

Greetings

of the Administrative Vice Minister of JDA

Thank you very much for that kind introduction. The event that we are participating in here today at the Grand Hill Ichigaya represents a first, since the Japan Defense Agency has never before held this type of public international security symposium. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to say a few words about the most recent efforts initiated by the Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces to build a stable security environment.

The Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements and the Effort to Build a Stable Security Environment

In order to ensure peace and stability for Japan, it is necessary to maintain an appropriate defense capability and to continue our commitment to the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. At the same time, however, we must also 1) pursue security dialogue and defense exchanges as a means of building confidence among nations and 2) lend our support to the arms control and disarmament efforts of the United Nations and other entities in order to build a peaceful and stable security environment. In keeping with this philosophy, Japan's National Defense Program Outline, which provides an overview of the type of defense capability that our country intends to maintain in the 21st century, regards contributing to the creation of a more stable security environment as one role of our defense capability. The Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces, based on close cooperation with the United States, vigorously pursue defense exchanges and security dialogue with our neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region in order to promote international stability.

In the Asia-Pacific region we have not seen the type of regional stability measures that are being pursued in Europe, such as arms control and disarmament. Nevertheless, in recent years there has been an increasing interest in political and security issues. As a result, bilateral defense exchanges have increased, and the region has begun to pursue multilateral dialogue.

Development of Bilateral Defense Exchanges

With regard to bilateral defense exchanges, I would first like to point out that Japan is vigorously pursuing defense exchanges with China and Russia.

China exercises considerable influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Efforts to achieve increased mutual understanding concerning defense issues and to build greater confidence not only help the cause of bilateral security, but also contribute to peace and stability in the region as a whole.

As evidenced by the many reciprocal visits by the heads of state of Japan and China in recent years, considerable progress in various fields has been achieved in our bilateral relations. In accordance with this progress, defense exchanges are being carried out at the very highest levels. Last year, for example, China's Minister of Defense visited Japan, and Japan's Minister of State for Defense traveled to China. Furthermore, regular consultations between defense authorities from the two sides are also producing positive results. The organizer of this symposium, the National Institute for Defense Studies, has made significant contributions in this area. When China's Minister of Defense, Chi Haotian, came to Japan in February of last year, he delivered a speech entitled "China's National Defense Policy" at the National Institute for Defense Studies, and engaged in a lively question-and-answer session afterwards with the researchers and students at the Institute. In addition, it has been decided at a Defense-ministerial Meeting that the National Institute for Defense Studies and the Chinese National Defense University shall carry out a defense research exchange

program. As a result of this agreement, the National Institute for Defense Studies and the Chinese National Defense University will develop stronger ties as counterpart institutions, and we expect that scholars at the two institutions will work from an academic perspective to promote research exchange for the sake of improved security, not only for our respective countries, but also for the region as a whole.

Now I would like to address the situation between Japan and Russia. After the Cold War, the former Soviet Union collapsed and Russia embarked upon political and economic reforms. Against this backdrop, relations between Japan and Russia have improved. Russia and Japan are immediate neighbors, thus it is extremely important that we carry out defense exchanges and take steps to build confidence. Within the context of this general progress in Japan-Russia relations, the Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces intend to steadily pursue bilateral defense exchange. Japan's Minister of State for Defense visited Russia in 1996, the first such visit between our two countries in history, including the Soviet period. In 1997, the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation paid a first-ever visit to Japan. In 1998, the Administrative Vice Minister of the Japan Defense Agency visited Russia. There he met with Russia's Minister of Defense, and he also became the first high-ranking official of the Japan Defense Agency ever to visit the Russian Armed Forces in the Far East. Talks between the two sides yielded an agreement to engage in discussions that will lead to realization of four-party dialogue between the principal powers in the region—Japan, the United States, China, and Russia. Also in 1998, the Chairman of the Joint Staff Council, who is the highest-ranking officer of the Japan Self Defense Forces, visited Russia, and the visit was reciprocated by the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces. Regular meetings between Japanese and Russian defense authorities are proceeding smoothly: meetings at the director-general and counselor level, and a joint working group at the division director level have been established. The National Institute for Defense Studies is engaged in defense research exchanges with research institutes related to the Ministry of Defense of the Russian

Federation, including the Center for Military-Strategic Studies of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. These exchange activities have afforded the National Institute for Defense Studies many opportunities to engage in exchanges of opinion with its Russian counterparts from an academic perspective. These research exchanges began in 1993 and have been carried out ten times thus far.

Defense exchanges with South Korea are also extremely important to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. The defense ministers of Japan and South Korea have exchanged reciprocal visits every year since 1994. Just last week, Japan's Minister of State for Defense, Hosei Norota, visited South Korea, where he took part in a Defense-ministerial Meeting. The two sides exchanged views concerning North Korea, focusing especially on the North's suspected nuclear weapons development, and on its ballistic missile program. The defense ministers also agreed to carry out concrete talks on the establishment of a system to ensure close communication between the defense authorities of Japan and South Korea in the event of crisis situations such as the incursion of a North Korean submarine into South Korean waters last December. Japanese and South Korean defense authorities have also been engaged in regular meetings including working-level defense policy dialogue at the counselor level, while the National Institute for Defense Studies is engaged in defense research exchanges with defense research institutes, including the Korea National Defense University.

I notice that Professor Chin Kin Wah is here with us today from Singapore. Japan is also involved in defense exchanges with Singapore and other Southeast Asian nations, not to mention Australia, Canada, and various European nations.

Multilateral Security Dialogue

I would like to turn now to the subject of multilateral security dialogue. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) represents an important effort to carry out

multilateral security dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region. It would be premature to equate ARF with the type of regional security framework established in Europe, but ARF is nevertheless important because it is the only regional political-military dialogue in East Asia. Five ministerial meetings have been held since 1994, and the scope of ARF activities is steadily expanding. The Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces are active supporters of the ARF process. In addition to the Senior Officials Meeting, which is more commonly referred to as ARF-SOM, the ARF process also includes the ARF Intersessional Support Group on Confidence-Building Measures, which is established for the purpose of comprehensive discussion of confidence-building measures, and the ARF Intersessional Meeting, established targeting specific confidence-building measures, such as search-and-rescue operations and peacekeeping operations. The Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces participate in these activities. In an effort to contribute to greater transparency within the region with respect to arms and security policies, Japan presented a document detailing its defense policy at the 2nd ARF-SOM meeting in 1995, and called upon all other nations to do likewise. Japan's position was accepted by the other member nations, and we believe that we have taken a very important step toward the building of greater confidence among the nations of the Asia-Pacific region.

ARF is not the only multilateral security dialogue in East Asia. The Japan Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces also host a wide variety of dialogues.

One of these is the Forum for Defense Authorities in the Asia Pacific Region, which is designed to provide a venue for multilateral security dialogue at the policy making level. This forum met for the third time in October 1998. Attended by 20 nations and one observer organization, it provided an opportunity for defense policy officials at the director-general and deputy director-general levels to engage in direct dialogue on regional security affairs. This forum has played an important role in the formation of a consensus concerning: (1) the importance of post-Cold War multilateral security dialogue in the East Asian region; and especially (2) the important role to be

played by defense authorities of the various East Asian nations in regional confidence-building efforts.

The Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces also carry out frequent multilateral meetings and seminars. Also, the National Institute for Defense Studies has held five Asia-Pacific Security Seminars, and every year it holds a conference for security experts from ASEAN countries.

As a research institute, the National Institute for Defense Studies carries out both bilateral and multilateral activities from an academic perspective. For this reason, it is able to exchange views in an objective and uninhibited atmosphere. This type of exchange spurs deeper mutual understanding, and makes it possible to generate ideas with expansive creativity.

We are honored to have with us at today's symposium many of the region's leading scholars, all of whom are participating in a private capacity, and from a purely academic perspective. They will present papers and participate in discussions as well. We have on hand Professor Richard K. Betts of the United States, Major-General (Ret.) Luo Peisen of China, Dr. Victor A. Kremenyuk of Russia, Professor Chin Kin Wah of Singapore, and Professor Toshiya Hoshino of Osaka University in Japan. I look forward to some very productive reports and discussions. Tomorrow, Professor Joseph S. Nye, Jr. of the United States shall deliver the keynote address. Each of these speakers will be speaking from an expert perspective, and I hope that the dialogue that we engage in during these two days will generate creative ideas to further the cause of peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Seeking a Regional Multilateral Security Framework

The theme of today's symposium is "The Strategic Environment in Northeast Asia at the Beginning of the 21st Century." In light of current conditions in the East Asian region, I think that this is a very appropriate topic.

Four of the countries with the greatest global influence are all Asia Pacific neighbors—the United States, China, Russia, and the economically powerful Japan. There is not another region quite like this anywhere else in the world.

The greatest progress in this region since the end of the Cold War has been the dramatic improvement that we have seen in bilateral relations between Japan, the United States, China, and Russia, all of which have enormous influence upon regional security. The frequent bilateral summit meetings between the leaders of these various countries since 1994 have been noteworthy events. In the area of defense exchanges, military exchanges between the United States and China have increased in frequency since 1996. The U.S. Secretary of Defense and China's Minister of Defense have exchanged reciprocal visits, as have the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army. As for China and Russia, the heads of state of each nation agreed in 1996 to develop a strategic partnership, and visits by top officials of both defense forces have increased, including reciprocal visits by each country's Minister of Defense. Japan, too, has stepped up its defense exchange activities with China and Russia, as I described earlier.

This progress in bilateral exchanges between the region's major powers is a very welcome phenomenon. However, progress in bilateral relations does not necessarily lead directly to the creation of stable multilateral relations. In Northeast Asia, furthermore, not only is there a lack of any multilateral security framework, but there has been almost no multilateral dialogue between the region's major powers.

It is true, on the one hand, that relationships of trust built up through bilateral dialogue can provide a basis for the promotion of multilateral security dialogue. On the other hand, the former is not a substitute for the latter. The purpose of multilateral security dialogue is to gather together under one roof people from many different countries so that they can exchange views and consult with each other concerning security affairs of mutual concern, thereby promoting greater confidence throughout the region. I think it would be accurate to say that multilateral security dialogue

constitutes an attempt to create a “public arena” for regional security affairs. This is where multilateral dialogue differs from the bilateral approach.

We regard the Japan-U.S. security arrangement as “international public goods” supporting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Taking this security arrangement as the foundation, we believe we should promote multilateral security dialogue and work to build a cooperative security framework within which all participating countries can enjoy national security. To achieve this objective, we must clarify a number of important questions. What problems, for example, exist in Northeast Asia? And what kind of regional security framework does each country in this region want?

Today and tomorrow, we will be discussing the strategic environment in Northeast Asia from an academic perspective. It is my sincere hope that our discussions here will spur vigorous debate, both among those of us here and in the regional community as a whole, regarding what kind of regional multilateral security framework we should envision. I further hope that through such debate we can arrive at a consensus on this issue.

That concludes my remarks, ladies and gentleman. I thank you all very much, and wish you a very successful symposium.

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