

Keynote Address

The Evolution and the Future of Joint and Combined Operations

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Introduction

The times have undergone a profound change. The end of the Cold War brought with it rapid globalization, especially in the economic sphere, causing shifts in the power balance among major states and the multi-polarization of the world. Notably, in 2010, China overtook Japan in GDP, becoming the second largest economy in the world behind the United States. China's military modernization supported by strong economic growth, coupled with its increased naval and air force activities, are changing the strategic security environment and power balance in the Asia-Pacific region. With regard to the broader world economy, emerging economies, including China, have witnessed remarkable growth. On the other hand, countries' vulnerabilities and problems stemming from globalization are spreading more easily, heightening instability and risks. The future outlook suggests with strong likelihood that the world will see a destabilization of the security and economic situation. The biggest challenge for the international community is then to deal with this situation appropriately and to establish an international order which maintains peace and prosperity.

Defense forces form the central element of national security. With major transformations taking place in the social structure and the strategic environment, the operations of defense forces have become ever more inextricably linked with political objectives. That is to say, they are increasingly integrated and interdependent with various elements, such as politics, diplomacy, economics, science and technology, natural resource and energy issues, and social culture. While it no doubt remains unchanged that "national defense" requiring the maintenance of defense forces is the ultimate mission of military forces, there has been a shift in the role and mission of the military sought by people and politics. Recently, even Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF), whose operations had been kept restricted since their founding, have been engaged in not only the mission of the defense of Japan, but also in overseas operations with other militaries and civilian organizations, including international peace cooperation operations and Japan Disaster Relief Team operations. In addition, the SDF have been involved in domestic operations as the main unit dispatched to respond to large-scale natural disasters. Against this backdrop of the changing security environment and the changing role of military forces, the significance of integrating and combining military forces has likewise changed, both in mode and content.

Evolution of Japan's Joint and Combined Operations

(1) Japan's Participation in Combined Operations and their Lessons

In 1894, the Japanese army and navy, established in the early Meiji Period (1868-1912), fought and won a full-fledged war against a foreign country, that is, the First Sino-Japanese War.

Six years later, in 1900, during the Boxer Rebellion in the Chinese continent, Japan for the first time participated in full-fledged combined operations. Of the as many as eight countries that dispatched armies to conquer the “Boxers,” Japan dispatched the highest number of 8,000 soldiers for a force participated by less than 20,000 troops in total. In this operation, many countries are said to have collaborated and made compromises through mutual coordination by forming operational objectives that were generally cohesive, such as the protection of foreign residents and the relief of Beijing. In these circumstances, the Japanese military played an illustrious role, and simultaneously, adopted a strict military discipline and contributed to elevating Japan’s international standing.

During World War I that commenced in 1914, Britain requested Japan’s participation in accordance with the Japan-Britain alliance concluded in 1902. The Japan-Britain combined army captured Qingdao, the base of the German East Asia Squadron, and the navy occupied the German colony of the South Sea Islands. Despite repeated requests for the dispatch of Japan’s army to the European front, Japan did not dispatch its army, judging that no direct national interests were involved. The navy, on the other hand, dispatched over ten cruisers to the Mediterranean Sea in 1917, including *Akashi*. The navy directly escorted troop transport vessels and contributed to the Allies’ operations in the Western Front. In addition to escorting approximately 800 vessels, the navy accomplished feats, such as rescuing approximately 7,000 people from a ship struck by lightning. The Japanese navy, however, lost 59 men in battle due to a submarine attack of Japan’s destroyer *Sakaki*. While after the war Japan earned the high praise of the Allies, there were criticisms that Japan’s dispatch of forces to the European front was “too late, too little.” There were also criticisms over Japan’s acquisition of interest in Shandong Province and mandate over the German territory of the South Sea Islands. Although Japan and Britain were allies, there existed an invisible battle over national interests between Japan, which wished to expand into China, and Britain, which wanted to thwart such Japanese effort even by slightly. By participating in this war, the Japanese navy learned many operational lessons regarding the importance of escorting vessels, the difficultness of fleet warfare, and changes in the form of war, i.e., protracted war. Nevertheless, Japan subsequently drew upon only a limited number of lessons, such as the introduction of German submarine technology.

Towards the end of WWI in 1918, Japan, as one of the eight countries of the Allies, dispatched a total of 73,000 troops to Siberia. This was on the pretext of “rescuing the Czech legion that was captured by revolutionary forces” and to re-direct Germany’s interest to the Eastern Front, following the Russian Revolution and the ceasefire between Germany and Russia. The troops were dispatched also for operational objectives, including to protect Japanese nationals and to secure a buffer zone against communism. It was a combined operation that reflected a mix of the national interests and ulterior motives of different countries. In November of the same year, a revolution occurred in Germany, and a ceasefire agreement was concluded. Although the Allies withdrew in 1920, Japan did not withdraw until 1922 in order to acquire territory, to regain concessions which were lost after the Russo-Japanese War, to maintain relations with the geopolitically important Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula, and to avert a communist spillover. From an operational point of view, Japan came to recognize the difficultness of partisan warfare (it was difficult to distinguish between insurgents and

farmers), and eventually faced the dilemma of not being able to move forward or turn back. Japan's human losses were high, estimated at 3,700. Yet it cannot be said that Japan has fully drawn upon the lessons learned from this experience.

In any case, in the Boxer Rebellion, WWI, or the Siberian Intervention, the role that military forces play as a political and diplomatic tool is reflected in the historical backdrop of the combined operations in which Japan participated. In particular, with their national colonial interests at stake, the Asia-Pacific region was a hotbed of intense struggles among major powers. Japan has not engaged in any combined operation with other countries following this period. Operations which come closest to combined operations are the operations conducted in cooperation with other countries during peacetime, including overseas operations such as peacekeeping operations (PKO) since 1991 as well as Japan's anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

(2) The Issue of the Integration of the Japanese Army and Navy during the Pacific War

The issue of military integration was hardly taken into consideration in Japan during the Pacific War, primarily due to fundamental issues, such as differences in the operational concepts and main operation areas of the army and navy since their founding. In 1943, a research proposal to completely unify the commands of the army and navy and place them under a single commander, while leaving the military administration bodies (Army and Navy Ministries) unchanged, was approved based on the assertions made by Cdr. Minoru Genda of the navy and Maj. Ryuzo Sejima of the army. Nevertheless, in the following year, Adm. Shigetaro Shimada, Navy Minister, who concurrently served as Chief of the Navy General Staff, ordered the termination of research on the integration issue. As regards the issue of integrating the central bodies on the operational front, in February 1943, the Army-Navy Central Agreement on Central Pacific Area Operations was concluded. The 31st Army was then placed under the command of the commander admiral of the Central Pacific Area Fleet, and Japan's first joint forces were formed. But various problems came to light, such as the parallel existence of the command and supply systems of the central bodies. Consequently, the joint forces were unable to fully demonstrate their effectiveness. In 1945, the Outline of the Operations Plan of the Imperial Army and Navy, the first army-navy joint operation plan since the start of WWII, was formulated, and the draft Army-Navy Central Agreement on Air Operations was reviewed. Yet, by then, it was already too late. Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, who commanded the fierce battle in Iwo Jima, sent a farewell telegram to Imperial General Headquarters during the final phase of the war, saying, "It is crucial to get rid of the army and navy's tendency to demarcate their own domains, and in therefore, unify them." What can be said for the whole of the Pacific War is that priority was given to the fundamental differences in the operational concepts of the army and navy that have existed since their foundation, rather than to the need for integration. As a result, the integration of the army and navy never came to fruition. From a purely military standpoint, the more that the operations have a defensive or interior operational nature, the more essential that the army and navy share operational objectives and demonstrate greater unified strength based on a single cohesive strategy. In the case of the

Japanese forces, however, integration was not realized during the Pacific War. Japanese units were defeated one after another as a consequence, even when the overwhelming difference in the strength of the Japanese and U.S. forces is taken into account.

(3) Evolution of Postwar Joint Operations

In 1954, the Joint Staff Council (JSC) was established, along with the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces. JSC was comprised of four chiefs of staff and adopted a representative system. Its mission was to unify and coordinate command orders during defense and public security operations. With respect to JSC's activities, it was decided that each chief of staff would support the Director General of the Defense Agency on the operations of each SDF service, and that the commands and orders of the Director General would be executed through each chief of staff. Two years earlier, in 1952, a system investigation commission was established within a bureau of the National Safety Agency (precursor of the Defense Agency). Based on the commission's investigation, a proposal was presented to organize a military force, which would consist of the northern, central, southern, and overseas escort general headquarters under the direct control of the Director General. The military force would adopt a single staff office system to save costs, deepen cooperation among units, and increase the efficiency of operations. As modern three-dimensional warfare often entail joint operations, the proposal was based on the basic principle that a joint headquarters should be established in order for regional commanders to be able to utilize the troops of each service organically. Former members of the navy opposed the proposal on the grounds that integration could result in the navy being absorbed by the army, that integration could make it difficult to execute naval strategies which are important for Japan's exclusively defense-oriented policy, and on the grounds of the pre-war circumstances of the army and navy. The army side, on the other hand, was apathetic and indifferent towards integration. It is said that for these reasons, the forces were never integrated, with Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida making the final decision against integration. Alternatively, one may also guess that some officials did not want the SDF to become stronger through integration. Since its founding, the powers of JSC have gradually strengthened. In 1961, it became possible for JSC to give orders to the joint force during its dispatch. In 1998, it became possible for JSC to integrate and coordinate forces for the dispatch of units in response to natural disasters and for international peace cooperation operations. In 2002, a study of the joint operation system began under the instruction of the Director General of the Defense Agency, and various issues were examined and reviewed. Then, legislation was developed, and budgets were allocated. In March 2006, the Joint Staff was created. It was decided that the Chief of Staff would provide integrated support to the Minister of Defense with regard to the SDF's operations, and that the Minister's commands and orders to the SDF would be executed through the Chief of Staff. In 2009 and 2012, to deal with North Korea's launch of ballistic missiles, a joint task force was formed with the Commander in Chief of the Air Defense Command as the commander for the first time. In response to the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, a joint task force was formed with the Northeastern Army Headquarters as the commander for the first time. Furthermore, in 2013, joint task forces were formed to

dispatch units in response to the typhoon disaster in Izu Oshima, as well as for the Japan Disaster Relief Team in response to the typhoon disaster in the Philippines. The functions and capabilities of the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), and the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) were exercised to the maximum. The joint operations of the three SDF services came about from their “profound need” as an outcome of the wise decision made by relevant officials, and involved overcoming many counter views and speculations. Looking back in hindsight, it seems that the joint operation system was established barely in time to respond to the subsequent situations. In any case, to functionalize and enhance joint operations, it is necessary in peacetime to carry out operations, to conduct trainings and exercises, and to develop defense forces as a trinity. Promoting joint operations after a war has begun, which was the case before WWII, is all too unreasonable and infeasible. The Ministry of Defense is currently studying the idea of reforming the Ministry of Defense, reorganizing the Joint Staff and the Bureau of Operational Policy into a single organization, and creating the Ground Defense Command that presides over operations (of the three SDF services, only the GSDF does not have a Defense Command). It is also hoped that a joint headquarters is established at an early date. It is clear that all of these would contribute to the enhancement and advancement of joint operations.

The Characteristics of Joint and Combined Operations

From around WWII, the importance of joint operations became increasingly recognized. The army, navy, and air force saw a major transformation and modernization of their equipment, especially with the advancement of military science and technology. The temporal and spatial activities of the military expanded in area. Additionally, more complex operations were carried out at faster speeds, and were increasingly mobile. On top of that, the post-Cold War security environment changed dramatically. Threats diversified to include terrorism and guerrilla warfare, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), cyber attack, and piracy, in addition to the traditional threats to military forces. It became both essential and feasible for the army, navy, and air force to work together to deal with these threats. At the same time, the international community and the public have begun to expect a cohesive military response to the various and diverse threats. It is of course no surprise that each of the military services have different ideas on operational concepts, tactics, formation, equipment, and logistics, as well as different values and structures, which stem from their respective characteristics and capabilities. For example, the services have different standard concepts of time for making operational decisions. The army thinks in units of day, the navy thinks in units of hour, and the air force thinks in units of second. Nonetheless, in the present era, such differences must be overcome to give priority to the need for efficient and practical “joint” operations. In the current era, it is neither possible nor efficient for a single military service to respond to all threats. In this light, although it is impossible for Japan to have a joint force ready in peacetime as with the powerful U.S. forces, Japan needs to have more effective readiness posture. This includes establishing a permanent joint headquarters, and developing defense forces and strengthening joint exercises for joint operations. What must never be forgotten, however, is that each of the

military services must be strong, first and foremost, for the military forces to be powerful as a whole. To this end, units must be organized and trained constantly.

Combined operations refer to operations conducted through military partnerships among allied nations sharing the same objectives and sharing the same destiny. But as history of war and the world situation suggest, the fact of the matter is that all nations give No. 1 priority to its national interests, as one would expect. Taking this into account, it is desirable from an operational point of view, that the allied nations naturally have a shared understanding on the strategy and operational objectives, that, in terms of infrastructure, there is as much interoperability of equipment as possible, including the arms, ammunition, fuel, and command control communication systems of the military services and units of different countries, and that, in terms of the operations, the units have common rules of engagement. The fundamental issue comes down to the language issue. During the stage of the execution of combined operations, the command relationship becomes critical. Command authority symbolizes the sovereignty of participating nations. In principle, nations want to avoid operating under the command of the commander of any other nation. From a purely military standpoint, nations should pursue unified command as a “principle of war” rather than a cooperative relationship. The history of war shows that in many cases, command was unified under a single commander in major operations. Such cases leveraged the characteristics of the army, navy, and air force. They included cases in which the operation area was divided, and units were organized by country, as was the case with the army in the Normandy landings and the Korean War. There were also cases in which participating nations units acted as one and were organized by military service, as was the case with the allied navy during WWII and the United Nations (UN) air force during the Korean War, a practice often seen among the navy and air force. In view of the command relationship in recent years and in the future, a new, major challenge for both joint and combined operations will be the question of how to transform the flat-shaped organization comprised of many systems for information sharing purposes, into a pyramid-shaped command and control system suited for operations, or how to make the two systems coexist. There is significance to sharing information across the organization vertically and horizontally in the same timely manner. But for the execution of operations, the command relationship should be vertically structured. Furthermore, the respective missions as well as their accompanying responsibilities and authorities need to be further clarified.

Changing Role of Military Forces and Joint and Combined Operations

(1) Changes in the Security Environment and Role of Military Forces

The proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles, which are turning into the delivery means of WMD, as well as international terrorism and the existence of failed states are pressing security concerns for the entire international community. Similarly, securing stable use of the global commons, that is, domains, such as the high seas, the atmosphere, outer space, and cyberspace, is becoming a vital issue.

With respect to the security environment as a whole, economic and military development in countries, such as China, India, and Russia, as well as their expanded influence in

international politics have led to changes in the power balance, including the relative decline of U.S. influence, along with the multipolarization of the world. Also, the rising demand for natural resources, energy, and food as a result of the economic growth of emerging countries, including China, is expected to further intensify the competition over these resources among nations. Against this background, there may be a significant increase in nations denying the *status quo* of the existing regional and international order pertaining to territories and sovereignty, and in nations making assertions and moves aimed at attaining their economic interests. It is possible that regional conflicts would increase, or even if they do not, “gray-zone” situations which are neither purely peaceful nor contingency situations would become normalized, generating a new set of destabilizing factors.

Amid these tense relations, the globalization of the economy and the rapid advancement of technological innovation have further increased and deepened the interdependence of nations. At the same time, there is elevated risk of a disruption or security problem occurring in one country or one region immediately becoming an issue or destabilizing factor of the entire international community. These contradictory factors of “expanded interdependence” and “risks” are further complicating nations’ decision-making of security policies and activities. Such challenges and destabilizing factors have become diverse and wide-ranging, in proportion to the globalization of the world. It is extremely difficult for a single country alone to deal with these challenges and factors, and it is becoming ever more crucial that countries with shared interests in a stable region or international community collaborate and proactively deal with them.

UN PKO, an example of international collaboration, played a large role in preventing the spread of regional conflict during the Cold War, and supplemented the UN’s collective security function to a certain extent. The end of the Cold War, however, ushered in ethnic problems that had been under control under the Cold War order, and regional conflicts began to break out frequently. This led to rising expectations for the peace functions of the UN. PKO during the Cold War era numbered no more than 13 over a period of 40-plus years. After the Cold War, more than 50 PKO were newly created. Currently, 15 PKO are established, and approximately 100,000 personnel are participating in the operations. In addition to traditional activities, including ceasefire monitoring, in recent years, PKO mandates have covered diverse activities, such as disarmament monitoring, security sector reform, election and government monitoring, humanitarian assistance such as refugee return, and civilian activities. The scale of operations has likewise expanded. Further still, activities which could be construed as enforcement measures for disarmament and other activities under Chapter VII of the UN Charter have begun to be conducted, coupled with activities aimed at preventing conflicts. Without a doubt, efforts for PKO and other such operations will become significant and indispensable elements in maintaining peace in the international community.

With these changes taking place in the international community and the security environment, it is becoming imperative that the role of military forces changes. The role of military forces has been shifting around the world. Before the Gulf War, military forces were used only in times of emergency. After the Iraq War and the Afghanistan War, military forces are used continuously even in peacetime in order to deal with non-traditional and asymmetric

threats, or for peacebuilding, entrusted with diversified missions. Meanwhile, the importance of dealing with “gray-zone” situations has been increasing, in addition to dealing with traditional security issues, especially in East Asia. Thus, the diversification of the required role of military forces has significant impact on how joint and combined operations will be carried out now and in the future.

(2) Joint and Combined Operations in the Future

The first of these impacts concern the relationship between a military alliance and coalition. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union, respectively, formed military alliances with countries, including European and Asian countries, to jointly deter and deal with each other’s threats. The military alliances of the United States included the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Japan-U.S. Alliance. The military alliances of the Soviet Union included the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The alliances constituted the nexus of the East-West forces. Even now, there are about 20 major collective security treaties in the world, including the aforementioned treaties involving the United States, Russia, and China. The 1991 Gulf War after the Cold War was, for NATO countries, a war against a threat that existed outside of their region, which had been inconceivable during the Cold War period. For this war, 38 countries participated in a coalition, including the United States and the United Kingdom, in accordance with a UN resolution. A decade after the Gulf War, the coalition approach was taken also for the Iraq War. The permanent members of the UN Security Council were divided between the United States and the United Kingdom, which urged for armed sanctions, and Russia, France, and China, which called for peaceful resolution of the crisis. Furthermore, Arab countries did not participate in the coalition. A coalition is a framework created temporarily for achieving specific missions and objectives. The member countries’ national interests, such as political and economic interests, are given foremost priority. Voluntary participation is at the basis of coalitions. On the other hand, an alliance is a framework created in line with strategic objectives in accordance with a treaty. An alliance rests on member countries’ common values, and member countries share a broad set of interests. Also, an alliance is effective as a “deterrent” in peacetime. This “deterrent” greatly contributes not only to peace and stability in alliance countries, but also to peace and stability in the neighboring region. For sovereign nations, dealing with external threats remains a vital national interest. For countries that cannot or that will be disadvantaged by defending against such threats by themselves, forming an alliance with other countries is indispensable. Alliances are strengthened constantly through consultations and joint exercises in peacetime. Yet there has been an increasing trend away from alliances and towards forming coalitions for several reasons. In the Middle East, for example, due to the complex political, religious, and other issues that relevant countries confront, the environment does not make the establishment of definitive military alliances feasible. Should full-fledged military actions become necessary, members of coalitions can expect (could expect until now) responses of countries led by the United States, which has overwhelming military strength and political influence. Additionally, the types of potential threats have shifted to asymmetric and

non-traditional threats, rather than large-scale clashes of military forces. As such, opportunities increased to form coalitions, in which relevant countries that have interests at stake work together to deal with the situation based on a loose and temporary union. In the future, even if there are no large-scale wars between nations, many destabilizing factors to the security environment may be conceived, including the further radicalization of diverse threats that extend beyond national borders and nations, or the occurrence of large-scale natural disasters due to climate change and other phenomena. Multilateral cooperation is essential in dealing with these threats. Furthermore, international peace cooperation activities may increase to stabilize conflicts, including regional and ethnic conflicts. In this light, it is expected that there will continue to be an increasing number of coalition-based responses.

The second impact concerns the transition from “joint” and “combined” operations to “integrated” operations. With regard to joint operations, the United States established the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act in 1986 based on the lessons from its experience with many previous wars. The Act strengthened the powers of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, clarified the powers of the commanders of the Unified Combatant Command, and aimed to strengthen the joint operations of the four services. Since December 2010, Russia has reorganized the existing six military districts into four military districts and then established unified strategic commands tailored to each military district, which conduct joint operations of troops under the leadership of the commander of the military district. In China, drawing on the lessons learned from such wars as the Gulf War, Iraq War, and the Kosovo War, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in November 2013 decided to improve China’s joint operation capabilities. It is believed that China aims to build practical military forces. As these examples demonstrate, not only major powers but also countries which possess modern militaries are forming, organizing, and training joint forces from peacetime as a matter of course, deeming that “joint operations” are inevitable. And what will make these forces even more functional is military reform accompanying the considerable advancements in ICT. As part of the reform in this direction, the United States has already made network-centric warfare (NCW) a priority. One of the features of the 1991 Gulf War was its high-tech nature. It is said that the landmark victory of the multinational force was largely due to the effective functioning of the command, control, and information system, of the air defense suppression system, and of the precision-guided system, as well as due to their synergistic effects. In the case of the Iraq War, it is said that with the remarkable progresses made in the U.S. forces’ introduction of high-tech systems, the U.S. military success resulted from the sharing of information across military services and units using C4ISR and weapons system networking, which in turn made swift decision-making possible. According to newspaper reports at the time, Richard Cobbold, Director of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI), commented with regard to the historical significance of the Iraq War, that the nature of war had changed, that the ability to assemble the army, naval, and air forces and special forces had improved, and that in a purely military sense, these improvements in joint capabilities were the biggest lesson from this war. On relations with participating countries, Cobbold noted that since U.S. power far exceeded that of other countries, system unification with other countries would be difficult.

He expected that opinions would be divided on whether, as in the Iraq War, the U.S. and Britain would be able to take joint actions a decade later. Fifteen years have passed since the Iraq War. In NCW, information on enemy forces or other information, which is collected using information gathering systems, such as reconnaissance satellites and unmanned aircraft, is shared through networks. Even from remotely located headquarters, command and control is exercised in an extremely short timeframe. This allows striking capability to be oriented towards the target in a swift, accurate, and flexible manner, and enables a country to aim for more efficient operations of the forces. This requires not only the development of information and communication infrastructures, but also the simultaneous reform of elements associated with the exercise of forces, including operational concepts, doctrines, organization and equipment, main points of command and control, weapons systems, and logistical support systems. However, at this time, only the United States has these capabilities. A problem with other countries forming an alliance or a coalition with the United States is that there basically is not a large difference between them since the Gulf War, or the disparity between them may have widened. That said, going forward, the joint operation issue would likely extend beyond the concept of military service forces merely integrating or collaborating, or the concept of only joining single function systems. At the very least, we will be entering an era where military services would be completely connected through information communication networks, and we will be asking ourselves how, based on shared information, all hard and soft forces possessed by the military services can be integrated to execute efficient fighting. Further still, depending on the mission, coordination with relevant organizations and private groups would also be required. Similarly, in the case of alliances, there would be integrated alliances of joint forces, requiring integrated country systems that extend beyond the interoperability of information and communication systems and the individual equipment of the army, navy, and air force.

The third impact concerns the establishment of the strategy of the party in the operation. Whether a country's military forces are participating in joint forces, in an alliance, or a coalition, what needs to be done first and foremost is establish a clear national strategy. Especially in the case of combined operations, as the history of past wars also illustrates, a variety of factors come into play, including the national interests and ulterior motives of participating countries, as well as the nature of the leader. In a combined operation, it is important above all that the common objective is achieved. However, the prerequisite to this is to clearly identify the national interests of the country and establish a strategy for their realization. In December 2013, Japan established its first National Security Strategy to serve as Japan's basic policy on national security. It was decided that under the basic principle of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, Japan's national security policy would be promoted in a more strategic and systematic manner under the leadership of the National Security Council. Following the establishment of the National Security Strategy, a new National Defense Program Guidelines and the Medium Term Defense Program were adopted as Cabinet decisions. The National Defense Program Guidelines present Japan's basic policy on security, the security environment surrounding Japan, the significance and role of Japan's defense forces, as well as basic guidelines on the building up of Japan's defense forces based on the aforementioned items, including the specific arrangements of the SDF and target

levels for major equipment. The National Defense Program Guidelines set out the basic concept that Japan will deal with various situations through joint operations. The Guidelines then make explicit the significance of prioritizing the functions and capabilities from a comprehensive perspective, which are identified through capability assessments of the SDF's total functions and capabilities. The Guidelines conform to the new security environment while incorporating such concepts as "Dynamic Joint Defense Force." Meanwhile, some observers express the opinion that the National Defense Program Guidelines, which were positioned under the newly established National Security Strategy, marks a change from the past, or that that this positioning should be changed. It means that, instead of the National Defense Program Guidelines containing both the current defense policy and the basic guidelines on building up defense forces, the "Defense Strategy" would be established that would serve as the basis for defense policy and joint strategy, as one of the new strategic schemes based on the National Security Strategy. In order to execute the basic concept of building up defense forces through joint operations, it is necessary to establish a more precise "joint strategy" that is consistent with the "Defense Strategy." In any case, the existing system of defense programs must be reviewed and reorganized in order to make them consistent with the National Security Strategy, and to have a more robust joint operation system and Japan-U.S. Alliance arrangements based on coherent defense strategies and policies, joint operations, and building up of defense forces.

Conclusion

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings, the largest combined operation in history. Two years and two months went into the planning to execution. These landing operations that the Allies went ahead with on June 6, 1944 alone involved the participation of 39 divisions and the mobilization of a vast number of army, naval, and air forces, including 133,000 officers and troops. The coordination of a major strategy among the relevant countries, including the United States, Britain, and Russia, resulted in the landing operation, the liberation of France, and the inland invasion into Germany. The Normandy landings were indeed the largest operations in history. In the foreseeable future, there may never be such a war in which so many countries form an alliance and in which the entire Europe is the battlefield. The Normandy landings, however, still provide numerous lessons to us in the present era, when the international community as a whole must deal with many threats and uncertainties which are not restricted to military ones. It is important that war history is examined in order to make the past relevant to today from a historical perspective and to look out into the future. Going forward, the security environment is expected to become even more severe and complex. With many factors interacting, it is difficult for one country alone to deal with such factors. Whether it is through an alliance or coalition, threats will increasingly be dealt with jointly by many countries. For the military to execute a diversifying role in this context, a more integrated organization needs to be established while harnessing the features and capabilities of each military service. The principles of war remain unchanged. It is essential that preparations are made for joint and combined operations by applying strategies and operations that take into account scientific and technological progresses to the modern era, or by looking ahead to the future.

