



U.S. National Security Strategy: Implications for the U.S.-Japan Alliance

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Edited by Shihoko Goto

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Cover: Two F-2 fighter of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force before takeoff
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Introduction

Tensions continue to rise in East Asia, not least with the continued threat of a nuclear North Korea, coupled with China's ever-growing military, economic, and political aspirations for regional hegemony. Expectations for Japan to play a critical role to ensure peace and stability have increased as a result, and strong ties between Tokyo and Washington remain critical for the two sides to work closely together.

On March 14, 2018, the Wilson Center's Asia Program hosted a day-long conference on the U.S. national security strategy and its implications for the U.S.-Japan alliance. The closed-door forum, made possible through support from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, brought together nine panelists, two dozen analysts, and officials from the current administration as participants.

This is a collection of essays from three of those participants. Contributions from **Rumi Aoyama** of Waseda University, **Hiroyasu Akutsu** of Japan's National Institute for Defense Studies, and the Wilson Center's **Abraham Denmark** should further discussions about understanding U.S.-China strategic competition, the way forward on North Korea, and options to update

China

Shared deep concerns about the rise of China and its implications for the established liberal international order are a major area of concern for both Washington and Tokyo, though it is perhaps felt more acutely in the latter.

ese concerns span several issue areas—including Chinese military modernization, its expanding economic influence across the Indo-Pacific, and its apparent territorial ambitions.

Scholars from both the United States and Japan shared concerns about China's rapidly growing military capabilities, fueled by continually rising military budgets and an apparent ability to rapidly acquire and integrate cutting-edge technologies into tools of the state. This includes the development of advanced 5th-generation fighter aircraft, large numbers of advanced surface combatants, and bureaucratic reforms designed to make the People's Liberation Army (PLA) a more formidable fighting force.

For Japan, concerns also extend to China's use of non-military and para-military maritime forces to assert territorial claims and complicate Japanese response options. This especially applies to the waters adjacent to the Senkaku Islands, which China claims as the Diaoyu Islands. Due to Japan's pacifist constitution and related rules of engagement, China's use of non-military forces to assert its claims poses a challenge for Tokyo. Concurrently, the increased tempo of Chinese military activities in Japanese territorial air- and sea-space is taxing the ability of Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) to respond, and thus putting a financial and logistical strain on Tokyo.

Complicating matters in the Alliance has been U.S. disinclination to confront China over such "salami-slicing." While Washington has overtly included the Senkakus as covered by its commitments under the U.S.-Japan Alliance, it has proven reluctant to risk explicit and direct tension with China over nonmilitary vessels that, though annoying, are not known to have technically violated Japan's territorial waters.

Several other security issues play a role in discussions between Tokyo and Washington about China. Japanese and American scholars alike see dynamics in the South China Sea as linked to those in the East China Sea, and have grown concerned about Beijing's apparent success in changing the regional status quo, expanding its military capacity, and intimidating other claimants in the South China Sea.

Generally speaking, many in Japan are concerned that their interests are not deeply shared by the United States, and may not be reflected in any bilateral engagements between Washington and Pyongyang. Specifically, Tokyo is worried that the United States may focus on dismantling North Korea's ICBM capabilities to the exclusion of other North Korean capabilities that directly threaten Japan. Additionally, Prime Minister Abe has emphasized the persistent issue of Japanese abductees as a top priority for his government, and some scholars in Japan are concerned that the United

On the other hand, there exists among some Japanese observers a complex, internally inconsistent, analysis of the Trump administration's over-

Options to Update the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Common Strategic Objectives and the Indo-Pacific Strategy

Hiroyasu Akutsu

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The Trump Administration released its first National Security Strategy (NSS) in December 2017. From a Japanese perspective, this important document involves fewer surprises than expected because it has only confirmed many things that the administration has already done over the year since the administration came to power. However, the document

In light of the latest NSS, there are ways to update strategic objectives as a way of deepening Japan-U.S. alliance cooperation and enhancing quadrilateral cooperation between the Japan-U.S. alliance and other like-minded security partners, namely the UK and France, as a way of widening of the alliance in addition to the existing “Quad” among the United States, Australia, India, and Japan.

Key Features of the U.S. National Security Strategy

Principled Realism, Geopolitics, and Geo-economics

A closer look at NSS 2017 takes us to both change and continuity from the previous administrations’ national security strategy. The major constant elements, for example, include American leadership (with stronger emphasis this time), importance of allies and partners, and de facto prominence of Asia or the Asia-Pacific despite the fact that the region is now termed “Indo-Pacific.”

The major changes, on the other hand, may be (e)1.1 (r)1.4 (m)9.9 (p)8.4 (h)-10.2

From Japan's perspective, the administration's appreciation of the strong leadership role of Japan indicates the current close ties at the highest political leadership level of the alliance.

Given all this, what implications are there for the Japan-U.S. alliance and what options are there for updating the alliance? There are many ways to draw such implications and discuss the ways to enhance the alliance. As for the ways to update the alliance, there is a choice between deepening and widening. Deepening involves reforming or enhancing the existing institutional arrangements at the alliance management on

Again, the most contentious policy divergence is seen in economic

The Way Forward: Options for Updating the Alliance

Option One: Deepening by Resetting Common Strategic Objectives

When it comes to deepening alliance cooperation, the alliance has often updated the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Alliance Cooperation. The Guidelines have most recently been updated in 2015, and the efforts to effectively utilize them have also continued since then, including the mutual work to improve the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM). But those efforts have persisted even before the Trump Administration came in power and the new NSS was published.

Given the theme of this paper, I think that one of the effective ways to deepen alliance cooperation is to review and update its common strategic objectives. The 2011 common strategic objectives (http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/pdfs/joint1106_01.pdf) cover a wide range.

of objectives for the Asia-Pacific and some parts of Middle East and Africa (d4)Tjp5.6 (o)

One of the most immediate challenges would be for the like-minded allies and friends to more closely coordinate to better provide necessary security capabilities to maintain and promote the free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific by building on their experiences of joint activities.

Another Quad among the Japan-U.S. alliance, the UK and France have emerged over the year. From May 3rd to 22nd, the Japanese MOD/JSDF conducted a first-ever joint training exercise involving the four partners in the air and sea space around Japan, the air and sea space in and around Guam, and the air and sea space in and around the Northern Mariana Islands. This training took advantage of the opportunity presented by the visit of French naval vessel (BPC Mistral) to Japan on April 29th based on the agreement reached at the Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting held in January as well as the Japan-France summit meeting held in March.

It should be noted that with both the UK and France, Japan has already agreed on ACSA, information-sharing, defense technology exchanges. This indicates that high-level joint exercises of this kind do require a very close relationship and a certain degree and level of capabilities, but just as US-Australia-India-Japan Quad, this Quad also has to improve their interop-

Conclusion

Despite the initial concerns about the new U.S. administration's policy and strategy in late 2016, partly due to Prime Minister Abe's active and direct engagement with President Donald Trump, the Japan-U.S. alliance has managed to deal with the common security challenges including North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. Now that NSS 2017 has set a

The China Challenge: China's Foreign Policy as a Rising Power

Rumi Aoyama

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The rise of China and its increased foreign policy efforts have posed a significant challenge for Japan, the United States, and more importantly for the current existing international order.

It is clear that China is a revisionist power that will inevitably challenge U.S.

China's foreign policy, especially foreign policy under Xi Jinping consists of three pillars: (1) Military rise of China; (2) Economic statecraft; (3) Institutional statecraft.

(1) Military Rise of China “富国强兵 (achieving a rich country and a strong army)” has always been an overarching national goal for the Communist Party of China (CPC) since the founding of the People's Republic China. From around 2009, the Chinese government switched from using the slogan formulated by Deng Xiaoping “韬光养晦; 藏拙 (hide our strength, bide your time)” to a new watchword “积极进取; 奋发有为 (actively seeking to achieve something).” Since then, China foreign posture has become more and more assertive, especially regarding its maritime disputes with Japan, Philippines and Vietnam in East and South China Sea. Beijing established an Air Defense Identification Zone over East China Sea (ECS ADIZ) encompassing disputed maritime territory in November 2014 and has pushed forward with the reclamation of artificial islands in South China Sea. Under Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy—the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has outlined its plan to build a world-class army by 2050. In the last decade, China has become substantially more aggressive in terms of its expanding power projection capability, and its willingness to use coercive power to establish a strategic foothold in the disputed sea. With the newly approved 2018 defense budget by the National People's Congress, China has now become the world's second-largest defense spender. Although China's military spending continues to be dwarfed by that of the United States, China's assertive maritime posture has posed great challenges for many countries in Asia, especially Japan. China's growing military spending, combined with its breakthrough in technological developments, has played an important role in enhancing its influence in the Asia-Pacific region. While its greatly expanded military footprint has raised concerns in many neighboring countries, China has been able to deepen its relations with many countries in the region. It is worth noting that China's improving bilateral relations with many ASEAN nations have led to increased sway of

China in the region. After the July 2016 arbitration ruling, China has put enormous efforts into deepening ties with ASEAN countries. Bilateral relations between China and many ASEAN countries have largely been mended in the last one or two years.

As a result of China's charm offensive policy, the framework on the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea was endorsed by related countries, and negotiations on the first print of the COC has already started. Furthermore, China has also been benefiting from the weakening centrality of ASEAN as a regional institution.

From the security angle, the United States is still the dominant military power in the region. However, China's assertive maritime posture and increased military presence have posed great challenges for Japan, the United States and many other countries in the region. In the Asia-Pacific region, security rivalry between China on one hand, and the United States, Japan on the other is also on the rise.

(2) Economic Statecraft China has been promoting multilateral economic cooperation, including bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP).

To date, China has signed FTAs with 15 nations and regions. There are 11 FTAs under consideration, and 10 FTAs under negotiation. These vigorous economic statecraft serves two purposes: to create a sphere of influence centered on itself and to mitigate the negative impact of TPP and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) on China.

Thus, in the economic realm, China intends to leverage its economic power by establishing a free-trade system, and has been promoting multilateral economic cooperation including bilateral FTAs, RCEP and FTAAP. However, there is a potential risk for countries doing business with China that China may use economic dependence as an instrument of coercion against the recalcitrant countries.

(3) Institutional Statecraft

After the turn of the 21st century, China has been attempting to increase its presence and influence through structural power.

As a permanent member of the security council of the United Nation, it is natural for China to see a strategic opportunity in being directly involved in the existing international order. China is now seeking to increase its influence and political presence through setting the agenda and creating rules for global issues.

In the meantime, China has been increasingly vocal about its dissatisfaction with the current international order and is endeavoring to reform the existing international institutions centered on the Western liberal democracies. BRICS and G20 are the two major platforms for China to advance its interests by reforming the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Winning more say in the current global institutions is one of the top priorities of China's foreign policy today.

In order to enhance its political and institutional power, efforts have also been made to create new global institutions centered on China. Along with other BRICS members, China launched BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) in July 2014. One year later, another China-backed multilateral development bank—Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIIB) newly opened. AIIB, with over 80 member states, received the highest credit rating by three major rating agencies.

In line with its ambition to boost its economic, political and security influence globally, China has established cooperative frameworks with almost every regional institution. In Asia, China has participated in China-ASEAN talks since 1991, established Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001, initiated the Six-Party Talks until 2007, and joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation as an observer in 2005. In addition to the China-European Union (EU) Summit, the China-CEE (Central Eastern European Countries) Summit started in 2012. In Africa, there are two cooperative frameworks in progress—one is the China-Africa Cooperation Summit, the other is the China-AU (African Union) Strategic Dialogue Mechanism. In the Arab world, China launched China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in 2004, and China-GCC (Gulf Cooperation

Council) in 2010. In an attempt to boost bilateral relations with the Pacific Island states, China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum was established in 2006. In a relatively recent move, China joined the Arctic Council as an observer in 2013, and embarked on the China-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum in 2014. These cooperative frameworks have subsumed many joint

Belt and Road Initiative: Building a Socialist Countries with Chinese Characteristics

Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the three salient features of foreign policy of China were brought in together with "the China model." It should be noted that Xi, who coined the phrase "socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era," clearly aspires to build a great "socialist" power. Indeed, in his speech in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi stressed the supremacy of the communist party and declared that China will not imitate the Western political institution of liberal democracy.

The 19th National Congress was convened in Beijing from October 18th to 24th last year. Xi Jinping used this occasion to establish his position as the father of China's ascendancy to the position of being a great power, with the aim of putting himself on a par with Mao Zedong, the founding father of modern China, and Deng Xiaoping, the father of reformation in China and its open-door policy.

Xi Jinping is gambling for a new governance model. The reformation and open-door policy championed by Deng Xiaoping yielded brisk double-digit economic growth for China year after year. At the same time, however, political decay, widening income inequality, worsening environmental destruction and other such problems stemming from these reforms are becoming increasingly apparent. The need for a systemic and comprehensive overhaul of the national strategy for tackling the side effects of Deng Xiaoping's reforms had already been pointed out under the leadership of Hu Jintao, but special interest groups had obstructed

Commerce jointly announced the “One Belt, One Road” concept. In May 2015, specific policies pertaining to the “One Belt, One Road” concept were revealed. In the aftermath of the Belt and Road 2017 Summit, the Chinese government announced two routes for the Maritime Silk Road. In January 2018, a new route named “Polar Silk Road” which connects China with the arctic region was included. To date, “six international economic corridors” for the “One Belt (Silk Road Economic Belt),” and three routes for the “Maritime Silk Road” would be deployed in the center.

The BRI is an instrument to consolidate China’s position and influence in the world. Along with negotiations for investing and financing infrastructure projects, agreements for deepening cooperation in military affairs, culture and many other areas are often signed simultaneously. There are compelling reasons to believe that the BRI is far more than a collection of infrastructure projects, and has well-defined political and security aims. It is also designed to share the “China model” with the countries signed on with the BRI (in Chinese, 习习 SC R< China experience is more often used, rather than 习习 T [China model]). At least in the short run, the BRI will contribute greatly to China’s growing global economic, political, and security presence and influence.

Thus, the BRI may change the global economic, political and security landscape, and lead to a new ideological war with the western countries.

China’s Challenges

There is little doubt that China will put enormous efforts to push forward with the BRI. China is going to further and deepen regional economic integration and bilateral FTAs. President Xi Jinping is determined to revive communist ideology and adopt a more assertive foreign policy. China’s global and regional engagement has a great potential of weakening the current international order.

A wide range of challenges have emerged in the context of a rising China. China’s challenges lie mostly in two fronts: security and ideology. First, China’s military rise will challenge the dominance of the United

is a lingering likelihood of severe ideological competition between China and the Western democratic countries.

cooperation with the BRI will only be conducted on a case-by-case basis. Last year, the Japanese government has released guidelines for Japan-China business cooperation in third countries. According to the guidelines, third party cooperation will be centered on environmental and energy-saving sec-

The Indo-Pacific strategy has its limits when countering the BRI as well. Whereas the BRI has a global reach, the Indo-Pacific strategy as a quasi-security alignment is currently confined to the Indo-Pacific region.

The competition between the TPP and RCEP, and the contest between the BRI and the Indo-Pacific strategy may eventually further deepen the current trend in Asia-Pacific / Indo-Pacific region: deepening economic cooperation and growing strategic rivalry.



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