in response to BMD's role in deterring the nuclear threat: "If we trust solely on interdiction, we have missed 10 opportunities to address this issue." A Japanese responded that the question "Why do we need missile defense?" is a dangerous one given the importance of BMD and the necessity of maintaining the program. Others mentioned missile defense, but while this topic should have been a focus of the conference, it only earned mention, not clarifying analysis.

* *DISCLAIMER: The thoughts and views expressed in this paper are those of the author, and are not necessarily those of the United States (U.S.) Air Force or the U.S. Government.*

Another issue highlighting differences in thinking between older and younger generations was the permanence of the alliance. Many Young Leaders were less inclined to believe that the alliance would remain in a state similar to its current form given the changing global situation. Older representatives however, had witnessed the U.S.-Japan alliance weather many storms and perhaps that gave them more confidence in the alliance's solidarity. It is safe to assume that U.S. and Japanese have a need for each other, but future events may alter the setting, forcing a change in priorities for either nation. Alliance managers must prepare not only for today's issues, but tomorrow's as well. This requires forward thinking and a desire to institute fundamental change in the alliance.

Ultimately, the majority of the discussions regarding the future of the alliance predicted change and prescribed action based on a framework in which the U.S. bears the military burden and Japan bolsters the U.S. economically and politically. One American asked how the aging of Japanese society will affect the alliance. This issue was not pursued. This is one example of divergences in perspective. This could result from the relatively static nature of the alliance since the Korean War. Still, one must only look to the changes made within the Japanese defense sector since the advent of the 21st century to understand how different today's security setting is from that of the Cold War and Gulf War-eras. Changes can no longer be discussed under what is perceived to be the current framework for alliance because the framework itself has been changing. With each step the Japanese have taken in reshaping their defense structure – the upgrade of the Japan Defense Agency to the Ministry of Defense, for one – the roles and responsibilities of the Self-Defense Forces have greater potential for expansion. Additionally, the changing security outlook in East Asia and beyond demands fundamental change in the structure of the alliance.

Foundation of an alliance:

The essential role of military cooperation in the U.S.-Japan security relationship

The U.S. and Japan are at a crossroads. After years of a strengthening relationship under Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro and President George W. Bush, economic crises and disputes over actions and attitudes toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and People's Republic of China (PRC) have exposed weaknesses in this relationship. Additionally, the growing assertiveness of Russia and the Global War on Terror (GWOT) constitute additional challenges. While ideology inhibits political cooperation, strategic posturing and joint-operability of military forces remain the foundations of an alliance; therefore, the greatest immediate threat to the U.S.-Japan security relationship is failure to improve in these areas as the security setting evolves.

For decades, the U.S. has shouldered the load in the alliance in providing a security umbrella for the Japanese. Though Japan has made efforts to restructure its Self-Defense Forces, its ability to reach parity in military operations with the U.S. has been limited by the war renunciation clause of its constitution. Still, as tensions mount with continued DPRK saber-rattling and the growing power of the PRC's military, it is increasingly important for the two countries to foster military cooperation. However economic crises in both countries have lead to the inclination to reduce military spending which could lead to a cessation of some of these activities. At the greatest risk is the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) program.

Both the U.S. and Japan have invested billions of dollars in developing this technology. In many ways, the reshaping of the U.S.-Japan alliance has centered on the BMD program, as it requires a level of joint-operability never before achieved between the two nations. It also plays a significant role within the extended deterrence and collective security debates. Maintaining the BMD program should be a top priority for both governments, as it indicates a mutual respect for a potential DPRK and/or PRC missile threat, strengthens joint-operability, contributes to extended deterrence, and bolsters the effectiveness of the U.S.-Japan alliance in the Asia-Pacific region.

Additionally, the Japanese cannot retreat from the recent trend of accepting greater parity in overseas operations. The U.S. has urged Japan to take an international military role commensurate with its economic power, in part to support U.S. operations overseas. Though constitutional issues will be obstacles to progress, it is important that Japan remain amenable to U.S. strategic needs in efforts to maintain greater parity in the alliance. The most important aspect of this parity is collective self-defense, something the Japanese will have to adopt if the alliance is to make any lasting fundamental change.

The U.S. and Japan must bolster this relationship in spite of domestic troubles, and can do so by capitalizing on threats. The North Korean threat has prompted the GOJ to ramp up its defense program and can help restructure roles and responsibilities within the U.S.-Japan alliance. When DPRK saber-rattling began in the mid-1990s, many factions within the Diet's ruling party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and JSDF relished this opportunity to reconstitute and reshape Japan's defense forces. The U.S. and Japan can continue adapting their roles and responsibilities to oppose the current North Korean threat, primarily through the use of extended deterrence.

Extended deterrence is a key idea and encompasses many different elements along the PMESII (Political, Military, Economic, Information, and Infrastructure) spectrum, as well as incorporating both nuclear and conventional arms. The newest addition to extended deterrence has been the BMD program, which represents a linchpin for change in the U.S.-Japan security relationship. The BMD shield is a major step toward providing greater defense against external threats, and as a purely defensive measure to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Japan against missile attacks, it situates itself nicely within Japan's self-defense oriented defense policy while encouraging greater interoperability with the U.S. Through BMD, the U.S. and Japan have a joint venture where generals, politicians, engineers, mechanics, technicians, soldiers, airmen, and sailors work closely in developing technology, building the armament, and training for and utilizing the missile defense assets. It will also require a greater amount of information and intelligence sharing, invariably leading to better information assurance between the two countries and stronger ties between the respective intelligence communities. Most importantly, BMD provides a potential foot-in-the-door for Japan's acceptance of collective self-defense.

A significant question that has re-emerged with North Korean missile threats and development of the BMD shield is collective self-defense. If the North Koreans fire a missile at the U.S., would Japan be able to shoot it down? Under Article VII of the UN Charter, Japan has the right to collective self-defense. The Japanese interpretation of their constitution, however, is that Japan acknowledges this right, but cannot exercise it under

Article IX of its constitution. Under these conditions, the Japanese would not be able to shoot down the missile. While the Japanese populace and GOJ may not be comfortable with the idea of JSDF soldiers fighting in the defense of U.S. troops on the battlefield, they are likely to be more amenable to the idea of destroying a missile in support of their ally. Adoption of a policy that allows for Japan to utilize its BMD assets to defend the U.S. from missile attack is an important step toward adopting collective self-defense for other situations.

In the meantime, military cooperation in combat still remains a large question for the U.S. and Japan, who have also attempted to move the alliance forward under the framework of the GWOT (not without difficulty). The deployment of GSDF troops to Samawah was a significant gesture by the Japanese, but it was not enough to create lasting precedent. The problem with attempting to restructure roles and responsibilities through involvement in the GWOT is that there is not enough Japanese social, political, or economic investment in the outcome of the war. As the U.S. winds down in Iraq and prepares to step up operations in Afghanistan, there is again talk of Japanese deployment of troops in support of its alliance partner. One American at the Maui conference asserted that Japan must define what it can and cannot do in Afghanistan. A Japanese speaker noted that he would like to see 500 GSDF troops operating in Afghanistan. Another American retorted that in the challenging security environment within the Afghani war zone, a Japanese force with limiting rules of engagement (ROEs) and inability to exercise collective self-defense will be more of a bane than a boon to the security relationship. As the GWOT continues to shift focus to Afghanistan, these debates will become more intense.

In spite of their difficulties in moving the alliance forward within the GWOT, the Japanese should still accept a role in the war, but in the realms of transport and other support operations. This runs contrary to the beliefs of many participants at the Maui conference, but the alliance managers have a choice between investing their efforts in the tumultuous combat zones of Afghanistan, or attempting to foster lasting progress in the U.S.-Japan security relationship by other means. There is too much uncertainty in the fog and friction of war, and the inability to exercise the right of collective self-defense combined with the limiting ROEs typically set upon the JSDF compound the dangers of deploying Japanese troops to Afghanistan. Japan has already put 'boots on the ground' in one front of the GWOT, and if the war garnered more popular and international support, the risk to Japanese troops in Afghanistan might be acceptable. As it stands, the marginal benefits of such an action are far outweighed by the cost to the alliance and JSDF if the operation is a failure. Instead, by accepting roles in support operations, the JSDF can immediately provide a significant service in the prosecution of the GWOT while showing their willingness to take part in coalition activities internationally. Additionally, it provides a valuable service to a U.S. military already stretched thin. With this, the Japanese will be able to foster greater military cooperation and accept a greater role in support of the U.S. military as an allied partner.

Military cooperation is fundamental to the future of the U.S.-Japan alliance. The advent of the new millennium has brought significant change to the world's security setting; to meet new challenges and maintain the strong relationship they currently enjoy, the U.S. and Japan must restructure their alliance. This means Japanese acceptance of collective self-defense, increased joint-operability, and a redefinition of roles and responsibilities for the allied partners. These are daunting goals, but achievable through greater cooperation in

extended deterrence, continued commitment to BMD, and joint-operations overseas that attempt to foster rather than force progress in the relationship. Failure to adapt to the changing security setting does not necessarily mean the alliance will falter, but it does presage a missed opportunity for the U.S. and Japan to create an alliance prepared to meet all of the challenges of the 21st century.

Closing the Perception Gap

By Catherine Boye

The U.S.-Japan alliance was designed to counter the threat posed by a great power. After the fall of the Soviet Union the alliance suffered an identity crisis like most alliances and regional international organizations after either their founding state or adversary suddenly disappeared. At “The End of History” who could justify spending massive amounts of money to maintain an alliance that no longer seemed needed? The alliance wavered. Then, as the 1990s progressed, East Asia became less peaceful. Elections in Taiwan pushed cross-strait relations into dangerous territory, North Korea launched a missile into the Sea of Japan, and the Asian Financial Crisis weakened the financial and political stability of a region. The U.S.-Japan alliance was solidified and evolved into a quicker, more flexible institution. Japan after years of facing only a theoretical threat from the Soviet Union was now facing an unstable and very real threat from North Korea. Continual brinkmanship and the vituperative rhetoric of the North Korean regime constituted a serious threat to the Japanese homeland. Worse, as the North Korean threat grew, with more missile tests and later a nuclear test, the United States’ attention was distracted from Asia.

Drawn by the horrendous attacks on the World Trade Center, the United States plunged deeper into the volatile world of Middle Eastern politics with disastrous consequences. First Afghanistan and later in Iraq, the United States became embroiled in a world of tenuous alliances and fading friendships as it fought terrorism and radical Islam.

Due to the unique nature of the U.S.-Japan alliance, Japan was not compelled to provide military aid to the United States and its allies. Yet Japan was worried the U.S. wasn’t paying sufficient attention to Japanese concerns. Perhaps the U.S. while busy in the Middle East would decide that a nuclear but non-proliferating North Korea was acceptable. Japan passed laws allowing it to help NATO in Afghanistan through refueling projects in the Indian Ocean, and later passed more laws to allow the SDF to help in Iraq with civil reconstruction projects. These projects were meant, in part, to cement the role of Japan as a solid U.S. ally in areas outside of Asia as well as well as remind the U.S. of the contribution of an important ally.

Japan has been feeling overlooked by its ally. Since the end of the Cold War Japan has suffered from one of the ever-present fears in any alliance: abandonment. Japan’s military is understaffed and underfunded. Since the end of World War II, Japan has followed the Yoshida Doctrine which advocates economic growth over all else and the farming out of defense matters to the U.S. In addition to the Yoshida Doctrine, Japan’s defense aspirations are restrained by its Peace Constitution, in particular Article IX which states that Japan is not allowed to maintain any land, sea, air or other war potential. Article IX has been interpreted to allow for a Self-Defense Force (SDF) but the SDF is small and not particularly well funded, trained, or staffed. The SDF also has many limitations on how and where it can be used. Overall, Japan has relied on the U.S. for its security, especially the U.S. extended deterrent.

The perception of American concern for Japan is central to the reliability of the U.S. extended deterrent. Japan has pinned its security strategy on the promise of American protection. Refusal to change Article IX and develop a normal military means that without the U.S. extended deterrent, Japan is vulnerable.

Japanese perceptions of U.S. attentiveness are vital to extended deterrence because deterrence is a psychological phenomenon. Extended deterrence requires all members of the security equation to be confident in the deterrent for it to be used effectively. Japanese fears that the U.S. attention is fading could lead to doubt about the U.S. extended deterrent which could cause deterrence to fail.

If Japan starts doubting the effectiveness of the U.S. deterrent or believes that the U.S. is not sufficiently concerned with Japanese security interest, then it is likely that the alliance will be put in jeopardy. As the security goals of the U.S. and Japan diverge, Japan will be frustrated by its inability to protect itself. If Japan believes that the U.S. concentration on Japan and Asia is waning and Japan faces what it perceives as greater threats, it is likely that Japan will seek the means to protect itself on its own. In the short term, this is likely to take the form of the development of offensive strike capabilities. In the long term, it is possible that Japan could either find another ally or embrace neutrality in international relations. Either of these options would be devastating to the alliance and to U.S. strategy in Asia. In the latter two cases, the alliance would dissolve while the first would put a tremendous strain upon the alliance both diplomatically and militarily.

Japanese offensive strike capabilities would have a profound effect on U.S.-Japan relations. The alliance is fashioned to protect the Japanese from being entangled in U.S. wars. Japan does not need to come to the aid of the U.S. if the U.S. is attacked but the U.S. must come to Japan's aid if it is. This arrangement worked well as long as Japan did not have the ability to strike another country. If Japan acquires offensive strike capability it greatly limits U.S. options in a crisis. Japan would have the ability to force the U.S.'s hand. Japan could not need to acquire the ability to win a war but only to start one.

While most countries will be nonplussed by the idea of a 'normal' Japan; this development could push an unpredictable region into dangerous territory. North Korea would understand that the offensive capabilities are aimed at it and could react dangerously. A remilitarized Japan would stir up remembrances of the expansionist Japan of World War II in China and South Korea. South Korea would be worried about Japan slipping the U.S. yoke and might work to match Japanese capabilities, possibly triggering an arms race. Japan would likely suffer a diplomatic blow around the world. It would damage Japanese hopes for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council and undermine Japan's soft power reserves, especially in Southeast Asia.

If Japan perceives the U.S. is apathetic about Asian issues and Japanese concerns, it may seek to create its own diplomatic strategies in Asia. If these policies conflict with U.S. policies it could create chaos and bad feelings in the alliance. This has already happened with North Korea. In 2008, the U.S. agreed to remove North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. Japan was angry that the U.S. had done this despite Japanese protests over a

lack of resolution on the abductions issue. This split has Japan wondering if it should go about working on the abduction issue in a different way, perhaps outside of the Six-Party Talks. This would be injudicious, as the Six-Party talks are vital to dealing with the North Korean problem. A fracturing of the group could allow North Korea to play each party off the others as it did before. While not a disastrous scenario, it would make the North Korean problem more difficult.

Working together is even more important when dealing with China. When dealing with the Soviet Union both the United States and Japan agreed on a policy: containment. Presented with a rising great power, there is no consensus on how to deal with it. Do we contain, engage, or some combination of the two. If a combination, then how much containment and how much engagement? Can the United States and Japan shape China's rise? If so what is the best way to shape it and what is the shape we are trying to create. None of these questions are easy or have simple solutions. Answering them is made even harder by political instability in Tokyo and the current U.S. focus on the Middle East. Nonetheless, the U.S. and Japan need to work together to secure a peaceful Asian region

The greatest threat remains the perception in Japan that the United States is apathetic to Japanese security concerns. This perception can lead to a lack of confidence in the deterrent, a public less tolerant of the costs of the alliance, and diverging views of the best way to accomplish each country's security goals. The United States should convince Japan of its understanding of, and the importance of, Japanese security concerns. The trip to Japan by Secretary Clinton at the beginning of 2009 was a good start. Japan should do more to inform the United States of its concerns and areas it feels it can help the U.S. or needs help from the U.S. The alliance is not about to dissolve, but like cracks in a dam, the doubts and fears could lead to a collapse.

From the dialogue

During the dialogue a U.S. presenter spoke about the effects the economic crisis would have on the security and the U.S.-Japan alliance. Money is always important and budget feuds are a frequent problem. Recently, large amounts of money have been put aside for the U.S. force relocation to Guam. With both the U.S. and Japan now desperate to fix their flagging economies this money might be used for other projects. Both governments need patience to understand the fiscal strain that each is suffering under and act accordingly. Without patience and understanding this could lead to greater stress on the already fragile alliance.

A Japanese presenter highlighted an important non-fiscal effect of the financial crisis: nationalism in East Asia. The trend was most clearly seen in China but it can also be found in South Korea and Japan. He feared that this trend would be exacerbated by the use of nationalistic rhetoric by governments in an attempt to unite the country in the face of harsh economic times. 19th and 20th century European history demonstrate the perils of a combination of unforgiving economic times and nationalism.

This trend towards nationalism is especially worrying in China. The CCP has long used economic growth and nationalism as to boost its legitimacy. If China's economy remains dim and the country cannot spur enough domestic consumption, the CCP might resort to increased nationalism to maintain their hold on power. Japan and the U.S. must watch the situation closely and, if necessary, work to prevent a resurgence of extreme Chinese nationalism.

In times of economic hardship countries often become more protectionist and nationalistic. The United States also has its own history of becoming isolationist when facing economic challenges. The United States will be especially susceptible to this urge in the next several years. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have left many Americans with a dislike for foreign exploits. Combine this new dislike with an economic depression and there is a chance that the U.S. will attempt to retreat behind the safety of its oceans to lick its wounds. Even if the alliance remains in place, removing much of the American influence from Asia would be destabilizing. This would further fears in both Japan and South Korea of U.S. abandonment.

Generational differences

International relations theory says that a bi-polar world is one of the most stable forms of world orders. During the Cold War, the U.S.-Japan alliance and the Soviet Union were like wrestlers leaning against each other trying to gain an edge. While small blips occurred when one opponent tried something, overall the situation was stable for 30 plus years. In 1991, the Soviet Union disintegrated and like the wrestler whose opponent suddenly disappears the U.S.-Japan alliance stumbled. I like many other Young Leaders, am too young to remember the 1980s or the stability of the U.S.-Japan alliance. I have only known a time when the alliance's future was uncertain and therefore to me the uncertainty and fragility of the alliance seem natural.

The presentations and discussions covered a variety of important and pressing topics yet there were two issues that should have received more attention: outer space and cyberspace. The U.S. extended deterrent relies on satellites for intelligence, communication, and targeting. If an adversary is capable of destroying or disabling some or all of these satellites the U.S. extended deterrent would be greatly hampered. Attacks from cyberspace are now a reality and have been used against both Georgia and Estonia by groups allegedly under the control of Moscow. The U.S. and Japan are on the cutting edge of the technology curve and could do much to advance the fields of space and cyberspace through cooperation. These fields have an added bonus, work in these areas is entirely defensive in nature and thus would not require constitutional revision or defense policy changes on the part of the Japanese to participate.

Threat to the U.S.-Japan Alliance

By Taro Hayashi

The most important threat to the U.S.-Japan alliance is the ambiguous definition of both countries' roles in the alliance and the consequent erosion of trust in the alliance. The failure of the U.S. and Japan to define their roles in extended nuclear deterrence is an example of this.

The conference strengthened my thinking. Throughout the conference we pondered the following questions; what Japan can / should do to cooperate with the U.S.? ; What the U.S. should request of Japan? How will the U.S. meet its commitment to defend Japan? These questions focus on defining the roles that the U.S. and Japan are supposed to play in their relationship. If left unanswered, these questions can lead to an erosion of trust in the face of urgent issues.

For example, discussion of operations in Afghanistan provided an example of the ambiguous definition of both countries' roles and the possible erosion of trust. One U.S. participant pointed out that Japan should clarify what it can do in advance because U.S. officers are tired of negotiating with NATO allies over the division of roles and had suspicions about allies' willingness to cooperate with the U.S. A Japanese participant added that the U.S. should define the expected role of Japan in Afghanistan. The wider range of capabilities and intentions could create discontent if the U.S. and its allies fail to define their roles before getting in conflict situations. When applied to the U.S.-Japan alliance, this understanding means the ambiguous definition of the roles of the U.S. and Japan in the alliance will lead to the erosion of trust given the threats to both countries and the huge gaps between the countries, especially regarding intentions.

The discussions of Afghanistan provided a stark comparison between the U.S.-Japan alliance and NATO. NATO countries were worried about the credibility of the U.S. commitment to the defense of Europe throughout the Cold War; they have experience negotiating with the U.S. and making it understand their interests and the limits of cooperation. In contrast, because the Soviet and Chinese threats against Japan were not as serious as the Soviet threats to Europe, Japan did not have to negotiate with the U.S. about such issues as how the U.S. nuclear umbrella and the Japan Self-Defense Forces would be connected.

Now that Japan faces more urgent threats than Europe, this lack of negotiating experience and in defining the roles of the U.S. and Japan are likely to emerge as a real problem. Nevertheless, this gap between NATO countries and Japan seems to keep expanding. As seen in Afghanistan, European countries have continued to reflect their visions of the alliance and to define their roles in that alliance. If this tendency continues, the erosion of trust in the U.S.-Japan alliance and the consolidation of the trust in NATO will show an even sharper contrast, which could lead to less U.S. emphasis on Japan and consequent Japanese distrust of the U.S.

To be sure, the U.S.-Japan alliances and other alliances (e.g. NATO) are not mutually exclusive. For example, the consolidation of trust in other U.S. alliances does not necessarily mean a decrease in the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance. There could be unintended conflicts of interests between alliances, however. A Japanese participant pointed out, the U.S. may have to consider possible conflicts of interests of Japan and the European countries with regard to Missile Defense (MD). If the U.S. delays or reduces the size of the MD project in face of Russian pressure on European countries, Japan would be vulnerable to similar pressure from China. In such a case, the trust in each alliance matters.

Although Japan's self-marginalization was intensively discussed, this was done in the context of Japanese cooperation with the U.S. However, the marginalization of Japan could also be caused by the ambiguous definition of both countries' roles in the alliance and the consequent erosion of trust (In this respect, the marginalization of Japan, rather than self-marginalization, is more appropriate). In other words, not only expanding Japan's role in the alliance (if that is the suggested solution to self-marginalization) but also defining the roles of both countries is crucial to avoid marginalization.

Extended deterrence and the most important threat to the U.S.-Japan alliance

Extended deterrence is the essence of the U.S.-Japan alliance. If suspicion on this issue arises, its impact on trust would be much more serious than suspicion caused by disputing roles in operations in Afghanistan. Extended nuclear deterrence has a special importance in the alliance since Japan cannot allow the U.S. to trade deterrence with other U.S. interests. In addition, because extended deterrence has psychological aspects, the perception of reliability between the U.S. and Japan could easily diverge.

To avoid these problems, it is important for the U.S. and Japan to clarify their roles in U.S. extended deterrence, especially in the year of the drafting of the new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review. The U.S. government should reveal the process of policymaking and explain its ideas about extended deterrence. Also, the U.S. should explain the policy review's possible effect on Japan's defense policy and request its opinions. If the U.S. fails to do this and changes its thinking about extended deterrence, the psychological divergence between Japan and the U.S. regarding reliability will expand because Japan anticipates that the U.S. will consult with Japan more actively compared to the last Nuclear Posture Review. At the same time, the Japanese government should seize every opportunity to clarify its opinion about the policy review and affect it. Japan should regard the policy review not only as an object of analysis of U.S. nuclear policy but also as part of the assumptions on which Japanese defense policies will be based. If the U.S. succeeds in explaining its nuclear policy in terms of the defense of Japan and the Japanese government succeeds in realizing its position in the new Nuclear Posture Review, this will clarify the roles of the U.S. and Japan in the alliance.

Generational gap seen in the conference

The generational gap among participants was smaller than expected. Rather, the differences were evident among careers. Especially among Japanese participants, there are

significant differences in opinions between practitioners and scholars; among U.S. participants this difference seemed smaller. Therefore, the generational gap should not be over-emphasized compared to gaps resulting from other factors.

There were some generational gaps. The biggest gap conceived Japan's self-marginalization. As one Japanese participant pointed out, Japanese feel that the U.S. should acknowledge Japan's increased cooperation with the U.S. and international society rather than requiring more contributions. Because Japan has expanded its efforts to contribute to the international security environment, especially since the end of the Cold War, younger Japanese have witnessed these efforts as contemporary events. As a result, the feeling that Japan deserves more recognition seems much stronger among the younger generation. On the other hand, because older Japanese witnessed how Japan restricted its role in the Cold War era, they tend to accept U.S. requests. This tendency was apparent as younger Japanese emphasized the current expanded Japanese contribution while older Japanese mentioned the former condition and the process of Japan's expanding role. As a result of the difference in feelings, the argument about self-marginalization is accepted more easily by older generations (who know Japan's past restrictions and consider Japan's current effort insufficient to satisfy the U.S.) than the younger generations (which consider Japan's effort and sees no reason to be blamed for marginalization).

The generation gap on the U.S. side was evident in the discussion about Afghanistan. For younger American participants, the U.S. effort in the war on terror is their first experience with U.S. involvement in war activities (or the second experience, if the Gulf War is included) and they regard the threat of terrorism as global. As a result, the younger generation tends to want other countries to actively participate in the U.S.-led effort to fight terrorism worldwide. In the case of the U.S.-Japan alliance, the younger generation tends to request that Japan expand its contribution to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, including deployment of the Self-Defense Forces. On the other hand, because the older generation witnessed the Vietnam War and the Cold War, they think of war in relation to other political factors. They emphasize the difficulty in organizing multilateral efforts rather than the necessity of such efforts. Also, they point out the troubles that such multilateral efforts might create for the U.S. As a result, the older generation seems more willing to accept other countries' cooperation in their own way.

All in all, the generational gap seems evident in how issues are framed rather than opinions about the issues themselves.

Other thoughts regarding the conference

It is important for U.S. and Japanese participants to understand each other's policies in a strategic sense. They need not only to listen to each other's thoughts, but also try to explain and understand the underlying factors behind such policies, such as their positions, assumptions, and the progress so far. We need greater understanding of each other's thoughts. I was pleased to hear Japanese argue that, in considering what to request of Japan, the U.S. needs to understand how the Japanese evaluated their country's achievements in the last decade.

Japan's Agenda for the Future U.S.-Japan Alliance

By Aki Mori

Today, nation states must respond to both “new” and traditional threats to protect their people and prosperity. These diversified threats and approaches have generated new challenges for the U.S.-Japan alliance, which is designed to protect Japan and deter an attack. The alliance must now deal with a traditional security agenda, maintain silent but steady deterrence toward North Korea, and a possible military challenge by China, which has been modernizing military capabilities.

Yet, it is not enough. The U.S.-Japan alliance faces another basic question: how can the alliance deal with “new threats” that destabilize regional and global security? “New threats” can’t be effectively handled without international cooperation. This offers an important opportunity to shift from a bilateral military alliance to a platform of international cooperation to meet “new threats.”

In other words, there are two agendas for the U.S.-Japan alliance: to maintain steady deterrence and to become a platform for international cooperation. These two agendas might seem inconsistent, but they complement each other. International cooperation to meet “new threats” will increase joint action and mutual understanding among states, and will likely contribute to stabilization of inter-state relations. Fostering functional cooperation in military operations other than war with the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is a vital task for regional and global security.

To achieve the twin goals conviction is key. Japanese and U.S. officials have to explain their future vision of the alliance to their publics and their friends. Broader support for the U.S.-Japan alliance is critical to international stability as the balance of power shifts and in East Asia where a security dilemma is possible. Ceaseless effort on both sides is needed.

Japan's an alliance killer?

The biggest obstacle to the realization of these goals might be Japan. Two dozen security experts and officials (with their private capacities, along with nine Young Leaders from the two countries met in Maui to discuss dynamics of the U.S.-Japan alliance. Significantly, both Japanese and U.S. participants insisted that Japan cannot use the political chaos in Tokyo as an excuse for inaction. Participants from both countries are concerned about a gap arising from Japan’s domestic situation and an international environment in transition.

Japan must make greater efforts to get sustainable support for the U.S.-Japan alliance from the U.S. public. The immediate reason for this is the absence of political stability in Tokyo after the Koizumi administration. Prime Ministers have suffered from a “divided Diet” since the July 2007 election: the ruling parties hold a majority in the Lower House, while opposition parties hold a majority in the Upper House. Decision making is paralyzed.

Under these circumstances, relocation of the Futenma airport, the most important task for the U.S.-Japan alliance, is a big U.S. concern and demonstrates Japanese readiness (and ability) to pay its share of costs of the alliance and force relocation.

Japanese political and media discourse about Japan-U.S. relations in the Obama administration has been naïve. We often hear “the Obama administration will strengthen strategic relations with China, and downplay relations with Japan.” Delaying a decision to share costs of the alliance and a naïve discourse about U.S.-China policy may raise questions about Japan’s ability to be an alliance partner.

In our strategic dialogue, some U.S. participants were concerned that Japan seems increasingly wary about political sensitivities surrounding discussion of extended deterrence, blaming the political turmoil in Tokyo. America is concerned that Japan is too slow to deal with international issues. Sending vessels to protect the sea lanes of communication from pirates off the coast of Somalia is a good example. When asked if the dispatch of PLA Navy vessels to the coalition influenced thinking in Tokyo, Japanese denied that the Chinese move forced Japan’s hand: discussions had been underway for months. This might be true. Yet, given that stability of sea lanes of communication and security of Japanese merchant ships have been threatened, Japan’s response was slow. A Japanese military expert was concerned that Japanese appears reluctant to make contributions to international security; Japan should push for more strategic international engagement, even in politically hard times.

Embedded “dependence” on the United States

Lack of understanding about Japan’s diplomacy and the role in the U.S. of the U.S.-Japan alliance among Japanese have created uncertainty about Japan. Both social democrats and nationalists in Japan criticized Japan’s diplomacy and security policy after World War II for having “lost independence.” This complaint is rooted in the Yoshida Doctrine, the strategic choices made by Shigeru Yoshida, prime minister during the U.S. occupation of Japan, which opted for a “lightly armed, economic-centric Japan, weighted heavily to the U.S.-Japan alliance.” Yoshida’s choices became the foundation of Japan’s postwar security policy. It has two pillars: the peace constitution and the U.S.-Japan security treaty. The Yoshida Doctrine embedded structural “dependence” of Japan on the United States, though Yoshida’s choices were realistic during occupation. This led to challenges from nationalists in Japan – on both left and right – that criticized the lack of “autonomy,” and this is still debated.

As a Japanese participant warned in Maui, debating extended deterrence publicly remains risky in Japan, and doing so might derail or sidetrack discussions of more immediate concern. In this regard, Japan’s policymakers have managed the risk of politicization by avoiding open debate on extended deterrence.

Yet, this creates two considerable problems. First, the structure of “dependence” on the United States has stimulated Japanese nationalism, yet choices made during occupation were elevated to the Yoshida Doctrine as a national strategy. Therefore, Japan’s moderate postwar diplomacy is challenged by nationalists to vent frustration as well as recover a sense

of pride. For example, a Japanese participant noted that some Japanese politicians and public are frustrated at Tokyo's inability to punish North Korea on its own and its reliance on Washington. When they challenge Japanese officials on the abductee issue, they often insist that Japanese diplomacy lacks "autonomy."

Second, as a result of the reluctance of Japanese politicians to publicly explain extended deterrence, security issues are debated among a small circle of Japanese experts and the Japanese media and public remain unready to accept the reality of extended deterrence. Moreover, this encourages inward-looking voices in Japan that lack a well-balanced view about the crucial linkage between military and diplomacy, though this is required for Japan to contribute to regional and global stability.

Frustrated nationalists and an attempt to escape the reality of international society have destabilized Japanese thinking about foreign relations. Unresolved historical issues reflect this set of contradictions.

What Japanese must understand about history

In Japan, nationalist claims about historical issues continue. Tamogami Toshio, former Chief of Staff of the Air Self-Defense Force, questioned whether Japan "invaded" other states. Tamogami insisted that Imperial Japan deployed armed forces in Asia based on international treaties like other major powers. However, this assertion was interpreted as a challenge to the official statement by former Prime Minister Murayama Tomi-ichi in 1995 that expressed "feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology." At the end of October 2008, Defense Minister Hamada replaced Tamogami as Chief of Staff of the ASDF, and Tamogami was forced to retire.

Some Japanese newspapers criticized Tamogami's explanation and argued the Ministry of Defense lacks civilian control. The real problem was that Japanese politics haven't answered to the contradiction arising from the embedded "dependence" of the Yoshida Line that has stimulated nationalism in Japan. Soeya Yoshihide, a leading scholar in Japan, pointed out that Japan must not simply criticize Japan's "dependence" on the U.S. but develop a mature strategy.

Now look at U.S. House Resolution 121. The resolution urged Japan to "formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as 'comfort women,' during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II."

In 1993, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei made an official statement on the issue of "comfort women." Kono officially said "the Government of Japan would like to take this opportunity once again to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women." In 1995, the Asian Women's Fund (the AWF) was established based on Kono's statement. The AWF delivered a letter from the Japanese prime minister

expressing his apology and “atonement money” to 285 women in South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines and to 79 women in Holland. The AWF closed in March 2007.

Nationalists urged Japan to break out from “the postwar regime” under former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, and this challenged the Kono statement. On March 2007, politicians in the Liberal Democratic Party insisted that the Japanese government should correct the Kono statement “based on the historical evidence,” because “Japan didn’t officially enforce women to become comfort women.” At a meeting with journalists, Abe mentioned “the remarkable fact is that we couldn’t find the evidence of ‘officially enforcing’ women to be ‘comfort women.’”

Media in other countries reported that Abe intended to correct the Kono statement. Abe’s explanation and clear statement to maintain the Kono statement quieted criticism. However, on June 14, 2007, some Japanese politicians and journalists published a letter in the *Washington Post* saying there was no official involvement in the comfort women process. This editorial triggered stronger criticism of Japan on the issue of comfort women, and invited HR 121.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* objected sharply saying HR121 was based on “complete misunderstanding,” and insisted that Japan should offer counter arguments to ensure the “wrong” understanding of history does not spread. Yet, in the case of the Tamogami paper, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* criticized him as follows: “rethinking of history itself should not be prevented, but this is the business of historians.” There is an unanswered question. Why should Japan object to HR121, and not support Tamogami’s paper?

Japanese reaction to HR121 and the Tamogami paper originated from the same mindset, and made the same critical mistake. Some in Japan assert their beliefs without consideration of the international environment and global perspectives on Japan. Some parts of their beliefs might be true. Yet, what Japanese must understand is that how others recognize Japan is vital to protecting national interests and is sometimes more than “truth” or the “actual situation” of Japan. If Japanese remain unconscious about this, it could spread a negative image of Japan that is never “repentant.” This could undermine America’s trust in Japan, and bring about the end of the U.S.-Japan alliance. Togo Kazuhiko, a retired diplomat, described H.R. 121 as an honorable defeat of Japanese nationalism by international society.

Japan has lost understanding and support from international society on historical issues. As a Japanese participant insisted in Maui, “Japan has to understand its national interests and what is required to protect them.” This is especially true when it comes to historical issues. Japanese has to seriously consider that too inward-looking a mindset could lead to insecurity. To lead the Japanese public beyond inward-looking nationalism, Japan must become more persuasive. This is key to the future of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Positive signals in Japan for the future alliance

There are some positive signals in Japan. For example, the Japanese public is increasingly mature about international security. The Cabinet Office conducts an annual

survey of Japanese opinions asking, “How do you think about the Japanese role in international society?” In October 2008, 66.5 percent answered that Japan should play a leading role in global issues like climate change. This was an increase of 26.3 percent compared with 1998. In 2008, 51.8 percent insisted that Japan should contribute to global efforts such as peaceful resolution of regional conflicts, arms control, and nonproliferation; this showed increased support of 11.8 percent over 10 years. The Japanese public strongly supports Japan’s contribution on global issues and international security. Action by the Japanese government on international society is a responsibility accepted by the Japanese public.

There was an interesting generation gap in Maui. When the chairman asked experts and Young Leaders from Japan and the United States to describe a future agenda for the alliance, U.S. experts and Young Leaders from both countries ranked regional issues first, then global and bilateral issues. Answers by Japanese experts were different – a much higher percentage put top priority on global issues. This implies a strong willingness of Japanese experts to act on global security. This will work as a significant built-in stabilizer to push Japanese international engagement.

A Crisis of the Mind?

By Wakana Mukai

“Is the alliance ‘still’ in crisis?” The question whether the U.S.-Japan security alliance is in crisis remains on the table, especially for the security community. But is the alliance really in crisis? I consider five perspectives. The five emerged from the conference (the second U.S.-Japan security dialogue) and seemed different to the thinking of younger generations. I point out the ideas that were shared between the senior participants and briefly examine them in relation to the grand question embedded in this paper.

Threat perception-based policy

One of the shared notions among senior participants at the conference was the idea that “threat” was explicitly present and policies should be considered based on those threat perceptions. A threat-based analysis is inevitable in considering security policies from a strategic point of view. But, the notion that threat exists dominates the security community.

Moreover, this threat perception seems to be directed singularly at China. The DPRK with its newly established position as a possessor of nuclear weapons might be seen as a threat from a certain community within Japan: however, the larger problem for Japan regarding the DPRK remains the abductees issue. The argument that China has existed (and will in the future) as a military threat to Japan is not enough, however, to justify the threat-based analysis. The Northeast Asian region contains another large nuclear weapon state, Russia, which has possessed nuclear weapons for longer and has a larger arsenal than China. Nonetheless, the focus has always been on China: hence, linking China to nuclear which links to threat is not a logical way of thinking. Thus, threat-based analysis, linking the threat specifically to China, is premature.

Vague definition and expanding expectance of deterrence

When discussing the deterrence system, arguments are formed around an estimation of what the United States would do if Japan were attacked. This mindset is unhealthy since deterrence itself is a means to prevent those attacks. The notion that a certain threat (here presumed to be China) exists, and considering specific countermeasures the U.S.-Japan alliance would take is crucial from a security point of view, but if this perception starts to dominate thinking of policy makers, then, the whole concept of deterrence would become a strategy of retaliation. Moreover, this situation indicates that the two sides are already considering situations in which the U.S. nuclear deterrent has broken down, which implicitly shows that the two sides are suspicious of the system itself. This is not healthy for the alliance.

More important is the fact that there has been no attack on Japanese soil since World War II. The U.S. nuclear deterrent has been successful. However, one can at the same time question whether this deterrent was the result of the United States: was the nuclear umbrella

really efficient, or does it owe more to Japan? There are no specific answers to this question, but this point should be kept in mind.

Another example of “old thinking” among senior participants was the idea that the nuclear umbrella is a necessity when regarding the United States’ deterrent vis-à-vis Japan. The deterrence system has always been about nuclear deterrence. For example, according to the 1976 National Defense Program Outline by the National Security Council, “(a)gainst a nuclear threat Japan will rely on the nuclear deterrent capability for the United States.” This indicates the precise role the two countries played (and are still thought to play) regarding the U.S.-Japan security alliance: nuclear issues are a matter of the United States, and the rest are a matter for Japan. This line allowed the two countries to pursue their positions, but at the same time, made Japan dependent on the United States. Is the nuclear umbrella there because the Japanese consider it to be there, or would the United States really move toward “defending” Japan? The question remains unanswered. The nuclear deterrent provided by the United States cannot be examined physically, and therefore, as one Japanese participant clearly indicated, it is a matter of psychology: if Japan believes it is protected by the United States’ nuclear umbrella, then, the deterrence system is alive. In short, this is a win-win situation for both countries.

Lack of understanding regarding the public

When considering security issues from a Japanese point of view, there is always the question of public sentiment, on nuclear issues as well as the military in general. There is always the question of whether public sentiment in Japan is suspicious of the U.S.-Japan security alliance or nuclear weapons. One senior Japanese participant strongly pointed out public sentiment in Japan embraces both. However, I argue that Japanese public sentiment is, and has always been, focused on the nuclear issue. In fact, contrary to senior Japanese participants, one can argue that the U.S. nuclear deterrent based on the U.S.-Japan security alliance is a given in Japan. This is because Japan has a strong longing for peace; a distorted perception, though, that somehow the U.S.-Japan alliance system which includes nuclear deterrence brings peace. As long as Japan is kept secure by the “protection” provided by the United States, the Japanese people are satisfied. This also explains the fact that no precise suspicion of the U.S.-Japan security alliance exists among the general public, but is evident in the security community.

This also explains why whenever the issue of building a nuclear capability in Japan is raised, politicians that support this option face severe censure. Yet there are steady calls to reinforce the U.S.-Japan security alliance.

Belief in cooperation

There seem to be a strong belief, especially among senior U.S. participants, that Japan would maintain the U.S.-Japan security alliance in any circumstance. To be blind to Japan’s options is dangerous. There are active discussions about the fact that Japan cannot increase its military forces since the expense would be too large (500 percent is one estimate) However, it is puzzling that there are no thoughts that Japan might pursue the path of

“neutrality,” as seen in Switzerland. It is taken as a given when considering the U.S.-Japan alliance that Japan would be willing to live up to, and even reinforce it. But what would happen if Japan were to say it would not cooperate with the United States?

The belief that Japan will cooperate with whatever policy the U.S. pursues is a result of the fact that Japan has demonstrated specific areas where it could and would cooperate. To keep a healthy relationship with the United States, and ultimately win credibility, Japan must show its stance within the alliance, and help achieve its objectives through the alliance. Japan would lose confidence if it were to change its position according to what the United States demanded and how the United States responds to Japan’s policies. The international environment has shifted dramatically over the past decade. Acting flexibly yet within its legal framework is what Japan seeks: policy has not caught up with this desire.

Gap of the positioning of the alliance

The final point to consider is the gap regarding what the two countries seek from their alliance. While Japan looks at the alliance as an important measure to reinforce its security, the United States considers it as one of the many tools it has to preserve a safe and secure East Asia, which eventually leads to a peaceful and secure international environment.

The question actually goes to the definition of the alliance itself, whether it is a bilateral, regional or international matter for the two countries. If it is more of a bilateral (and presumably a national) matter for Japan, it is more of a regional and international matter for the United States. In other words, while the U.S.-Japan security alliance is regarded as indispensable for Japan, U.S. counterparts do not have the same expectations since it is just one of the many options that it has. This gap creates a huge cleavage between the two countries: it might lead to suspicion and lack of confidence. Thus, while Japan fears most the decrease of the American commitment, the United States fears an “overdependent” Japan which may limit its actions in the region.

To ease its apprehensions, the United States has encouraged Japan to become more independent: this, however, caused Japan to become more anxious, thus seeking further commitments from the United States to alleviate its anxiety. This vicious cycle would, in the end, lead the two countries to further distrust and a deterioration of confidence that would ultimately damage the alliance. To solve this awkwardness, or at least, avoid this result, Japan should make specific action plans that allow both parties to understand at what point Japan can cooperate within the alliance system. The United States should take steps that let Japan maintain its confidence and trust in the United States. For example, a statement by a senior member of the government (such as the announcement Secretary Rice released after the North Korean nuclear test) saying that the United States is committed to Japan’s security, would mitigate the fear of abandonment that could tempt Japan to become more “independent.” Again, the important matter is how the two countries, specifically Japan, perceive the matter. No hard documents besides the treaty itself prove the United States’ commitment. The matter is psychological; as long as Japan believes in it, there is presumably nothing stronger.

Conclusion

In my preconference assignment, I argued that the “overdependence of Japan on the United States is a crucial threat to the U.S.-Japan security alliance.” My thinking has not dramatically changed after attending the conference; however, the conference forced me to consider what “overdependence of Japan” means. Is Japan really “overdependent”? And if so, in what sense does one consider a state’s action to be too dependent? The question remains unanswered, but one of the important factors would be “belief.”

The alliance system functions as long as the two countries work toward a shared goal. The basic problem in the U.S.-Japan alliance system can be examined from the above mentioned five points. There may be cases in which people might argue that Japan is suspicious of the alliance. However, this would not be based on a suspicion of the alliance itself, but rather on the “bad” behavior of the United States: raping, military accidents, and other crimes by U.S. forces in Japan have always been ways to judge the United States. But the basic unconscious, yet shared understanding within Japanese society is that peace has been present largely because of the existence of the U.S.-Japan security alliance. Hence, the question whether the alliance is in crisis is no, since no one can imagine Japan without the alliance.

With a declining population, a decrease in tax revenues is inevitable for Japan. In that society, Japan would have to decide which policies would take precedence: welfare or defense. It is of no surprise that welfare and economy have great support in elections: the Japanese community has been innocent about security matters. How would Japan maintain its defense power if the country’s financial circumstance deteriorates? How can Japan respond to the United States’ calls for military assistance and the alliance? It is therefore, crucial for Japan to frame its position, and what it can and cannot do within the alliance system.

Although the relationship with the United States is already asymmetric, Japan is not the United States’ “pet.” Framing its position would allow Japan to become more independent and provide confidence to Japan that it is not being abandoned. This would become a win-win situation for both countries, which would maintain peace and security in Northeast Asia.

Is the Alliance in Crisis? Is this Crisis Qualitatively Different from Before?

By Aishah Pang

The U.S.-Japan alliance is not experiencing an outright crisis, nor is it in danger of collapse. Rather, as was noted, the alliance partners are at a cross-road – one where they find themselves in the midst of a significant setback due to a combined sense of insecurity and misperception. Like good friends can and good friends should, the U.S. and Japan must discuss the rising tension within the relationship. However uncomfortable or embarrassing it may be, fears and hurt feelings should be stated, acknowledged, and addressed. Miscommunication, however, is a common problem in relationships and therefore should not be overstated. A key difference between good friendships and bad ones (or mere acquaintanceships) is that good friends care enough to sit down, listen, give and receive critical feedback, and jointly seek positive resolution. Revealing vulnerability and dependence goes far to instill and strengthen trust and confidence in each other and in the relationship. This process of sharing and reassurance needn't happen all the time (indeed it would indicate constant, troublesome insecurities that could have a long-term negative effect), but should be expected every so often.

I found it important that all the Japanese Young Leaders seemed to echo the sentiment that the alliance is not in crisis. Their opinions are critical. If most Japanese don't believe that the alliance is in a crisis, then all involved should avoid treating it as if it were. A critical setback needs to be addressed but aside from this, the alliance seems to be in an otherwise normal state.

Age matters

Generational differences are apparent over whether the U.S.-Japan alliance is at a crossroads or a significant, but unsurprising setback vs. a crisis with potentially immediate, dire consequences. Senior participants see an alliance facing critical, sudden danger of collapse while the younger participants see a somewhat expected setback in a long-unbalanced alliance (i.e., military capabilities and cultural differences). Perhaps the fact that every country is facing a serious global recession motivates partners like the U.S. and Japan to recommit to each other, recognizing the extent of interdependence.

We still agree

I still believe that the most important threat to the U.S.-Japan alliance is perceived U.S. inattention to and neglect of Japan's security. While we might agree that the alliance is not in danger, misperceptions of intent and commitment impact how each country views the other, which drives decision making. Misguided perceptions could have serious consequences for the alliance.

An example of a communication gap complicating the U.S.-Japan alliance is the “abductee” issue. Many Japanese conference participants said that this issue confuses the

political scene and has been afforded much more importance and attention than it deserves. Most Japanese realize that it has been a painfully slow, frustrating process and an obstacle concerning only a handful of families. One observer criticized Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's decision to directly link North Korea denuclearization negotiations with progress in the abductee issue. By doing so, Clinton raised expectations for U.S. action on two perceived associated issues. Sentiment at the conference and this critique are a stark contrast to national opinion which ranks the "abductee" issue as the most important, ranking above security issues with North Korea, China, or nuclear deterrence – ones that Japanese political elite are more apt to be concerned with. It is important, however, not to undermine public opinion, especially one that has significant sway when the government is weak. As a result, misunderstandings are apparent in two places – between the Japanese public and Japanese political elite and between the U.S. and Japan – in regards to how best to respond to Japan's concerns because Japanese themselves aren't clear about their priorities.

Japanese perception of the U.S. continues to play a role in a number of other divisive internal debates within Japan (e.g., expanding Self-Defense Force roles and missions, sending troops to Afghanistan, contributing to anti-piracy operations, relocation of U.S. troops, etc.). As long as Japanese continue to believe that the U.S. has taken its relationship with Japan for granted, the alliance will remain susceptible to miscommunication and misunderstanding that could significantly impact both bilateral relations and regional stability. Measures to correct this perception are already underway – Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit and statements as well as Prime Minister Aso's Washington, D.C. visit. Some Japanese citizens, including some senior officials, remain doubtful. With perceptions at the crux of the U.S.-Japan alliance, both countries will have to take sincere, demonstrative measures to reinvigorate the relationship and reaffirm their commitment to each other (e.g., taking a truly regional approach toward the DPRK, developing Japan's commitment to stability in Afghanistan in the means most viable to them, etc.).

Japan cares more

One issue that warrants discussion is the fact that the Japanese public has more interest in U.S. action, policy (i.e., President Barack Obama), and U.S. soft power elements than Americans do in Japan. The Japanese public seems to care about and discuss U.S.-related issues daily and at a much more intense level than Americans do of Japan. The average U.S. citizen does not think much about Japanese products, relations with the Japanese, or the Japanese prime minister at the same level that the Japanese think of all things U.S.-related. This difference has important implications for recognizing Japanese sensitivity to U.S. actions.

Extended deterrence and the alliance

At a fundamental level, extended deterrence has everything to do with these issues. If perception gaps exist over defining extended deterrence (according to each country) in addition to intent, capabilities, or confidence in extended deterrence, then this poses a significant threat to the alliance. Dialogue and exchange meant to issue reassurances and

clarify misunderstandings are key to preventing misperceptions from creating into a domino-effect leading to an eventual alliance breakdown.

Because misperception plays the biggest role in what we would consider the most significant threat to the alliance at this time, I propose an intensive one-day pre-conference workshop for 2010 that critically addresses and discusses perceptions regarding key alliance issues. The proposal or process may seem elementary, but all too often views on these issues are thrown out in a conference, but rarely closely investigated or verified. All present usually have in-depth knowledge of the issues and views, so assumptions are made without thorough examination of what those assumptions are. I propose a workshop that explores these views in detail, in order to map out gaps and overlaps regarding U.S. and Japanese views on key issues (please see below).

Intensive Pre-Conference Workshop
To challenge assumptions and critically examine U.S. and Japanese perceptions of
issues important to the U.S.-Japan alliance

The one day workshop will cover five issues with 6–8 people per issue (3-4 Americans and 3-4 Japanese) for a total of 30–40 participants. Participants are ideally from different backgrounds across academia, government, military, media, Young Leaders program and business, with expertise in at least one of the issue areas cited below and belief in value of such an exercise.

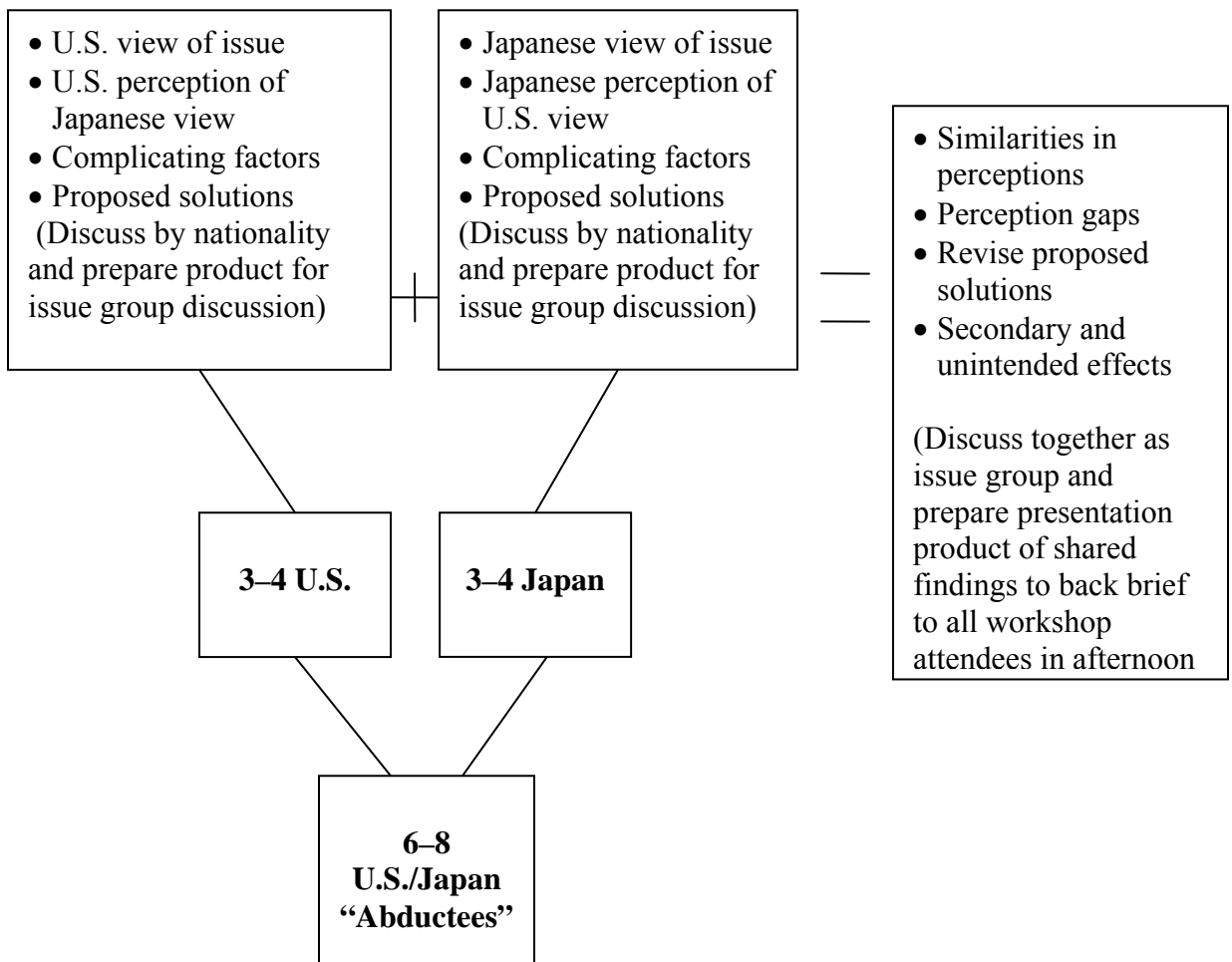
Issues discussed could incorporate the Young Leaders’ assignment regarding perceived threats to the U.S.-Japan alliance:



Proposed Activity

Steps:

- Welcome and introduction to exercise; break up issue groups into separate rooms
- Issue groups split into Americans and Japanese entities
- Americans and Japanese reconvene within each issue group; discuss findings; prep presentation
- Issue groups all reconvene together to share group findings
- Wrap-up; reflections; recommendations



Reflections on Japan-U.S. Relations

By Ryo Sahashi

Problems

A lack of vision on how to deal with China is hurting Japan-U.S. relations. In Japan we often hear that for the Obama administration the U.S. regards China as a more important state than Japan and other allies, Zbigniew Brzezinski's proposal of a G-2 and a leak in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* about the new dialogue between the U.S. vice president and China's prime minister stimulates fear. The increase in bilateral talks, from top-level official dialogues to track-two conferences, is not a serious problem as long as the Japan-U.S. alliance is strong and credible, but these emotions in Japan have been caused because both countries failed to agree on the future of China: for Japan, the relationship with the U.S. should promise Japan's regional and international status and its role in order-making, in addition to security assurances. Thus when Washington contemplates a "G-2" in Asia with China, Tokyo responds critically.

On the nuclear extended deterrence question, Japanese aims are clear: it does not want to be locked into a position where it would be blackmailed or coerced by other countries. Neither North Korea nor China, a regional nuclear power, should achieve such a position vis-à-vis Japan through its nuclear arsenal. To be sure, Japan relies on the U.S. nuclear and conventional second-strike capability against China, and wants the U.S. to deter China. However, due to the expectation gap and geography, the Japan-U.S. alliance suffers from a lack of credibility. The Bush administration's seemingly conciliatory behavior vis-à-vis Pyongyang and its dialogues on nuclear strategy with Beijing have increased Tokyo's doubts about U.S. credibility, and this is magnified by the Obama administration's new attitude toward nuclear disarmament.

Solutions

a) General

One American assumed that China would continue to increase its nuclear stockpile, improve delivery methods, and it was very unlikely that it could be forced to slow down. Therefore, the U.S. has to choose "trump" by arms race or acquiesce to China.

It should be noted that Japan does not want to force the U.S. into a new arms race with China. Rather, it wants to keep a regional balance with the U.S. maintaining its preponderance of power and at the same time reduce the likelihood of an arms race between the U.S. and China and sudden and unintentional crises. Binding China into the established liberal order, with more participation and voting rights for China, is controversial but ultimately desirable for Japan as long as it ensures China's stable and healthy growth, since the Japanese economy and society is, despite the financial turmoil, more interdependent with China. The fatalistic approach – that the U.S. and China will clash – must be overcome, with innovative and inclusive ideas regarding a "rising China."

b) *Security Architecture with a rising China*

To assure and mobilize public support for the U.S.-Japan alliance and forward deployment of U.S. forces, and to provide pressure as well as public and private support for peaceful development of China, Washington and Tokyo should increase discussions on how to manage and help China in bilateral official frameworks. It is essential that both countries adopt the idea of taking China into a new security architecture, where security dilemmas would be avoided by mutual trust. Also, it is important to consider *an official trilateral framework* with an agenda ranging from hard security to economic and social development, enhancing human networks. “Seminar diplomacy” and other opportunities to work together trilaterally would help increase transparency. To be sure, bilateral framework is sometimes speedier than a multilateral framework, but given the mistrust between Japan and China, Japanese concerns on Sino-America relations, and Chinese worries about the Japan-U.S. alliance, trilateralism has the potential to supplement the three bilateral relationships.

I recently proposed a three-tier approach using the trilateral framework as a stepping stone for enhancement of bilateralism and the configuration of a *new regional security architecture*; if three major powers could reach consensus on regional architecture, it increases the likelihood of establishing feasible and workable institutions to tackle nontraditional and, in the future, traditional security challenges. It is insufficient to have trilateral talks without clear regional aims: this institution would discuss ways to avoid the security dilemma and achieve peaceful change in this region, which can tackle the fundamental security challenges, and create a new Northeast Asian balance of power.

c) *Extended Deterrence*

It is time that Japan and the United States start discussing extended deterrence since the credibility of the nuclear umbrella is eroding and the East Asia strategic environment is changing. For many Japanese proponents of enhancing extended deterrence, the problem lies in the U.S. willingness to defend Japan if North Korea, China, or any other country or actors launches a nuclear missile. They have proposed many solutions, including nuclear consultations, sharing (double-key options), and introducing U.S. nuclear arsenals into Japanese territory and even to ports, with some Americans agreeing with these proposals. Some Japanese have also proposed improving nonproliferation regimes.

This is a very sensitive subject. To address it properly we need to keep the following questions in mind: Has the credibility of the alliance been damaged? Do these options enhance the credibility of the alliance with appropriate costs and benefits? Do they really enhance U.S. policy makers’ attention and support for the alliance with Japan? Will such proposals from Tokyo be embraced by the new administration, which might put more emphasis on nuclear disarmament?

At this stage, Japan does not seriously doubt the credibility of U.S. strategic forces and planning, and it has not concluded that the U.S. should enhance its nuclear deployments in the Pacific Rim (considering the range of strategic missiles, it is not critical where they are deployed), or that U.S. strategic vulnerability has been created by improving Chinese

arsenals. As has been argued in *Foreign Affairs* and *International Security*, even in the long run the strategic preponderance of the United States is unlikely to change. The Chinese have not caught up with the United States, and the more immediate challenge is the not-well managed Russian nuclear stockpiles. While stockpiles in China and the DPRK have grown, they are still too small. Rather, discussion focuses on the limited launch of nuclear warheads. In other words, we are discussing a simple change of situation with a slight increase in stockpiles in uncertain countries in East Asia, and the credibility being discussed is not strategic, but regards a limited launch and the U.S. intention to retaliate.

Regarding such a limited launch, what are the policy options? Reassurance of nuclear deterrence with an invulnerable second-strike capability and a missile defense system have been provided. Does Japan need more? Does this involve strategic planning of the United States on a global scale? Maybe not. To request access to nuclear information merely increases the cost of alliance management, and to demand this would lead to concerns that a junior partner is asking for more without increasing its own commitment to the alliance. (In fact, Japan is decreasing its defense budget, uncertain about the future of bases for forward deployment and the budget to maintain them.) To be sure, information sharing on nuclear planning, without any political costs, might be welcome, but it should be noted that requesting access to nuclear planning did not enhance the relationship between Bonn and Washington in the 1950s and 1960s. Interviews with officials (civilian and non-civilian) in Tokyo show they share this thinking. They are worried about the conventional buildup by China, the U.S. defense commitment to Taiwan, and they closely watch the Korean Peninsula. One high-level non-civilian describes such arrangements as “risky.”

This year’s Maui conference seemed to shift the discussion toward two new agenda items: conventional force upgrades and proposals from the Obama administration on nuclear disarmament. Many in Tokyo raised the credibility issue due to their desire to upgrade the status of the alliance and to get another bargaining advantage. This year they more openly raised the issue of *F-22* sales. In fact, there is no consensus view that Tokyo needs the U.S. to enhance the nuclear umbrella with a shift of nuclear-warheads to the West Pacific.

Finally, we must ask: do the Japanese people really feel nuclear challenges and a lack of credibility regarding the U.S. defense commitment? Do they accept the introduction of nuclear weapons in Japan? If so, it would be a radical change of the social situation in Japan, but in fact we have no such evidence. In fact, it would create the feeling that Japan would be the target of a first strike. The nuclear detonation by the DPRK raised security concerns in Japan just as the missile launch in 1998 created momentum for missile defense deployments in Japan; however, even though some politicians asked for public discussion on nuclear matters, the media and public have not responded well and the discussions have not been heated. This is because the nuclear threat has not reached a point that national discussion on nuclear matters possible, and because for many it is still clear that Japan has no choice but to rely on U.S. nuclear weapons. Raising the nuclear issue still has political costs, for politicians.

Déjà Vu. The Price of U.S. Extended Deterrence

By Tetsuo Kotani

The threat perception gap in alliance management

The most imminent threat to the U.S.-Japan alliance is the gap in threat perception between Tokyo and Washington regarding North Korea. For Tokyo, North Korea is a direct threat, capable of attacking virtually anywhere in Japan with nuclear or conventional missiles and violating Japanese waters with spy boats, while kidnapping Japanese citizens. For Washington, North Korea is just one of several security concerns posing no direct threat – at least until North Korean missiles can reach the continental United States. The North Korean nuclear test in October 2006 made clear this perception gap.

This perception gap leads to a policy priority gap. Tokyo and Washington share common interests in denuclearizing Pyongyang, halting the proliferation of WMD, and solving the abduction issue. But for Tokyo, the abduction issue is as important as denuclearization for domestic reasons, while Washington regards nonproliferation almost as important as denuclearization. Thus, Washington's decision to drop North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, despite a lack of progress in Pyongyang's talks with Tokyo over the abduction issue and despite the lack of a verification protocol in the Six-Party Talks irritated Tokyo, which embarrassed Washington.

It's *déjà vu* all over again. In October 1964, China became the fifth country to join the nuclear club. Given Chinese nuclear armament and subsequent U.S. pursuit of a nonproliferation regime, Tokyo worried whether the United States would continue to provide a nuclear umbrella, especially as the U.S.-USSR strategic nuclear balance was reaching parity and Chinese missiles could not reach the United States. Tokyo considered various options, including going it alone, but decided to pursue its non-nuclear policy under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Nevertheless, it took six years for Tokyo to ratify the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) after signing in 1970. In the 1980s, the prospect of intermediate nuclear force (INF) redeployments away from Europe to the Far East alarmed Tokyo again. The redeployment would leave Japan vulnerable to Soviet theater nuclear forces that posed no threat to the continental United States. In other words, Tokyo became anxious when the continental U.S. was less threatened by Soviet and Chinese nuclear capabilities than was Japan.

The threat perception gap is an inevitable element of an alliance. However, this threat perception, if mishandled, could not only lead to policy priority gap but also undermine the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence. It is not an exaggeration to say that management of the threat perception gap is what alliance management is all about. On the other hand, mismanagement of the alliance could give potential adversaries leverage to estrange Tokyo and Washington. In fact, Pyongyang is trying to take advantage of the gap to avoid a coordinated approach by Tokyo, Washington, and Seoul in the Six-Party Talks.

Although North Korea is the immediate concern, Chinese theater capabilities are a more substantial and formidable security threat to Japan. If the result of the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review process calls for substantial cuts in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, that could redefine the U.S.-China relationship. But it is not clear whether a U.S. reduction would prompt Beijing to moderate its nuclear arms buildup or accelerate to reach parity with the United States. Any shift that would encourage Beijing to abandon its minimum deterrent posture and embrace theater or limited deterrence would undermine the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence. In the face of the Obama administration's twin commitment to disarmament and deterrence, management of the North Korean nuclear threat can be a test case for U.S.-Japan alliance.

How did the alliance manage the gap?

Although U.S. nuclear deterrent in Europe was mainly land-based and therefore more visible, the U.S. nuclear deterrent in Asia was sea-based and more invisible. U.S. allies in Western Europe even jointly managed those nuclear capabilities under the double-key system, but it was not the case with U.S. allies in Asia.

Then, how did Tokyo and Washington manage the threat perception gap during the Cold War? First, in 1964, Tokyo accepted visits to Japan by U.S. nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) one of whose missions was to protect strategic nuclear submarines (SSBNs). The acceptance of SSN visits showed the unity of the alliance to the Communist bloc. Then, Tokyo accepted the homeporting of a nuclear-capable aircraft carrier in Yokosuka in 1973 – one of whose missions was nuclear retaliation with tactical nuclear weapons. The deployment of the carrier in Japan increased the credibility of the U.S. nuclear umbrella and the carrier became the symbol of U.S. commitment. For Tokyo, it was politically difficult to accept visits by SSNs due to the nuclear allergy of its citizens. It was more difficult to accept the homeporting of the carrier since one of the three non-nuclear principles prohibits the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japanese waters. That was a cost for the U.S. nuclear umbrella and Japan paid it. Washington pledged to provide a nuclear umbrella for the first time in the 1978 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines and thus the carrier based at Yokosuka, which provided nuclear retaliation capability, was integrated into Japan's national security system through the Guidelines.

The Soviet Union based approximately 100 surface ships and 140 submarines at Vladivostok in the 1980s and, coupled with the Tu-22M “Backfire” bombers and SS-20 intermediate nuclear missiles, attempted to make the Sea of Okhotsk a “sanctuary” for its SSBNs. In response, Washington and Tokyo agreed to strengthen naval cooperation in the western Pacific. The U.S. Maritime Strategy, made public in 1986, envisioned, in case of war fighting, a massive naval offensive against Soviet forces around the periphery of the Soviet Union to reduce the threat against NATO ground forces in the front line in Europe. Carriers were instrumental to this second-front strategy. The key to this strategy in the Asian theater was to establish a high-technology antisubmarine and air-defense network along the Japanese archipelago. Tokyo decided to introduce 120 P-3C patrol aircraft, advanced anti-surface and anti-aircraft missiles, and the *Aegis* air defense system. The carrier battle group at Yokosuka was augmented by the anti-submarine, air-defense and coastal defense capabilities of the

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. This U.S.-Japan naval cooperation in the western Pacific augmented Western naval superiority vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and contributed to ending the Cold War.

There is a cost for the nuclear umbrella. Tokyo paid the price by guaranteeing the flexibility of the U.S. seaborne nuclear deterrent as well as by contributing to its defense. Although it did not constitute any part of the nuclear triad (submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and long-range bombers), the carrier task force based at Yokosuka was an indispensable part of the escalation ladder if there was an exchange of strategic nuclear weapons.

What's the price of extended deterrence today?

Today, several factors have changed U.S. strategic nuclear doctrine. First, deterring an all-out nuclear war between Russia and the United States is no longer the central feature of U.S. war plans. Second, the accuracy of precision weapons has dramatically increased. Thus, nuclear weapons have become only one element in an array of capabilities designed to address threats posed by the proliferation of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and long-range ballistic missiles. U.S. nuclear doctrine embodies an effort to increase the credibility of U.S. strategic deterrent threats by increasing the range of options available to U.S. officials. The 2002 Nuclear Posture Review unveiled a new strategic triad, consisting of nuclear and precision non-nuclear strike forces; passive and active defenses; and a revitalized defense infrastructure. The old triad was intended to guarantee the availability of a massive response to nuclear attack, while the new triad is intended to guarantee that U.S. policymakers will have an appropriate way to respond to aggression, thereby bolstering deterrence. The new strategic triad thus paves the way for further reductions in U.S. strategic nuclear forces because it clears a path for the possible elimination of one of the legs of the old nuclear triad.

The cost of the nuclear umbrella will change accordingly. The beneficiaries of the U.S. nuclear umbrella need to maintain its credibility by helping U.S. policymakers keep a variety of options so that they can respond to any situation in an appropriate way. In addition, the term “extended deterrence” was almost identical to that of nuclear umbrella during the Cold War, but today it is important to distinguish nuclear and conventional extended deterrence. In other words, the list of items has diversified and they are not necessarily related to the operation of U.S. nuclear deterrent.

Then, what should Tokyo do to maintain the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence in the face of this threat perception gap?

First, Tokyo needs to implement the base realignment package without fail to increase the flexibility of U.S. forces in Japan. The relocation of the carrier air wing from Atsugi to Iwakuni is important. Tokyo needs to find a permanent site for field carrier landing practice (FCLP) within 200 miles of Iwakuni. The U.S. carrier strike group based at Yokosuka is still the core of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region. The carrier air wing provides the striking power of this strike group. Nuclear retaliation is no longer its mission, but it is part of the

new triad as a precision non-nuclear strike force. Its striking power is the most reliable deterrent and can be used for preemptive strikes.

Second, Tokyo should steadily upgrade the missile defense system not only for the defense of Japan but also for the United States. Missile defense constitutes a pillar of the new triad. Tokyo can contribute directly to the defense of the United States by updating the missile defense system and exercising the right to collective self-defense, which will increase the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence in return. In the face of a possible North Korean missile launch, which violates a series of UNSC resolutions, Tokyo should be ready to operate the missile defense system, while discouraging Pyongyang through diplomatic channels.

Third, Tokyo needs to contribute to the security of Afghanistan in addition to the refueling mission for CTF-150 and other activities to help stabilize the Afghan people's livelihood. It is difficult for Tokyo to send combat forces to Afghanistan but Tokyo needs to consider contributing to securing the supply line from Pakistan to Afghanistan through which 75 percent of supplies are carried. Without helping a friend in need, you cannot expect help from him.

These measures would increase the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence vis-a-vis China as well as North Korea. Vis-à-vis China, Tokyo needs to reinforce surveillance capability in the waters west of Guam and, north of the Philippines to counterbalance China's growing area denial/anti-access capabilities.

To maintain the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence, Tokyo always needs to consider the price and continue to pay it.

Divorce is not an Option

By Sophia Yang

Citing feelings of abandonment expressed by Japan when the United States last year removed North Korea from the U.S. State Department's list of states sponsoring terrorism addressed the issue of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea, I argued Japanese fears that Tokyo was losing its significance to Washington in the pre-conference assignment, even though Pyongyang had not constituted the main challenge to the U.S.-Japan alliance. The two recent high-level visits – Secretary of State Clinton to Tokyo and Prime Minister Aso to Washington – should quiet critics who fear “Japan passing.” Clinton made Japan the first stop on her first voyage abroad as secretary of state and Aso became the first head of state to visit the Oval Office since President Obama was sworn in Jan. 20. While both visits were designed to reassure Japan of its importance to the United States, suspicion remains evident in questions about “hidden agendas” behind the Obama-Aso meeting discussed in the Japanese media. Although Japan's fear about its relationship with the United States may seem misplaced, discussions at the U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue conference held in Maui on Feb. 9-10, 2009 highlighted differences in expectations on both sides as the overarching challenge to the alliance.

As regional and global security challenges evolve, so have expectations for the U.S.-Japan alliance. Although a U.S. presenter argued that the U.S.-Japan alliance remains *the* vehicle for U.S. engagement in Asia, Japanese participants felt less assured, particularly in light of President Obama's commitment to reduce the U.S. nuclear weapon arsenal, which some worry comes at the expense of the U.S. extended deterrent. Another Japanese concern is the ability to address real dangers as the Obama administration shifts from the use of hard power to smart power (a combination of soft and hard power) in its foreign policy toolkit. At the same time, the U.S. expects Japan to be more proactive in contributing to regional and global security efforts (a retired U.S. military veteran and security expert, for example, responded to concern about the aftermath of a U.S. pullout in Iraq with a question about what Japan, then, would like to do to help). Japanese experts doubted whether their country could meet these expectations. They remain pessimistic about Japan's ability to contribute because of the current lack of political leadership. While expectations may not always be met, clearly understanding what they are and the reasons for them, however, will help reduce miscommunication. The track-two dialogue in Maui, designed to bring together experts on both sides of the Pacific, is an excellent bridge. Other suggestions by participants include Japanese embassy outreach in Washington, discussions among defense and security officials, public forums, and publications in open source journals.

A greater challenge for the alliance, alluded to in the conference, is a gap between perceptions of Japan's security between the public and policy elites. Public support of alliance initiatives is crucial, but a Japanese expert acknowledged “a gap in understanding between laypersons and experts.” One Japanese participant pointed out, “No politician wants to put any political stake on national defense issues.” Another Japanese expert explained how in the domestic Japanese mindset, military and peace are contradictory terms. Although Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) will need to play a growing role in international security, “this reality is not largely accepted in Japan,” he said.

A less than helpful addition to this discussion is opposition leader Ichiro Ozawa's recent remarks on how the SDF, alongside only the U.S. Seventh Fleet, will suffice to maintain the security of Japan and the Far East. Equally troubling, a fellow Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) legislator, in support of Ozawa's statement said, "If the U.S. military presence in Asia is reduced, then China will also not have to expand its military power." Such public comments oversimplify the region's security situation, and do not educate the public on complex defense issues. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* quoted a U.S. State Department official in Japan's response, "Ozawa does not understand the strategic need for the U.S. Air Force presence in the Far East as well as the need to maintain the combat readiness of the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army."

Ozawa's comment is a clear reference to the U.S.-Japan roadmap for implementing the realignment of the alliance, which has been a politically charged issue. The DPJ, which has developed a reputation for opposing U.S. policies (notably over the war in Iraq and the refueling mission by Japanese naval ships in the Indian Ocean in support of the war in Afghanistan), demands that the agreement be revised. It insists the United States move the Futenma Air Base out of Okinawa, and objects to the amount Japan has promised to provide for the Guam relocation projects. Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia James Shinn, however, has warned against revising the agreement. In an interview with *Asahi Shimbun*, Shinn likened the agreement to a tower that will fall if everyone begins to pull little pieces out – "And if the tower falls, you're back to zero."

A public that is overly reliant on authoritative figures such as politicians as well as the media for direction poses a clear and present danger to the alliance. How the issue of abductees has been exploited is a palpable example. Longtime Japan watcher Ayako Doi has argued that rational discussion of the abduction issue has been made nearly impossible because of the atmosphere of intimidation created by the powerful association of abductee families and media executives eager to exploit "the highly emotional nature of the issue for maximum commercial gain." Because Japanese leaders' rely on Washington to solve the abduction issue, the decision to remove North Korea from the list of states sponsoring terrorism prior to a resolution on the abduction issue (and the promised denuclearization verification protocol) "has come to sour the whole bilateral relationship."

The health of the alliance is far too important to regional and global security for it to be held hostage by small interest groups, however compelling their stories may be. Likewise, the alliance cannot be viewed as a zero-sum relationship, as DPJ leader Ozawa suggested to Secretary Clinton during their meeting in Tokyo when he said, "I am one who has always said that the Japan-U.S. alliance was the most important. But it should not be a relationship in which one side is always subservient to the other." The alliance is a partnership, and should not be viewed as a vertical relationship. Ken Jimbo, a professor at Keio University and expert on foreign policy, echoes this sentiment. Although he believes Japan must improve indigenous military capacity to maintain Japan's national security, he supports a steady implementation of realignment initiatives as a key component of the U.S.-Japan joint effort to ensure the credibility of extended deterrence.

Weaning the Japanese public from relying on authority figures will prove immensely challenging since this issue is culturally embedded. In a recent *New York Times* op-ed, “Japan’s Crisis of the Mind,” Masaru Tamamoto, a senior fellow at the World Policy Institute, writes, “You won’t find many signs on Japanese beaches saying, ‘Swim at your own risk. No lifeguard on duty.’ If that sign were to appear, many Japanese would likely ask the authorities to tell them if it is safe to swim.”

While the U.S.-Japan relationship is far from perfect, both Japanese and U.S. interests are too intertwined for divorce to be considered an option. There are and will continue to be challenging times when interests and expectations are not aligned, but it will be incumbent, particularly on Japanese leaders, to remind the public of the value of the alliance. With the alliance’s 50-year anniversary approaching, one U.S. participant suggested the timing is right for both countries to reiterate shared visions. This reaffirmation would encourage strategic dialogue and reinforce the alliance’s vitality and importance to the public.

Appendix A

About the Authors

Mr. Michael M. BOSACK is a M.A. student in the School of Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and an East-West Center Degree Fellow since 2007. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in History and Foreign Area Studies from the United States Air Force Academy and is a commissioned officer in the United States Air Force. As an undergraduate, Michael devoted his studies towards achieving a greater understanding of military and political conflict in the Asia-Pacific Region. He represented the Air Force Academy at the 10th International Cadet Conference at the National Defense Academy in Japan and as a delegate in an Olmsted Foundation sponsored tour of Japan's political institutions. He is continuing his research and studies of Asian-Pacific Security at the University of Hawaii and the East-West Center before moving to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada to serve as a Maintenance Officer for the 763rd Maintenance Squadron.

Ms. Catherine BOYE is currently interning as a research assistant at the Center for Strategic and International Studies Pacific Forum in Honolulu, HI. She received a BA in Political Science and a BA in International Studies from the University of Utah in 2006. Catherine is currently pursuing a MA in International Policy Studies with a specialization in international security in Asia at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Her research interests include Chinese military policy, Chinese energy policy, and East Asian Security.

Mr. Tetsuo KOTANI is a Ph.D. candidate at Doshisha University and is currently a research fellow at Ocean Policy Research Foundation (OPRF). His dissertation focus is on the strategic implication of homeporting U.S. carriers at Yokosuka. His other research interests include U.S.-Japan relations and international relations and maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region. His English publications include "Reaffirming the Taiwan Clause: Japan's National Interest in the Taiwan Strait and the U.S.-Japan Alliance" (co-authored with Dr. Jim Auer) (NBR ANALYSIS Vol. 16 No. 1, 2005) and "Presence and Credibility: Homeporting USS MIDWAY at Yokosuka" in the JOURNAL of AMERICAN-EAST ASIAN RELATIONS (Vol. 15, forthcoming). He was a visiting fellow at the U.S.-Japan Center at Vanderbilt University. He received a security studies fellowship at Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), 2006-2008. He won the 2003 Defense Minister Prize for his essay.

Mr. Taro HAYASHI is an M.A. student in the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), the Johns Hopkins University, in Washington D.C. At SAIS, he is studying International Relations (concentrating Strategic Studies) and International Economics. He is a government official working for the Japanese Ministry of Defense, and his study at SAIS is sponsored by the Japanese Government Long-Term Fellowship Program. Hayashi earned a Bachelor of Law from the University of Tokyo.

Ms. Aki MORI is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at Doshisha University. She researches the implication of the rise of China, including the strategic linkage between military modernization and military operations other than war of the PLA, and the U.S.-

China relations. She published two papers focused on energy security of China and role of the PLAN in it. She will publish a new paper focused on Beijing's diplomacy in the globalized financial crisis in the book, which is scheduled for publication in 2009. She studied the U.S.-China relations from Chinese perspective at the School of International Studies in Renmin University of China during 2007-2008. She received B.A. from Waseda University and M.A. from Doshisha University.

Ms. Wakana MUKAI is a Ph.D. candidate in International Politics at the University of Tokyo in Japan and is also a research fellow at the Center for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Japan Institute of International Affairs. She specializes in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues as well as South Asian issues, especially views from Pakistan. She received her B.A. in Language and Area Studies from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and her M.P.P. from the School of Public Policy at the University of Tokyo.

Mrs. Aishah PANG received a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Washington and a B.A. in International Affairs from The George Washington University. She currently works for the U.S. Pacific Command as a Red Team analyst, conducting alternative assessments and analysis. Prior to this position, Mrs. Pang worked for three years at The National Bureau of Asian Research.

Mr. Ryo SAHASHI is an Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Public Policy (GraSPP), the University of Tokyo. He also serves as a Research Fellow, Japan Center for International Exchange. Previously, Mr. Sahashi served as a Research Associate/Program Officer for Policy Studies, Japan Center for International Exchange, as a Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, as a Research Assistant, Social Science Research Institute, International Christian University, and as a Research Assistant, Bureau of Trade Policy, Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry. Mr. Sahashi received his LL.M from the University of Tokyo and his Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts from the International Christian University after studying at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is currently completing his dissertation on American foreign policy towards China and Taiwan during the Cold War. Also, he is a recipient both of Minister of Foreign Affairs Award and of Japan Association of Taiwan Studies Distinguished Paper Award, a frequent invitee for Young Leaders Program of CSIS Pacific Forum, Honolulu, and currently registered as a non-residence fellow for security studies at Research Institute of Peace and Security (RIPS), Tokyo.

Ms. Sophia YANG is currently a research associate in the Japan Studies program at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C. As a summer 2007 Harold Rosenthal Fellow, she supported the U.S.-Japan Alliance at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Asian and Pacific Security Affairs. Following her fellowship, Sophia served as an American student delegate in the 59th Japan-America Student Conference during which she also participated as a student panelist at the Asia Youth Forum in Tokyo. Sophia graduated in May 2008 with a master's degree in international policy at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Appendix B

hosted by
PACIFIC FORUM CSIS
and sponsored by the
U.S. DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY

U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue

Royal Lahaina Resort ♦ Maui
February 8-10, 2009

AGENDA

February 8, 2009 - SUNDAY

Participants Arrive

6:30 PM **Welcome Reception and Dinner – Villas Lawn**

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY

8:30 AM **Continental Breakfast – Lanai Room**

9:00 AM **Opening Remarks (Introductions, review of 2008 meeting, and Dec. trip)**

9:30 AM **Session I: Perceptions of Asian and Global Strategic Security Environments**

U.S. presenter: James Kelly

Japan presenter: Masashi Nishihara

This session explores each country's view of the global and regional security environment, to identify issues, and highlight shared and divergent concerns. How does each country see the Asian balance of power? What are the principle threats to each country? To the regional balance of power? How are these threats best tackled? How have the perceptions and concerns highlighted at last year's meeting changed? Is the alliance relationship better or worse than a year ago? Why? Topics could include China's growing status and influence; relations with Taiwan and the cross-Strait relationship; North Korea and prospects for relations with Pyongyang; relations with South Korea; the Middle East, Central and South Asian challenges. This overview will set the stage for subsequent discussions of U.S. and Japanese security policies and efforts to address these challenges.

11:00 AM **Coffee Break**

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY (cont'd.)

11:15 AM Session II: Perceptions of Global Nonproliferation/Counterproliferation Strategies

Japan presenter: Satoshi Morimoto

U.S. presenter: Corey Hinderstein

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the spread of nuclear weapons, has been identified as one of the top security threats by President Obama and numerous U.S. national security documents. Do both countries agree on the threat posed by nuclear weapons proliferation? Its priority? The response? Do they agree on the status of the global nonproliferation regime and ways to strengthen it? How should the two countries approach the 2010 NPT Review Conference? How can the U.S. balance commitments to defend its allies with Article VI disarmament obligations?

12:30 PM Lunch – *Royal Ocean Terrace Restaurant*

**1:30 PM Session III: Understanding Deterrence and the Roles of Strategic Systems
*Session IIIA: America's Strategic Security Vision for Asia***

Presenter: Brad Roberts

This session explores the role of nuclear weapons and strategic systems (such as missile defense and other defense technologies) in U.S. national security strategy. What is the current posture? What changes can be expected in the Obama administration? Can we anticipate some of the thinking in the next Nuclear Posture Review? Speakers should focus on the strategic implications in East Asia and ways that the global nonproliferation regime can impact U.S. strategy.

3:00 PM Coffee Break

3:15 PM *Session IIIB: Japan's Strategic Security Vision for Asia*

Presenter: Ken Jimbo

How does Japan view nuclear weapons and strategic systems? Is this view changing? Why? How does it view the nuclear balance of power in East Asia? How does North Korean proliferation affect this situation? What is the status of the nuclear debate in Japan? How does Japan view extended deterrence? What implications does this have for the alliance with the United States? What does Japan wish to see (or not see) in the next U.S. Nuclear Posture Review?

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY (cont'd.)

5:00 PM **Session adjourns**

6:30 PM **Reception and Dinner** – *Villas Lawn*

February 10, 2009 - TUESDAY

8:30 AM **Continental Breakfast** – *Lanai Room*

9:00 AM **Session IV: Views of the U.S.-Japan Defense Relationship – Roles and Responsibilities**

Session IVA: Japan's Perspective

Japan presenter: Noboru Yamaguchi

This session focuses on respective views of the bilateral security alliance. How does Japan view its role and that of the Self-Defense Forces in regional and global security challenges? Is that view changing? How does Japan see the alliance functioning? What is Japan's role in the alliance? What progress has been made on implementation of the May 2006 "United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation"? What obstacles exist to future implementation? What can be done to overcome them?

10:30 AM **Coffee Break**

10:45 AM *Session IVB: U.S. Perspective*

U.S. presenter: Jim Przystup

How does the U.S. see its alliance with Japan? What are the two countries' respective roles within the alliance? What are the key issues in and obstacles to future development of the alliance and the realization of those roles and objectives? How will the redeployment of U.S. forces in Japan affect the alliance? What are Washington's expectations? What does it want Japan to contribute to the alliance?

12:30 PM **Lunch** – *Royal Ocean Terrace Restaurant*

2:00 PM **Session V: Enhancing Collaborative, Cooperative Strategic Security Activities**

Japan presenter: Sugio Takahashi

U.S. presenter: Mike McDevitt

This session will focus on the future of the alliance and ways to make it more effective. Do the two countries share a common vision of the alliance? What is it? What are the key challenges to the realization of that vision? How can the two countries ensure that the alliance contributes to national defense and

February 10, 2009 – TUESDAY (cont'd.)

regional security? How can the alliance work with other U.S. allies – in particular, the ROK but also Australia – and partners, such as India? How can it engage China? How can Japan influence the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review and how can both countries influence the 2010 NPT Review Conference?

3:30 PM Session VI: Conclusions and Wrap Up

Appendix C

hosted by
PACIFIC FORUM CSIS
and sponsored by the
U.S. DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY

U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue

Royal Lahaina Resort ♦ Maui
February 8-10, 2009

YOUNG LEADERS AGENDA

February 8, 2009 - SUNDAY

Participants Arrive

- 5:30PM** Meet Ana and Brad for Young Leaders introduction- *Pool, Royal Ocean Terrace Bar*
- 6:30 PM** Welcome Reception and Dinner – *Villas Lawn*

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY

- 7:30AM** YL Meeting with Jim Kelly, President Emeritus, Pacific Forum CSIS - *Lanai Room*
- 8:30 AM** Continental Breakfast – *Lanai Room*
- 9:00 AM** Opening Remarks (Introductions, review of 2008 meeting, and Dec. trip)
- 9:30 AM** **Session I: Perceptions of Asian and Global Strategic Security Environments**
U.S. presenter: James Kelly
Japan presenter: Masashi Nishihara

This session explores each country's view of the global and regional security environment, to identify issues, and highlight shared and divergent concerns. How does each country see the Asian balance of power? What are the principle threats to each country? To the regional balance of power? How are these threats best tackled? How have the perceptions and concerns highlighted at last year's meeting changed? Is the alliance relationship better or worse than a year ago? Why? Topics could include China's growing status and influence; relations with Taiwan and the cross-Strait relationship; North Korea

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY (cont'd.)

and prospects for relations with Pyongyang; relations with South Korea; the Middle East, Central and South Asian challenges. This overview will set the stage for subsequent discussions of U.S. and Japanese security policies and efforts to address these challenges.

11:00 AM Coffee Break

11:15 AM Session II: Perceptions of Global Nonproliferation/Counterproliferation Strategies

Japan presenter: Satoshi Morimoto

U.S. presenter: Corey Hinderstein

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the spread of nuclear weapons, has been identified as one of the top security threats by President Obama and numerous U.S. national security documents. Do both countries agree on the threat posed by nuclear weapons proliferation? Its priority? The response? Do they agree on the status of the global nonproliferation regime and ways to strengthen it? How should the two countries approach the 2010 NPT Review Conference? How can the U.S. balance commitments to defend its allies with Article VI disarmament obligations?

12:30 PM Lunch – *Royal Ocean Terrace Restaurant*

**1:30 PM Session III: Understanding Deterrence and the Roles of Strategic Systems
*Session IIIA: America's Strategic Security Vision for Asia***

Presenter: Brad Roberts

This session explores the role of nuclear weapons and strategic systems (such as missile defense and other defense technologies) in U.S. national security strategy. What is the current posture? What changes can be expected in the Obama administration? Can we anticipate some of the thinking in the next Nuclear Posture Review? Speakers should focus on the strategic implications in East Asia and ways that the global nonproliferation regime can impact U.S. strategy.

3:00 PM Coffee Break

3:15 PM *Session IIIB: Japan's Strategic Security Vision for Asia*

Presenter: Ken Jimbo

How does Japan view nuclear weapons and strategic systems? Is this view changing? Why? How does it view the nuclear balance of power in East Asia?

February 9, 2009 - MONDAY (cont'd.)

How does North Korean proliferation affect this situation? What is the status of the nuclear debate in Japan? How does Japan view extended deterrence? What implications does this have for the alliance with the United States? What does Japan wish to see (or not see) in the next U.S. Nuclear Posture Review?

5:00 PM **Session adjourns**

6:30 PM **Reception and Dinner – Villas Lawn**

8:00PM **Young Leaders meeting with Corey Hinderstein, Nuclear Threat Initiative - Villas Lawn**

February 10, 2009 - TUESDAY

7:30AM **Young Leaders meeting with Keiko Iizuka, Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, Brookings Institution and Deputy Political Editor, Yomiuri Shimbun - Lanai Room**

8:30 AM **Continental Breakfast – Lanai Room**

9:00 AM **Session IV: Views of the U.S.-Japan Defense Relationship – Roles and Responsibilities**

Session IVA: Japan's Perspective

Japan presenter: Noboru Yamaguchi

This session focuses on respective views of the bilateral security alliance. How does Japan view its role and that of the Self-Defense Forces in regional and global security challenges? Is that view changing? How does Japan see the alliance functioning? What is Japan's role in the alliance? What progress has been made on implementation of the May 2006 "United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation"? What obstacles exist to future implementation? What can be done to overcome them?

10:30 AM **Coffee Break**

10:45 AM ***Session IVB: A U.S. Perspective***

U.S. presenter: Jim Przystup

How does the U.S. see its alliance with Japan? What are the two countries' respective roles within the alliance? What are the key issues in and obstacles to future development of the alliance and the realization of those roles and objectives? How will the redeployment of U.S. forces in Japan affect the alliance? What are Washington's expectations? What does it want Japan to contribute to the alliance?

February 10, 2009 - TUESDAY (cont'd.)

12:30 PM **Lunch to Go**– *Royal Ocean Terrace Restaurant*

2:00 PM **Session V: Enhancing Collaborative, Cooperative Strategic Security Activities**

Japan presenter: Sugio Takahashi

U.S. presenter: Mike McDevitt

This session will focus on the future of the alliance and ways to make it more effective. Do the two countries share a common vision of the alliance? What is it? What are the key challenges to the realization of that vision? How can the two countries ensure that the alliance contributes to national defense and regional security? How can the alliance work with other U.S. allies – in particular, the ROK but also Australia -- and partners, such as India? How can it engage China? How can Japan influence the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review and how can both countries influence the 2010 NPT Review Conference?

3:30 PM **Session VI: Conclusions and Wrap Up**

4:00 PM **Conference adjourns**

4:10 PM **Young Leaders Wrap-up Session**