

## Building Dynamic Defense

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### **Introduction**

Hard as it is to precisely define the concept of “strategic management”, I would like to describe it as “building and deploying defense capability wisely.” How, then, would Japan be able to do so in the current complex and unpredictable world? While the country is facing a situation in which China is rising as a big power, it does not mean a reemergence of confrontational conditions that existed in the Cold War era. Rather, amid China’s growing presence in various situations, Japan must deal with a new environment of expanding military and defense roles in the so-called “grey area” between peace and war times. Still, with its defense budget unlikely to rise dramatically in the present tight fiscal conditions, Japan is required to build and deploy defense capability wisely. In other words, strategic management of defense capability has become extremely important. With such awareness of the problem in mind, I would like to discuss how decisions are being made from the perspective of strategic resource management in building a “Dynamic Defense Force” that was presented in the 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG).

### **1. Dynamic Defense Capability**

#### **1.1. National Defense Guidelines**

“The National Defense Program Guidelines” is a document laying out Japan’s fundamental defense policy by presenting a basic analysis of security situations surrounding the country and defining the role of defense capabilities and the composition of military power in the Self Defense Forces. Japan builds up its defense forces in accordance with the “Mid-Term Defense Program” that lays

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out a five-year defense build-up plan based on the NDPG. The NDPG was first set in 1976 at the height of the Cold War, revised in 1995 after the end of that war and again revised in 2004 in the wake of the 9.11 terrorist attack in the U.S. The latest version was set on December 17, 2010, to be referred to as “the 2010 NDPG” in the following text.

Of the various defense capabilities targeted to be achieved in the 2010 NDPG, the most important is to aim to build the Dynamic Defense Force, departing from the Basic Defense Force Concept. More precisely, the 2010 NDPG calls for developing “a Dynamic Defense Force that possesses readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility,” which is “reinforced by advanced technology based on the trends of levels of military technology and intelligence capabilities.”

## **1.2. Dynamic Defense Force as described in the 2010 NDPG**

The basic concept of the Dynamic Defense Force is based on the recognition that military power is deployed more frequently than before to improve the international security environment, such as for counter-terrorism, peace building in a war-torn country and maritime patrol against piracy. Such security problems that arise in the “grey area” between peace and war tend to arise abruptly and need a long-term engagement for their resolution. Therefore, readiness and sustainability are vital to a Dynamic Defense Force.

The 2010 NDPG states that “Clear demonstration of national will and strong defense capabilities through such timely and tailored military operations as regular intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance activities (ISR)<sup>2</sup>, not just maintaining a certain level of defense force, is a critical element for ensuring credible deterrence and will contribute to stability in the region surrounding Japan.” On this recognition, the guidelines further say that the country needs to place “importance on dynamic deterrence, which takes into account such an operational use of the defense forces.” The concept of dynamic defense applies to all three of the roles of defense, but the idea of dynamic deterrence is associated especially with effective deterrence and response.

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<sup>2</sup> ISR stands for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. For details, see “Japan’s Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era: Toward a Peace-Creating Nation” by the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era (August 2010) <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/shin-ampobouei2010/houkokusyo.pdf>.

The dynamic deterrence capability is thus designed to cope with situations that the traditional deterrence capability, meant only for war contingencies, cannot deal with. What the dynamic deterrence capability stands for is not military actions such as invasion or armed attack, but actions that border on non-military and military ones. Placed on particular emphasis as a goal of these actions is to prevent the target country from taking potentially hostile actions by showing that there is no room both time- and space-wise for the country to attack through actual operations of defense capabilities such as patrolling and monitoring, intelligence gathering, military training and exercising and international peace-keeping cooperation. As such, dynamic deterrence differs significantly from traditional deterrence in that deterrence is achieved through actual operations of military capabilities.

### **1.3. Special meaning given to “Dynamic Defense Force”**

On the day when the 2010 NDPG was approved by the cabinet, the then-Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa issued a statement on it. While it was the fourth revision of the guidelines, Mr. Kitazawa was the first defense minister to issue a statement on the guidelines. This fact allows us to interpret that a special meaning was inspired into the statement. From now on, I would like to elaborate on my interpretation of how decisions were made in incorporating the concept of “Dynamic Defense Force” into the 2010 NDPG.

While there appears to be a general impression that a “Dynamic Defense Force” is focused on defending the Nansei Islands, or the Ryukyu Islands, its objective is not limited to defending the islands. Rather what the phrase dynamic deterrence describes is, extrapolating from the guidelines and the minister’s statement, to utilize appropriate defense capabilities, including Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) activities, as needed on a permanent basis. Especially, regular, continuous and strategic ISR operation is underlined in it. Mr. Kitazawa’s remarks emphasize the need for the Ministry of Defense to advance seamless cooperation with other government ministries and agencies. Summing up all of these, the Dynamic Defense Force can be interpreted to mean improving the defense force’s effectiveness in reinforcing deterrence by upgrading the quality of equipment used and quantity of operations.

In light of this interpretation, it is not necessarily wrong to say that the dynamic defense force concept focuses on defending the Nansei Islands. Still, it

is more appropriate to understand the phrase as meaning that the concept is not limited narrowly to protecting the islands in a military emergency by mobilizing and deploying the Self-Defense Forces. The phrase should be interpreted to mean that Japan should project its SDF's defense power by increasing its activities not only in the Nansei Islands' vicinity but also in the neighboring areas of the four main islands, as well as on a global scale. That was behind choosing the term "dynamic defense force" instead of the wording of "mobile defense force." If the government had intended to only mobilize and deploy forces, the phrase "mobile defense force" would have sufficed. We should assume that the framers of the guidelines consciously chose the word "dynamic" in order to give it an important meaning. Furthermore, the idea of increasing defense-related activities in peace times in the grey area between peace and war is also encouraged in the Japan-U.S. Security Alliance. A "Dynamic Defense Cooperation" launched in 2011 is understood to promote such activities not only in the SDF but also in the realm of the Japan-U.S Security Alliance.

From the viewpoint of defense planning, in the so-called "Tooth and Tail ratio", a proportion between the fire power and logistic-support capability, these efforts would mean tilting the balance towards the latter. In other words, it means increasing the quantity of operations of existing equipment.

## **2. Military Capabilities Given Priority in the 2010 NDPG**

Next, I would like to touch on how the priority of military capabilities is set in the 2010 NDPG or in a Dynamic Defense Force. Strategy is often defined as "the art of prioritizing," and if we follow this definition, what is required of a strategic guideline is to determine priorities. The 2010 NDPG does set the priority of military capabilities and attach importance to three functions. The first is a function "applicable to a wide variety of operations," or versatility, in short. The second is a function that has "asymmetrical capability." In other words, it is a defense capability that has a relative advantage. The third is a function that "cannot be substituted." More concretely, the guidelines call for strengthening such capabilities as warning and surveillance, maritime patrol, aerial and missile defense, transportation and command net. In the wake of setting the guidelines, the decision to increase the number of submarines from 16 to 22 attracted public attention. This is an example of putting emphasis on

strengthening asymmetrical capability. The guidelines explain the entire concept and its examples this way.

### **3. Challenges in Strategic Management**

Now, I would like to turn to three challenges in strategic management. All of these are related to the difficulty of putting into practice a vision that was strategically compiled. There is a feature shared in every country's defense guideline document. Regardless of whether it is Japan's "National Defense Program Guidelines," the U.S. "Quadrennial Defense Review," U.K. "Strategic Defence and Security Review," or Australia's "Defence White Paper," basic defense strategies laid out in these documents constitute only 10-20% of the whole business of building and operating a country's overall defense force. The remaining 80-90% is the actual job of building these capabilities. In this sense, it is extremely difficult to put the concepts into concrete forms and realize them.

#### **3.1. Problems of Sharing Vision**

It is hard to imagine that even the understanding of the dynamic defense force as discussed in this paper is shared by other experts. The reality is that there exist many different interpretations and understandings of the term "dynamic defense force." While it is not necessarily undesirable that many interpretations exist, it matters a lot whether a vision of how defense capabilities should work is shared among them. Unless the vision is shared, it would become very difficult to realize the strategies in the same direction. If we look at building defense capabilities as a project, it would have the strong inertia of spending money on its development and acquiring equipment over the long term. It would be extremely difficult to change the direction of the project half way through.

Equally important is to share the sense of risk among the alliance or partner countries. Each country is in its unique environment and the yardstick gauging security risks differs from country to country. This tends to bring about differences in risk recognition even among alliance members. Furthermore, even in a situation where the method of risk assessment is already established, whether the assessment is right or not can be known only *ex-poste*. Looking back at the 2010 NDPG, for example, it was accurately focused on the rise of

China and the grey area as major risks. However, the 2004 NDPG put weight on the fight against terrorism and North Korea, while not giving enough attention to the rise of China. In hindsight, the risk assessment of the 2010 NDPG was in general accurate, while that of the 2004 was not necessarily right and cannot be said to suffice as an outlook for the following 5 to 10 years.

This shows the difficulty of making risk assessments. Even if the risk was assessed with the right method at the time of setting a guideline, the assessment may not continue to be right over the following 5-10 years. In this sense, we need to make a virtue of necessity when assessing risks.

When I checked recently whether Japan and the U.S. share a recognition about the current risk assessment, I found out that Japan's 2010 NDPG and the latest U.S. 2010 QDR seem to have been set mostly in a parallel and synchronized manner. This has made me believe that there are few differences between Japan and the U.S in assessing risks and dealing with them, and that no major problems are expected in risk management. In fact, responses of both countries toward the rise of China are synchronized.

### **3.2. Innovation issue in Grey Areas**

Next, I would like to point out the difficulty of making innovations in grey areas. Traditional studies have dealt with innovations in peace time separately from in war time to find problems in making innovations and how to proceed with innovations in both times. Still, many of the problems facing us today exist in situations between peace and war. It would be fine if only the excellent aspects of peace- and war-time innovations appeared in such situations. In reality, however, the probability of only the bad aspects of both types of innovations appearing is higher in these situations. What makes it more difficult is that the military innovations usually discussed have been basically those for battle and mainly aimed at reforms in the armed forces. But innovations in the grey area that we must make now are those for crisis control and are not completed only within the armed forces. Innovations must progress in seamless cooperation between the military forces and other government institutions. For example, innovations need to be implemented comprehensively including operational functions of the Defense Ministry and the Coast Guard as well as policy-making capabilities of the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister's Office. This would be a very difficult endeavor.

### **3.3. Coherency within the actual situations**

Lastly, I would like to remind you of the quick pace at which situations develop in the real world. The conditions surrounding the Senkaku Islands today were forecast to some extent by the 2010 NDPG. The present state has emerged amid the still ongoing efforts to build a Dynamic Defense Force for dynamic deterrence proposed in the Guidelines. In other words, the developments over the Senkaku Islands are overtaking the pace of building up the Dynamic Defense Force. So it has become important how we can bring this factor of reality overtaking the plan into play for innovations.