

The Critical Juncture of Japan's Defense Policy vis-a-vis the U.S. Strategy

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Japan's defense policy is presently undergoing a comprehensive review for the first time since the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent launch of the global "war on terrorism" - meaning that this policy is now at a critical juncture.

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The Council on Security and Defense Policy, which is a private advisory body to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, issued a report on October 4, 2004 recommending a fundamental transformation of Japan's military stance. The report adopted the concept of a "Multi-Functional Flexible Defense Force" to address the threats from military tension in Northeast Asia, as well as new threats such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and transnational organized crimes - threats that are often described as "asymmetrical." A new version of the National Defense Program Outline was adopted by the Cabinet on December 10, 2004 based on this report[1].

This article provides an overview of Japan's defense policy and an analysis of the ongoing military transformation. The focus is on the expansion of Japan's interoperability with U.S. forces that has taken place since the 1990s in the context of the U.S.' post-Cold War global strategy, as well as the widening gap between the concept and the reality of Japan's "exclusively defense-oriented policy," which it has been officially committed to under Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

Japanese peace advocates have long been striving for the development of non-military and non-violent approaches to peace and security. Affirming such an effort is the genuine materialization of Japan's Peace Constitution. There has been a fundamental tension, however, between peace movements and the government on the understanding of this Constitution. While the former sees it as a universal and ambitious basis for non-military and non-violent security, the latter has tried to limit its significance only to operational guidelines of its de facto military forces. This article will also provide an analysis of how the government's operational guidelines have been explained, implemented and transformed.

Background: Japan's Basic Defense Policy under Article 9

Japan's defense policy since World War II has been based on two fundamental institutions: Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, which was proclaimed in 1946; and the 1951 Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, which was revised in 1960. Japan has relied on U.S. military forces for its national security, including nuclear deterrence; and has also adhered to an explicit commitment to restrict its own

military capability under Article 9.

The article reads as follows.

Article 9:

1) Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Although Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF), which were established in 1954, have long been criticized as inconsistent with Article 9, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)-led governments have claimed that the SDF is "exclusively defense-oriented." Regarding the relation between the Constitution and the SDF, the government's interpretations of the Article 9 include the following points[2] :

(1) Minimum necessary level:

Japan is permitted to possess a self-defense capability limited to the minimum necessary level.

(2) Conditions for Exercise of the Right of Self-Defense:

The use of armed force as an exercise of the right of self-defense will be authorized only in restricted conditions such as imminent aggression against Japan if there is no appropriate means other than armed forces, which would be confined to the minimum necessary level.

(3) Prohibition of Overseas Deployment for the Purpose of using Force:

The dispatch of armed troops to foreign territory for the purpose of using force is generally beyond the limit of the minimum necessary level and is not permissible under the Constitution.

(4) Prohibition of Exercise of the Right of Collective Self-Defense:

Although Japan has the right of collective self-defense under international law, the exercise of the right of collective self-defense exceeds the limit of minimum necessary level and is not permissible under the Constitution.

In addition, a set of basic national policies are cited by national leaders as the materialization of Article 9, which include the following:

— Exclusively Defense-Oriented Policy

Defensive force may not be employed unless and until an armed attack is mounted on Japan by another country, in which case it must be limited to the minimum level necessary to defend itself. Furthermore the extent of defense forces and their use must be kept to the minimum necessary level.

— Not Becoming a Military Power

Japan will not become a military power that might pose a threat to the security of other countries. It will not possess military forces over and above the minimum necessary level.

— *Three Non-Nuclear Principles*

The Three Non-Nuclear Principles are not to possess, produce or permit the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan. These principles were firstly committed to by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in 1967 and approved by the Resolution at the House of Representatives in 1971. Since then, the government has regarded them as a fixed line of national policy.

— *Three Principles on Arms Exports*

The Three Principles on Arms Control, declared at the Diet session in 1967, are to prohibit arms exports to the following: communist countries, countries under arms embargo by resolution of the United Nations Security Council, and countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts. In addition, the government announced the collateral policy guideline in 1976 that Japan shall not promote arms export, regardless of the destination. (Japan-U.S. security arrangements have regarded military technology transfer to the U.S., however, as an exception.)

National policies that the government claims are “exclusively defense-oriented” have been fundamentally challenged by drastic changes in the international security environment in the last decade. Developments in U.S. military doctrine since the end of the Cold War have forced Japan’s “self-defense” paradigm to shift accordingly, deepening Japan’s dilemma over how to exist as a country that possesses a Peace Constitution and also remains an ally of the U.S.

Post-Cold War Redefinition of Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

The Gulf War and Overseas Dispatch of JSDF

The 1991 Gulf War was an international incident that paved the way for the JSDF to engage in overseas activities. After the ceasefire by the Coalition Forces, six Maritime SDF vessels deployed to the Persian Gulf for minesweeping activities. When the Soviet Union collapsed, many strategists vigorously argued the need to address a new threat of regional conflicts and to create a “New World Order.” In this context, the Diet adopted legislation to allow the SDF to engage in UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) in the name of “international peace cooperation.”

The 1992 International Peace Cooperation Law (PKO Law) provided the SDF with a new mandate to engage in UN PKOs under strict conditions that were agreed upon after hard debate on the legitimacy of foreign deployment that took place both in and outside the Diet. The Five Participation Principles are as follows:

- 1 *An agreement on a ceasefire* shall have been reached among the parties in conflict.
- 2 *The parties in conflict, including territorial state(s), have given their consent* to the deployment of peacekeeping forces (PKFs) and Japan’s participation in the force.
- 3 The PKF shall maintain strict impartiality.
- 4 Should any of the above requirements cease to be satisfied, Japan’s unit must be able to withdraw from the operation.

5 *The use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary* in order to protect personnel's lives, etc.

JSDF has participated in UN-sponsored and other international activities in Cambodia (1992-93), Mozambique (1993-1995), Rwanda (1994), Golan Heights (1996- present), East Timor (1999-2000, 2002- present), Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003).

The government says that these overseas activities do not contradict the Constitution since they are not "for the purpose of using force." The government maintains, moreover, that the five principles - including limitations on the use of weapons - are consistent with the Constitution.

1996 Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration

In April 1996, the heads of Japan and the United States issued the "Japan-U.S.. Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century." The joint declaration recognized that "since the end of the Cold War, the possibility of global armed conflict has receded." It also stated that "the Asia-Pacific region has become the most dynamic area of the globe," although "instability and uncertainty persist in the region." It proclaimed that the both countries are committed to maintain "a stable and prosperous environment for the Asia-Pacific region as we enter the twenty-first century."

This emphasis on the "Asia-Pacific region" was the main reason why the Joint Declaration was called a redefinition of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. Article 6 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty states that the stationing of U.S. forces in Japan is for the purpose of "contributing to the security of Japan, as well as international peace and security in the Far East." The "Far East" was defined, according to Japan's official interpretation adopted in 1960, as the area north of the Philippines (including Taiwan). The "Asia-Pacific Region" could imply broader geographical coverage, however - especially in the context of the U.S.' post-Cold War global strategy.

As explained above, Japan had already sent the SDF abroad in the name of cooperation with the United Nations. Such a redefinition of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements, or the virtual expansion of the scope of bilateral defense cooperation, aroused public concern regarding Japanese military expansionism in the region.

New Guidelines and Related Legislation

In the joint declaration, the two governments agreed to initiate a review of the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation to "promote bilateral policy coordination" over their defense policies and military postures. The "importance of interoperability in all facets" between JSDF and the U.S. forces was emphasized.

As a result of a subsequent review, the New Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation were approved by the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee in 1997, after which time the Cabinet decided to commit Japan to take steps to ensure the effectiveness of the guidelines. Legislation was passed in 1999 that included the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, and The Ship Inspection Operations Law was also approved in 2000.

Through these legislative measures, Japan has formalized its response to "situations in areas surrounding Japan" such as surveillance, minesweeping, search and rescue activities, inspection of ships, use of facilities (both SDF and civilian), and provision of other logistical support such as supplies, transportation, medical services, and communications. The coordination mechanism between Japan and the United States over defense policy under normal circumstances was also strengthened.

The “situations in areas surrounding Japan” was not clearly defined during the Diet debate, however, as the government argued that the “areas surrounding Japan” did not represent a specific geographical concept. The series of bilateral agreements and national legislation paved the way for Japan to be engaged in logistical support of the U.S. forces, therefore, even if the case was not “self-defense” of Japan in a traditional sense. This mechanism, combined with the authorization of JSDF overseas activities under the UN umbrella, has become the basis of JSDF integration into the U.S. global military posture.

The restrictions on JSDF overseas activities have been gradually lifted. The 1992 PKO Law originally allowed the SDF to participate only in logistical support such as medical care, transportation and communication, and suspended assignments for core PKF units engaged in monitoring, stationing, or patrolling. In 2001, however, the law was revised and the suspension was lifted. In addition, the revision loosened the original strict standards concerning the use of weapons by SDF personnel overseas.

Post-September 11 Paradigm Shift and Japan

September 11 and September 17

The attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, enabled the Bush Administration to argue that military transformation, which had actually been pursued since the end of the Cold War, should be strengthened and justified in the name of a “war on terrorism.” In the National Security Strategy of September 2002, the President announced that his country was ready to shift the target in its security strategy from the traditional Cold War threats into new “asymmetric” threats such as “Rogue States,” terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Strategy reads:

“America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones. We are menaced less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few. We must defeat these threats to our Nation, allies, and friends.” [3]

President Bush also stated that his country would “not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to excise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country.” The doctrine of preemption was actually implemented when the United States invaded Iraq to overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein. At the outset of the invasion, President Bush announced that the military action was “to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.” He made it clear that this was a preemptive or preventive military action to get rid of the perceived threat by declaring: “We will meet that threat now... so that we do not have to meet it later.”[4]

The September 11 attacks and the global “war on terrorism” have posed fundamental challenges to the security policy paradigm worldwide. Japan was no exception. It should be noted, however, that another historical event in Northeast Asia has been deepening the complexity of the security debate in Japan since the outset of this century: the Pyongyang Summit, which took place on September 17, 2002 between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Chairman Kim Jong-Il of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) National Defense Commission.

Remarkably, the two governments agreed in the *Pyongyang Declaration* that “they would make every possible effort for an early normalization of the relations.” This did not mean automatic progress, however, toward the easing of Cold War tension among states in Northeast Asia.

Kim Jong-Il admitted at the Pyongyang Summit that his government had abducted Japanese

nationals in the 1970s. Though Kim apologized, it was far from acceptable to the Japanese national sentiment since the DPRK has not been accountable for the historical facts or the current status of abductees. There is widespread speculation that many of the abductees may still be alive, despite the DPRK's official announcement that they have died. Bilateral talks to uncover the facts are still underway, and it is unlikely that substantive negotiations to normalize diplomatic relations – including compensation for Japanese colonial rule of Korea – can begin before the dispute over the abductions is settled.

The abductions have stimulated hostile and nationalistic sentiments among Japanese people against North Korea. Social movements with explicit slogans to fight the current DPRK regime, of which some have an anti-communist background based on Cold War ideology, have also gained national momentum. Economic sanctions against the DPRK are widely advocated, moreover, among the media and members of the Diet.

The strategic need to promote interoperability with post-September 11 U.S. military doctrine, combined with the post-September 11 Japanese public momentum to increase hostility against its former colony and Cold War enemy, has served to accelerate a complicated transformation of Japan's military posture and has sharpened the contradiction of an Article 9-based defense policy.

Emergency Legislation

Legislation was approved in the Diet from 2003 through 2004 regarding response to armed attack. The three laws approved in June 2003, of which the core is the Law to Respond to Armed Attacks, covered the responsibilities of the national government, local governments, and designated public institutions; as well as burden sharing, reinforcement of the national Security Council, and smooth operation of the SDF. Subsequently, seven laws and three treaties were approved in March 2004 covering measures to protect the lives of nationals, ensure smooth SDF activities and increase the effectiveness of the activities of U.S. armed forces through such measures as an amendment of the *Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)*.

While this legislation may be understood as a progression from the 1997 Guidelines of Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, the atmosphere surrounding the Diet debate in 2003-2004 was quite different from that regarding the Law Concerning Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan in 1999. During the recent debate, the majority of the population seemed to perceive threats over Japan much more imminently – a situation facilitated by the U.S.-led global “war on terrorism” and hostile sentiment against North Korea. Almost 90 percent of Japan's Diet members voted for the first three pieces of emergency legislation in 2003, following several amendments. It should also be noted that the emergency legislation begins with general principles that are closely related to the daily lives of the population, including the roles of local governments, as though it were the law's utmost concern. The law then moves to the promotion of interoperability with U.S. forces, which must be much more essential in terms of strategic and defense policy than the concern with people's lives.

SDF and the “War on Terrorism”

The Bush administration's “war on terrorism” has posed a serious dilemma to the Japanese government, which had claimed that any SDF contributions to overseas activities would be in the context of UN-based international peace cooperation and would not involve the use of force. Contributing to the U.S.-led “war on terrorism” by deploying the SDF to Afghanistan and Iraq was not authorized in the 1992 PKO Law, which emphasizes the existence of a ceasefire, impartiality, or local consent – all of which are fundamentally contrary to the unilateral character of the U.S.-led global war.

For this reason, the Japanese government created ad hoc legislation to enable SDF participation in logistical support of U.S. forces in the “war on terrorism.” *The Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law* of October 2001 authorized the SDF to conduct the supply of fuel to the U.S., UK and other nations’ ships in the Indian Ocean while they were engaged in military actions in Afghanistan, as well as other activities like transportation and intelligence collection. The Iraq Special Measures Law of July 2003 authorized the deployment of the SDF to Iraq in the name of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. An SDF unit has been deployed since December 2003 to Samawah, the capital of AL-Muthanna Province in Southeast Iraq, and has been engaged mainly in water supply activities.

Contrary to the government’s insistence in 1992 that it would be able to withdraw its units from peacekeeping forces overseas when the preconditions of ceasefire, impartiality and consent no longer existed, the reality is that Japan has remained unable to decide when to withdraw its troops from Iraq – even after insurgents murdered two Japanese diplomats in November 2003, two journalists in May 2004 and a kidnapped traveler in October 2004. As the security situation in Iraq worsens, other U.S. allies – including Spain, the Philippines, Hungary and the Netherlands – have already withdrawn or decided to withdraw their troops. In contrast, however, the Japanese government still sticks to the interpretation that the area where JSDF is stationed is not combat zone. This is the only way to justify the SDF deployment under Article 9, although this rationalization obviously does not reflect the reality of security in Iraq.

The U.S. Preemptive Doctrine and Japan

The explicit preemptive military stance adopted by the Bush administration poses another serious challenge to Japan’s “exclusively defense-oriented policy.” First, when the United States was about to invade Iraq in “excising the right of self-defense by acting preemptively,” Japan’s behavior in the international community was remarkable: it failed to join most of the UN Security Council members in insisting upon a UN resolution to authorize military action in Iraq. In addition, Prime Minister Koizumi issued a statement right after the U.S. invasion saying, “The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an issue not at all irrelevant to Asia, the region surrounding Japan,” [5] which could be interpreted to mean that the government would approve of a preemptive strike on the DPRK.

Second, not a few members of both of the ruling and opposition parties in the Diet raised the necessity of possessing offensive capabilities against enemy missile bases. After the DPRK announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003, then Defense Secretary Shigeru Ishiba (who resigned in September 2004) commented in response to a question regarding DPRK’s nuclear missile threat[6] that the possession of offensive capabilities “should be discussed properly at the Diet.” Although this is not a mainstream position so far, the issue may arise again given the hostile sentiment against North Korea.

Third, the Okinawan newspaper *Ryukyu Shimpo* reported that the U.S. 31st Marine Expedition Unit from Okinawa was the main force in the attack on Fallujah in November 2004[7]. It is becoming clearer to the Japanese public that Japan-based U.S. Forces are actually carrying out preemptive military actions worldwide in the name of the “war on terrorism.” The standard argument that the U.S. forces in Japan are to protect Japan and a stable “Far East,” based on the 1960 Japan-U.S. security arrangements, is losing credibility.

Missile Defense

The development of a missile defense system by Japan should be understood in the context of the drastic shift in U.S. military posture. In the 1990s, the Clinton administration pursued a limited missile defense system to protect the country from the ballistic missile, which it regarded as one of

the main threats in the post-Cold War world order. In July 1998, the Rumsfeld Report focused on the danger of ballistic missiles, and then the DPRK launched the TaepoDong rocket in August - both factors that accelerated the Administration's plan to build a missile defense system.

Japan formally started cooperation on a missile defense system with the United States in December 1998 when the Cabinet approved joint technological research of a Navy Theater Wide Defense (NTWD) system. The Clinton administration's limited missile defense system initiative comprised two categories: National Missile Defense (NMD) to protect the U.S. homeland, and Theater Missile Defense (TMD) to protect the U.S. forces deployed overseas and allied countries. NTWD, a system to intercept ballistic missiles during their mid-flight segment with a Standard Missile from an Aegis ship, was one type of TMD according to the Clinton administration's definition of its limited missile defense concept.

The government of Japan clarified in the Cabinet statement that the missile defense system was "an exclusively defense-oriented measure," and that Japan was making efforts "to tackle the issue independently." [8] The system was presented as purely defensive and consistent with its basic policy that prohibited exercise of the right of collective self-defense. Also, the government showed a very careful approach toward upgrading its cooperation with the United States by stating, "the transition to the development and implementation stages ... will be judged separately" only after "sufficient examination of the possibility of realizing BMD and the ideal way for the defense of Japan to develop in the future." [9]

Technical cooperation on the NTWD system covered the four elements of a Standard Missile launched from an Aegis ship: (1) Infrared Seeker to identify and track the target; (2) Kinetic Warhead to collide and destroy the enemy ballistic missile warhead; (3) Nose Cone to protect the infrared seeker; and (4) Stage-Two Rocket Engine in a three-stage missile. Japan has spent almost 15.6 billion yen (U.S. 150 million dollars) up to fiscal year 2003 (960 million yen (U.S. 9 million) in FY 1999, 2.1 billion yen (U.S. 20 million) in FY 2000, 3.7 billion yen (U.S. 35 million) in FY 2001, 6.9 billion yen (U.S. 66 million) in FY 2002, and 1.9 billion yen (U.S. 18 million) in FY 2003).

Japan's missile defense policy faced a serious dilemma, however, when President Bush came to power in 2001. First, the president abandoned the concept of having two categories of NMD and TMD, and introduced the concept of building a single, integrated, comprehensive and multi-layered missile defense system to cover the globe. NTWD, as a part of TMD, was now renamed the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense. Although many experts even under the Clinton administration had pointed out that NTWD technologies could be integrated into the NMD system for the purpose of protecting the U.S. homeland, it is now almost impossible to make either a technical or conceptual distinction between a system that protects a specific theater from one that protects the U.S. homeland. This posed a fundamental challenge to Japan in terms of the right of collective self-defense.

In December 2002, moreover, President Bush announced that the early stage of missile defense system deployment would start in 2004. The technical feasibilities of missile defense had not yet been proven in an operational environment. Instead, the administration spoke of "spiral development," arguing that the system is evolutionary and must be deployed in order to be tested. An official of the Japanese Defense Agency reportedly said that the U.S. announcement of such hasty deployment was "shocking" and, "we cannot catch up with the U.S. global strategy if we only maintain cooperative research [on missile defense]." [10]

In December 2003, the Japanese government announced that it would buy the two systems of Aegis BMD and the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) from the United States. The amount of 106.8 billion yen (U.S. 1 billion) was allocated in the FY 2004 budget for missile defense-related purposes,

mainly to modify Aegis ships and buy Standard Missiles and PAC-3 missiles from the United States. In addition, 7.6 billion yen (U.S. 72 million) was included for continued cooperative research on Aegis BMD technologies. A Cabinet statement explained, “the Japan-U.S. Joint Technological Research Project currently underway is not for the system being introduced this time, but it aims to improve the capability of future interceptors.” [11]

In other words, Japan – after five years of technological research at a cost of U.S. 150 million – decided to buy systems from the U.S. that were not the subject of its own research and that were in much earlier stages than it had been researching. The government recognized that “the technological feasibilities of the BMD system have been verified”[12] through tests in the United States. If the systems Japan was introducing were really effective for the purpose of Japan’s defense, however, there would be no way to logically rationalize continued technological research, for which great amount of money had been and would continue to be spent.

Despite the government’s claim that the missile defense system “will be operated based on Japan’s independent judgment,”[13] it is extremely difficult to distinguish this system either technologically or politically from the integrated global missile defense system under President Bush’s initiative. Prohibition of the exercise of the right of collective self-defense now faces a critical challenge, therefore, as missile defense proceeds.

Continued joint technological research with the United States, which has been interpreted as consistent with the Three Principles on Arms Export, will inevitably result in development and manufacturing at a certain point in the future, where Japan will sell manufactured components of the weapons system to the United States. The leaders of Japanese industry, including the Federation of Economic Organizations[14], began to vigorously advocate revision of the Three Principles on Arms Export. Cooperation between the U.S. and Japanese military and industrial communities is being strengthened in the context of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) – especially in the field of Information Technology.

The U.S.-led acceleration of missile defense in Japan is not only complementing the U.S. preemptive doctrine in the region, but is also bringing the basic defense policies of Japan under its Constitution into a serious crisis.

Visions for Japan’s Security Policy

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities issued a report on “Japan’s Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities” on October 4, 2004 that encouraged the government to go beyond the traditional “Minimum Necessary Basic Defense Force” in favor of a “Multi-Functional Flexible Defense Force.” This new concept can be understood as the result of various trends that have emerged since the late 1990s. The Council, chaired by Hiroshi Araki of Tokyo Electric Power Company and composed of ten experts from the academic, industrial and defense communities, made the following key recommendations:

1 To redefine the SDF’s overseas activities for International Peace Cooperation as one of its primary missions, with legislation that would enable the SDF to engage in various overseas activities even outside the framework of UN PKOs without repeatedly adopting ad hoc legislation.

2 To revise the Three Principles on Arms Export, especially for the purpose of cooperation on missile defense with the United States. The report proposed that the government relax the ban on arms exports (at least to the U.S.) and reexamine its export control regime, as well as determine what kind of weapons and technologies could be exported to which countries. (This would enable Japan to

export weapons or weapons components to the U.S. not only for missile defense system, but also for other field of high-quality weapons in the context of RMA to the U.S. and NATO members.)

On the whole, the report seems to recommend the transformation of Japan's military stance from a Cold War-type one into a U.S.-like flexible posture in order to address new "asymmetric" threats. A remarkable feature of the report, however, is the mention of both traditional and new threats:

"...traditional threats of inter-state conflict in the areas surrounding Japan have not disappeared. Preparing for such threats is the core role that defense forces of any independent state should play. At the same time, the defense force is expected to deal with an attack against Japan or Japanese citizens by newly emergent non-state actors, participate in international peace cooperation activities, and deal with large-scale disasters." [15]

As described earlier, many important decisions regarding Japan's security policies have been made in order to follow the U.S. strategy - not based on Japan's own strategic judgments of how to promote peace and ensure regional stability. As a result, we cannot expect substantial reductions in Cold War-oriented force postures of the SDF and U.S. forces in Japan. By contrast, South Korea has agreed to reduce the U.S. forces in Korea by one third, in return for substantial expansion of the roles of South Korean national forces, as well as a huge investment in missile defense. In Japan's case, there will not be substantial reductions in U.S.FJ, but there will be expanded roles of JSDF, as well as rushed development of missile defense and other military technologies. This is being justified in the name of the "coexistence" of both traditional and new threats.

Based on this report, the Cabinet adopted a new version of the National Defense Program Outline on December 10, 2004 that called for "an integrated response" to threats, and stated that "Japan's future defense capability should be a multi-functional, flexible, and effective force." It wrote that "military force has begun to play broader roles and is actively used for various purposes, such as preventing conflict and reconstructing failed states," and suggested that the SDF play an expanded role abroad in the name of conflict prevention and peace-building. At the same time, the government adopted the Mid-Term Defense Program (FY 2005-2009), which stated that Japan would "efficiently establish multi-functional, flexible and effective defense forces," while "maintaining the most capabilities of its defense forces to cope with large-scale invasion." Also remarkable was the Cabinet statement to ease the ban on arms export, which said that "the Government will exempt the items related to the BMD systems from the regulations of the Three Principles on Arms Export and their related provisions." [16]

The fundamental challenges for peace advocates in Japan are to stop the unprincipled expansion of the SDF's military roles, which go far beyond "minimum defense" self-designated by the government itself; to promote the reduction and elimination of outdated Cold War-type forces and equipment; and to demonstrate non-military methods of addressing emerging "new threats." These goals should be accomplished, moreover, by promoting peaceful conflict prevention, disarmament and non-proliferation; as well as by addressing poverty, economic injustice, human rights violations, and the other root causes of conflict and arms races.

Endnote

[1]: Main body of this article was written before the new National Defense Program Outline was adopted on December 10, 2004.

[2]: Japan Defense Agency, "Defense of Japan 2002"

[3]: The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002

[4]: President Bush Addresses the Nation, March 19, 2003

[5]: Statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Cabinet Decision, March 20, 2003

[6]: Budget Committee, House of Representatives, January 24, 2004

[7]: *Ryukyu Shimpō*, November 7, 2004

[8]: Statement of the Chief Cabinet Secretary Regarding Cooperative Technical Research with the United States on Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), December 25, 1998

[9]: *ibid.*

[10]: *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2003

[11]: Statement by the Chief of Cabinet Secretary, December 19, 2003

[12]: *ibid.*

[13]: *ibid.*

[14]: Nippon Keidanren or the Federation of Economic Organizations of Japan has issued a policy paper on future defense posture on July 20, 2004 which included a recommendation to amend the Three Principles on Arms Exports.

[15]: The Council on Security and Defense Capabilities Report – Japan’s Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities, October 4, 2004

[16]: Statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, December 10, 2004

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