

Chapter 8

Japan— Responding to the Changing Security Environment

In December 2004, the Japanese government formulated *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2006 and After* (NDPG) spelling out a concept of Japan's future defense capabilities. Since the announcement, the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) has carried out various reforms.

First, the SDF has been enhancing its existing capabilities by reforming its organization and systems. The NDPG of 2004 emphasized a new idea of defense capability based on building a “multifunctional, flexible, and effective force.” To achieve these key objectives—multifunctionality, flexibility, and effectiveness—the Japanese government has enacted laws for coping with a national emergency and for responding rapidly to a ballistic missile attack. In addition to strengthening joint operation capabilities, the government in 2006 also legislated to give the Defense Agency the status of a ministry and to redefine international cooperation activities as one of the primary missions of the SDF.

Second, the SDF has been introducing new equipment, namely a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. As the launch of ballistic missiles by North Korea in July 2006 shows, the ballistic missile threat is becoming more pronounced, making the introduction of BMD an urgent task. Meanwhile, the development of BMD has suggested a need for further organizational and systemic reform of the SDF.

Third, the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) is leading to reform of the Japan-US alliance as exemplified by the two countries' cooperation on roles, missions, and capabilities, and force realignment, based on the agreements at the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee meetings (SCC, the “2+2” talks) on October 29, 2005, and May 1, 2006.

In 2006, a significant change occurred in the security environment due to North Korea's missile launches and nuclear test. On the heels of the launch of seven ballistic missiles toward the Sea of Japan on July 5, North Korea announced that it had conducted a nuclear test on October 9. The United Nations (UN) Security Council took a firm stand against North Korea by adopting two resolutions, and Japan engaged in active diplomacy at the UN to play an important role in directing the international community's response. The North Korean nuclear test roused a debate on what measures Japan can take to ensure nuclear deterrence. In the course of the debate, Japan reaffirmed the existing policy, stating that it has no need to develop its own nuclear capability in the foreseeable future.

1. Enhancing Joint Operation Capabilities: The SDF in the “Era of Operation”

(1) Organizational Reform for Multi-functionality, Flexibility, and Effectiveness

The end of the Cold War has led to a global trend for armed forces to proactively implement joint operations. In April 2002, Gen Nakatani, director general of the Japan Defense Agency (JDA), ordered the initiation of a study on the joint operation capabilities of the SDF. To support that process, the Japanese government amended the Defense Agency Establishment Act and the Self-Defense Forces Act in July 2005. The JDA reorganized the Joint Staff Council into the Joint Staff Office (JSO) on March 27, 2006, with the aim of bolstering the effectiveness of SDF performance. Before the reorganization, the chiefs of staff for each SDF service—Ground (GSDF), Maritime (MSDF), and Air (ASDF)—were entitled to advise the JDA’s director-general, but the Joint Staff Council itself was not an advisory body for the director-general. Under the new system, the JSO chief of staff functions as a single advisor of military operational matters for the director-general.

Designed to facilitate the SDF’s performance, this upgrading of the JSO represents a key structural reform for advancing: (a) the transition of the SDF from a “basic force” to a “multi-functional, flexible, and effective force,” as called for by the *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2005 and After* (2004 NDPG), and (b) the transformation of defense capabilities from “deterrent effect-oriented” to “response capability-oriented,” which is outlined in the white paper *Defense of Japan 2006*.

Joint operation denotes the combined deployment of units from different service branches to achieve a specific operational objective. The need for joint operations is particularly strong in such situations as amphibious operations, which require tight cooperation between sea and ground units, and close air support operations, in which air units support ground troops. Conversely, joint operations are not critical in such cases as naval surface combat operations, which involve mainly maritime forces, or air defense operations, in which air units play the central role. Hence, the United States has become an accomplished implementer of joint operations, as its military missions are mainly carried out abroad and deploy all three services as a single package. In contrast, the need for the SDF to engage in joint operations was

considerably limited for some time, particularly during the Cold War. Consequently, each SDF service independently pursued its mission of defending Japan, relying on “joint coordination,” rather than joint operation, to harmonize its operational focuses and unit movements with those of the other services.

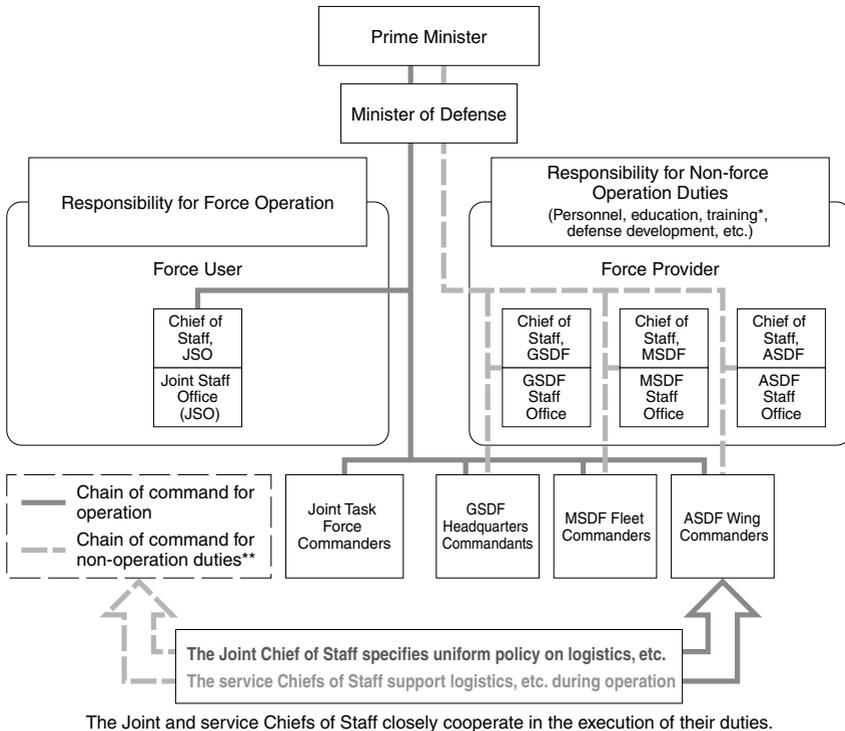
In the post-Cold War era, however, the opportunity for the SDF to take part in a variety of missions, such as international peace cooperation activities and disaster relief operations, gives rise to a greater need for seamless inter-service cooperation in order to accomplish specific operational goals. At the same time, the evolution of information technology and high-tech weaponry has made it possible to effectively coordinate operations involving units from different services. Examples of the SDF’s expanded reliance on joint operations include its helicopter operations following the Hanshin earthquake, and its participation in international disaster relief efforts in the wake of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. The most salient example of an area where information technology and high-tech weaponry are closely tied to inter-service collaboration is BMD, which depends on coordinated operation of the MSDF’s Aegis vessels and the ASDF’s warning and surveillance systems and Patriot missile defense systems. These changed circumstances, mission expansion, and information technology have driven the enhancement of the SDF’s joint operation capabilities.

(2) Establishment of the JSO: Separating “Management” and “Operation”

Before the establishment of JSO, each service of the SDF had operated under its own staff office. With the establishment of JSO, the function of each individual service’s staff office has changed. However, the JSO is not a headquarters, nor is its chief of staff a commander-in-chief for the SDF. Instead, the role of the JSO chief of staff is to advise the minister of defense (prior to January 9, 2007, the director-general of JDA) by functioning as a unified source of expert military advice on SDF operations. The establishment of the JSO has not altered the relationship between the ministry’s internal bureaus and the staff offices. Accordingly, the Minister of Defense continues to be counseled on policy-related matters (including operational concerns) by the internal bureaus and on military operations by the JSO. What has changed is the division of responsibilities among the service branches’ staff offices.

The significance of the formation of the JSO lies in the separation of “force providers” and “force users.” Prior to the reorganization, the three staff offices

Figure 8.1. Roles of Joint Chief of Staff and service Chiefs of Staff



The Joint and service Chiefs of Staff closely cooperate in the execution of their duties.

Source: Compiled from p. 120 in *Defense of Japan 2006*.

Notes: * Joint training is the responsibility of the Joint Chief of Staff.

** Service Chiefs of Staff's duties other than joint task force duties are stipulated by the Defense Minister.

simultaneously functioned as force providers responsible for enhancing defense capabilities and conducting training, and as force users responsible for operating the defense capabilities. The new system assigns the force user role to the JSO, so the service staff offices now only fulfill functions as force providers.

In addition, the JSO's role is not limited to cases where joint units are formed to operate under unified command; it also encompasses the activities of units within a single service. The establishment of the JSO to reinforce the joint operation capabilities does not signify that the SDF will form permanent joint units. Joint task forces will be set up as required in the future for BMD operation, as well as in response to invasion of Japan's offshore islands and in relief operations

for large-scale disasters. However, joint units will be organized on a necessary basis, limited to these cases.

(3) Toward Further Streamlining of the Organization

One of the key factors behind the push toward organizational reform has been the expansion of the SDF's sphere of activity, as demonstrated by rising expectations for SDF deployment for disaster relief activities, and by its active participation in international peace cooperation activities. The advent of this "era of operation" for the SDF has stimulated organizational restructuring, especially the operational structure unification that resulted in the JSO's establishment. Efforts are now being made to enable the new system to fully capitalize on its advantages. Three questions remain to be answered (a) to what level should joint operation be pursued, (b) how can joint operation-related needs be reflected in the building of defense capabilities, and (c) how can Japan-US defense cooperation be strengthened.

The first challenge is determining the level of jointness. In some cases, joint operation is simply not feasible due to differences in equipment, doctrine, training, and other characteristics of each service. For example, antisubmarine warfare conducted by the MSDF is poles apart from the GSDF's counter-special operation unit warfare. This gap is natural as each service has a unique role, and must keep its units' equipment, training, and education tailored to that specialty. To ignore the distinctive qualities of the three services and recklessly fuse them into joint operations would drastically undermine the ability of each service to execute its traditionally expected duties, and thus incapacitate the defensive capabilities of the SDF as a whole. In order to counter this risk, it is necessary to follow a path that achieves synergistic effects by exploiting each service's unique capabilities, instead of integrating them into "generalist" forces at the cost of losing their specialized capacities. In this respect, the current endeavor to strengthen the SDF's joint operation capabilities through operational system unification can be considered an effective approach that strengthens the teamwork between "specialist" forces.

Although the United States is generally seen as having a higher degree of jointness compared with Japan, it should be kept in mind that in some cases the US military requires a deeper level of inter-service cooperation in order to effectively engage in joint operations, due to the overlapping of the services' functions. Those cases include the conducting of ground warfare jointly by the

army and the Marine Corps, or the execution of air warfare jointly by the air force's tactical combat aircraft and the navy's carrier-based aircraft and ship-launched cruise missiles.

The second question to be answered is how to reflect joint operation-related needs in defense capabilities development. Similar to the US military, in which the service departments hold responsibility for creating war potential, the staff offices of the SDF services, as force providers, have the duty of building Japan's defense capabilities. The making of budget requests is the responsibility of each service office and not the JSO, so the requests tend to reflect minimum joint operational needs. Since the roles of force user and force provider are now separated under the SDF's new organization, it is necessary to facilitate effective segregated consultation and communication especially in budget process so that force user's needs can be accurately assimilated into the defense capabilities build-up.

The third task to be addressed is creation of a blueprint for the shape of future Japan-US defense cooperation. To date, bilateral operations have been conducted between the jointly operating US military and the independently operating SDF services. Now that the JSO has been established, the SDF will likewise participate in bilateral operations as a jointly operating force. However, the future framework for bilateral operations is bound to be complex since the structures of the US military and the SDF are not completely analogous. The US military uses a two-tiered system in which a regional joint command is established for each theater of operation, and joint task forces are formed, when needed, under that command. The Asia-Pacific region is overseen by the US Pacific Command, with the army's First Corps, the Seventh Fleet, and the Third Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) designated as candidates for joint task force command in that theater. Hence, the SDF must work with its US counterparts at two levels: the Pacific Command and the components that can be called up as joint task forces. Similarly, Japan-US operations in the Indian Ocean or the Middle East place the SDF side-by-side with both the US Central Command and its joint task forces. As such, future Japan-US defense cooperation will probably be achieved by interfacing the two-tiered US military with a combination of the JSO, the SDF service commands, and the Bilateral Joint Operation Coordination Center (BJOCC) that will be established at Yokota Air Base as part of the DPRI agreement signed in May 2006. This interface will likely take shape as a very complex mechanism since a different multilayered framework will need to be put together for each scenario envisioned. That

The Defense Agency's Transition to a Ministry

In 1997, the Japanese government began discussing the issue of whether the Defense Agency should be upgraded to the status of a ministry. In 2002, the ruling party made conversion of the Defense Agency into a ministry the top priority on its security policy agenda after the enactment of national emergency legislation. Following the passage of this legislation in 2004, the Defense Agency and the SDF implemented a number of system reforms, including strengthening of joint operation capabilities through the establishment of the JSO, and enhancement of policy-making functions through a sweeping realignment of internal bureaus. On December 15, 2006, the Diet amended the Defense Agency Establishment Act to give ministry status to the Defense Agency and include participation in international peace cooperation activities as one of the SDF's primary missions. The Ministry of Defense officially started operating on January 9, 2007.

The decision to make the Defense Agency a ministry reflected the increased weight of security in national administration. On the domestic scene, the need has grown to strengthen the state's power to deal with crises so that an integrated response—involving not only the SDF but also police and fire agencies—can be made for national defense and a diverse array of situations, particularly terrorist or guerrilla attacks and large-scale natural disasters. Furthermore, international cooperation, rather than unilateral action, is essential for ensuring global stability in this era of rapid globalization. The launch of the Ministry of Defense was deemed a necessary step for enabling Japan to respond promptly and appropriately to such domestic and external challenges.

Prior to the transition, the Defense Agency's director-general could not call for cabinet meetings on critical defense issues without going through the cabinet's leader, the prime minister. Now, however, matters concerning security and crisis management can be directly handled by a full minister, meaning that rapid responses can be made to ever-diversifying security concerns. At the same time, the transition does not alter the fundamental elements of Japan's defense policy, including the principles of civilian control and exclusively defense-oriented policy.

mechanism needs to be designed so that it enables the bilateral forces to take concerted actions with speed and efficiency.

2. Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)

(1) Japan's BMD Initiative

Japan is currently devising a system of BMD using a three-stage approach: research, development, and deployment. In each project, an exit decision must be made before advancement to the next stage. As a result, the pursuit of research on a particular system will not automatically lead to development of the same system,

and the system chosen for deployment may be different from what was researched and developed. At present, Japan is carrying out two BMD programs. One aims at implementing an immediately deployable system to counter existing ballistic missile threats, and the other at research and development (R&D) of a system for dealing with potential missile threats in the future.

The former program is based on a decision made by the cabinet and the Security Council in December 2003, and involves deployment of a system that has already demonstrated its potential for actual intercept operation. The Japanese government has concluded that the Patriot system (PAC-3, a surface-to-air BMD system) and the Standard Missile (SM-3, a sea-based upper-tier missile defense system) possess high technological potential for successful ballistic missile interception, and is proceeding with deployment of these systems prior to introduction of an interceptor missile being jointly developed with the United States, which will be discussed later. Under the current plan, the BMD shield in its final form will comprise four Aegis vessels, four PAC-3 groups, four newly developed radar sets (FPS-5), upgrades of seven existing radar systems (upgraded FPS-3), and the addition of BMD capabilities to the Japan Air-Defense Ground Environment (JADGE), an automated air defense control system. Deployment of those components is expected to be completed in 2012. In response to North Korea's ballistic missile launches in July 2006, the Japanese government has accelerated the timetable for PAC-3 delivery so that the first PAC-3 group will be deployed at Iruma Air Base in Saitama Prefecture in March 2007.

The latter program is based on joint R&D with the United States. It started out in 1999 as a US-Japan Joint Cooperative Research project for technological research on four components of an Aegis vessel-based upper-tier missile system that posed significant technological challenges:



Test launch of sea-based upper-tier missile (SM-3) developed under a US-Japan Joint Cooperative Research project, off the Hawaiian coast (March 8, 2006)
(Photo by Missile Defense Agency, US Department of Defense)

the nose cone, the infrared seeker, the kinetic warhead, and the second-stage rocket motor.

As stated above, Japan's decision-making process on BMD does not guarantee that any research would automatically lead to development, so the Japanese government's approval was necessary to move the project into the development phase. In December 2005, that approval was granted by the cabinet and the

Security Council, and subsequently Japan and the United States agreed to pursue joint development of an upgraded version of the SM-3 now being put into service, with completion slated for 2014.

The system under development is the SM-3 Block IIA, which is also referred to as the 21-inch diameter SM-3. The latter appellation derives from the fact that the diameter of the missile is 21 inches up to the warhead, making it wider than the SM-3 Block IA currently being adopted by the SDF, which has a 13.5-inch diameter above the second-stage rocket motor. Development plans for the SM-3 Block IIA include enhancement of such missile components as the 21-inch second- and third-stage rocket motors, the advanced infrared seeker, the advanced signal processor, and the divert and attitude control system, as well as upgrading of the Aegis system and the vertical launch system. Japan's role in the project is centered on nose cone and rocket motor development.

In addition to this buildup of the SDF's own BMD, the US military is in the process of deploying its BMD in Japan. In accordance with the DPRI agreement, a Forward-based X-band Radar was installed at the ASDF's Shariki Garrison in Aomori Prefecture in June 2006, and a PAC-3 unit under the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command was deployed in Okinawa in the following October. Moreover, following its refitting with BMD capabilities, the Aegis guided missile cruiser USS *Shiloh* arrived at Yokosuka to take up its duty as an element of forward deployment forces for the West Pacific. Through close cooperation with the SDF, the US military's BMD is expected to play a significant role in the defense of Japan.



USS *Shiloh*, an Aegis guided missile cruiser, arriving at Yokosuka (August 8, 2006) (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chantel M. Clayton, US Navy)

(2) Reforms Spurred by BMD Implementation

The BMD system is being steadily built up in Japan. This system is essential to Japan's defense at a time when ballistic missile proliferation continues unabated around the globe, as there is no other means of countering ballistic missile attacks. During the first Gulf War of 1991, the deployment of Patriot missiles to Israel after it was battered by Iraqi missile attacks gave the Israeli public a greater sense of security. Similarly, further expansion of Japan's BMD system will likely assuage the Japanese public's unease over ballistic missile threats. Today's BMD capabilities have vastly improved over the level during the first Gulf War, as demonstrated in the Iraq War of 2003. During the conflict, Iraq launched a total of 18 ballistic missiles, but the US-led coalition successfully downed all nine of the missiles that were deemed to require interception. Given this track record, the development of indigenous BMD is in Japan's national interest.

A number of issues remain to be resolved. The first is the exorbitant cost entailed by BMD deployment—a single PAC-3 missile carries nearly the same price tag as a tank. While it is necessary to set up an operation-ready system now, it is also important to develop for the future a system that offers higher performance at a lower cost. There is a limit on the defense budget allocation to BMD, and while the ballistic missile threat is intensifying, there are also other threats facing Japan. Furthermore, since the SDF is tasked with not only national defense, but also international peace cooperation activities for preserving global stability, all resources cannot be concentrated on missile defense. It is vital for the government to prioritize the programs of defense development appropriately, and to continuously enhance the multifunctionality, flexibility, and effectiveness of defense capabilities.

Another problem is the systems and operational factor, as possession of equipment alone does not ensure successful operations. Since the time between launch and impact of a ballistic missile would be a matter of minutes, it is of utmost importance to construct a rapidly responding decision-making system.

War does not just happen out of the blue; it is usually preceded by various political disputes that escalate to confrontations, followed by different signs of military movement. When events unfold in this manner, it is possible for the SDF to intercept an attack as soon as the Japanese government identifies the existence of an "armed attack situation" and gives the order for defense operations. In this sense, political leaders must identify an "armed attack situation" in due time since

only a short time is available for successful operation of BMD. As such, political leadership has a critical role to fulfill in effective BMD operation.

On the other hand, there could be cases where the government has not declared a particular state of affairs to be an “armed attack situation,” so a separate command system for dealing with inbound ballistic missiles is required. As one solution, the July 2005 amendment of the Self-Defense Forces Act gave the minister of defense the power to order the destruction of incoming ballistic missiles based on the prime minister’s consent, or based on emergency response guidelines approved by the prime minister. This change enables prompt, appropriate responses while preserving the principle of civilian control. Nevertheless, since BMD responses must be made in an extremely short time, the government and defense authorities should continuously search for ways to optimize organizational structures in terms of command and the flow of information.

One more critical issue is the impact of BMD implementation on Japan-US defense cooperation. The juxtaposition of US and Japanese BMD systems in the same region requires seamless cooperation for missile interception to be effective. Given that Japan operates its BMD system under its own set of procedures, it is obvious that missile interception performance would be bolstered if information on targeted missiles is shared by the US and Japanese BMD networks. Conversely, if tightly coordinated interception command and control is not exercised, there is greater potential for redundant responses or failed intercepts. To resolve this challenge, it is imperative that Japan and the United States create a system that supports appropriate collaboration in interception command and control during military emergencies. A large stride was taken in this direction when the 2+2 Meeting of October 29, 2005, called for the establishment of the BJOCC in the Security Consultative Committee document *US-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future* (hereinafter, “10/29 Joint Document”).

The US Ballistic Missile Defense Program

The United States leads the rest of the world in the development of BMD. On January 10, 2006, the United States deployed a Sea-based X-band Radar platform off the coast of Alaska, and on February 23 conducted a test that successfully tracked a mock missile launched from Alaska, using a radar system installed at Beale Air Force Base in California. Despite some occasional snags, the United States is achieving steady progress in its BMD development.

The US government's budget for fiscal 2007 sets aside \$439.3 billion for defense spending, which represents an increase of 7 percent over the preceding year's level. The portion earmarked for R&D amounts to nearly \$76.1 billion—in itself a vast sum that exceeds Japan's total defense outlays—and includes for BMD development approximately \$9.3 billion. This enormous figure, forming 13 percent of the total R&D account, is on par with the army's entire R&D budget, and palpably conveys the heavy emphasis placed on missile defense by the current US administration.

The United States is pursuing its program of BMD development and deployment in units of two-year blocks that are each based on specific objectives. The goal of Block 04, completed at the end of fiscal 2005, was to implement the preliminary deployment of the Ground Based Interceptor (GBI) and the SM-3 in Alaska. Block 06, scheduled to finish at the end of fiscal 2007, comprises such tasks as reinforcing the preliminary capabilities achieved in Block 04, building up the ground component of the Space Tracking and Surveillance System, trial manufacture of the laser cannon for the Airborne Laser (ABL) system, and conducting flight tests of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD). By the conclusion of Block 06, the BMD network will consist of: 26 GBIs in Alaska and additional two in California; four ground-based radars, one each in Alaska, California, the United Kingdom, and Greenland; one Sea-based X-band Radar deployed off the Alaskan coast, two Forward-based X-band Radars (one in Japan), six Aegis vessels with ballistic missile tracking capabilities; 11 Aegis vessels with both tracking and intercept capabilities; and 512 PAC-3 missiles. The Department of Defense states that this deployment will produce full defense capabilities in the Middle East and expand the defensive coverage for US allies, friends, and expeditionary forces stationed abroad. The United States also plans to follow this with Blocks 08, 10, and 12 to further strengthen its missile defense system in terms of both quantity and quality.

These missile defense programs are divided across three intercept phases—boost, midcourse, and terminal—to provide a layered defense system. Boost intercept systems target a missile while it is still burning its engine in the ascent stage, midcourse intercept goes after the missile in mid-flight after the engine cuts, and terminal intercept attacks the missile while it descends toward its target.

The job of boost-phase intercept is assigned to the ABL and the Kinetic Energy Interceptor (KEI). The ABL is a laser weapon designed to be carried on a B-747 and fired at ascending missiles. To date, the United States has successfully tested a megawatt-class chemical laser and, in Block 06, fitted out a B-747 with the laser weapon. Test flights are scheduled to be conducted in Block 08.

The KEI is a high-speed missile that is launched from a land- or ship-based platform near the ballistic missile launch area, and destroys its target by impact. Intercept testing is slated for fiscal year 2011, and, if all goes well, 10 KEIs will be deployed during Block 12. The United States is also looking to test the space-based KEI in Block 14.

Midcourse-phase intercept is to be provided by the GBI and the Aegis BMD. The GBI is already being deployed on a test bed, and is currently in operation in Alaska. The United States will continue to work on enhancing the interceptor's performance, and will build an additional missile every month. The Aegis BMD is, as the name suggests, a missile intercept system employed on Aegis vessels. Plans call for production of two new SM-3 interceptors each month, and for performance improvements to the sensors, computer, and the interceptor itself. Japan's joint R&D with the United States is an element of the Aegis BMD program.

The role of terminal-phase intercept is to be fulfilled by the currently deployed PAC-3 missiles, and a cooperative arrangement between the army's THAAD missile system and Israel's Arrow missile system. THAAD deployment is scheduled for some time in 2008.

3. Realignment of US Forces Japan

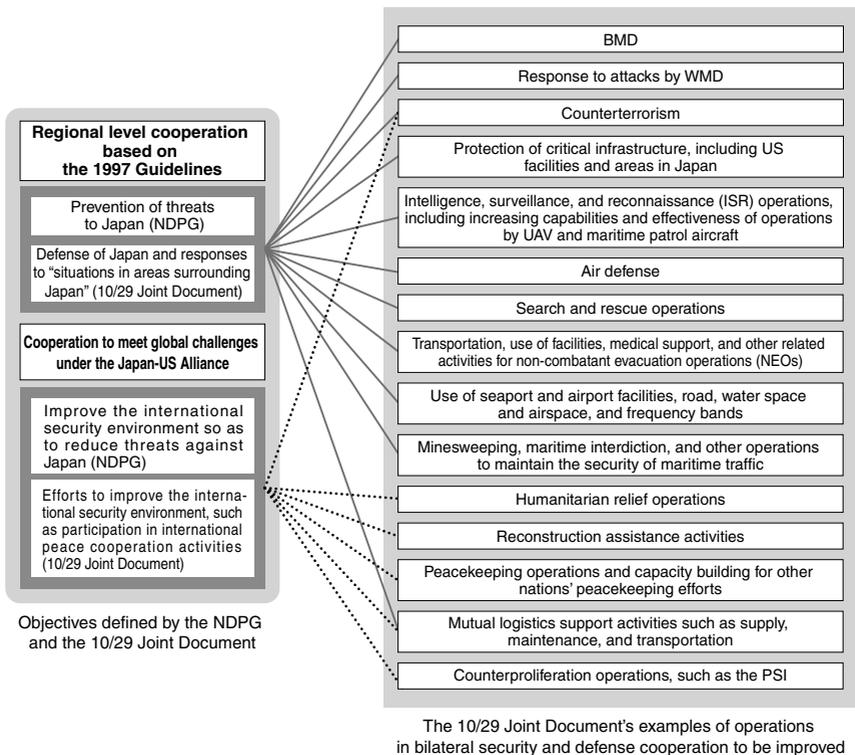
(1) NDPG and the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI)

The United States is vigorously carrying out a transformation of its armed forces. The Department of Defense indicates in its 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance* that this effort is aimed at reforming three areas: "how we fight," "how we do business," and "how we work with others." The scope of this reform encompasses US alliances with other nations, and the posture of its forces deployed abroad. The outward-looking goals include strengthening the out-of-area operation capabilities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), withdrawal of two US divisions from Europe, downsizing of the US presence in South Korea by 12,500 troops, and implementation of changes in Japan as well. As agreed upon in the 2+2 Meeting of December 2002, the United States and Japan have worked under the DPRI framework to determine how roles, missions, and capabilities should be shared between the SDF and the US military, and how to go about realigning US military facilities and areas in Japan. These talks resulted in the formulation of the 10/29 Joint Document and the United States-Japan Security Consultative Committee Document *United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation* issued on May 1, 2006 (hereinafter, "5/1 Joint Document").

The 10/29 Joint Document consists of two parts, with one focusing on roles, missions, and capabilities, and the other on force posture realignment. The 5/1 Joint Document specifies the pathway for transformation of US Forces Japan (USFJ) and the transfer of certain USFJ facilities and areas to Japan. In recent years, public attention has tended to be directed at the issue of USFJ realignment, partly due to the media's intense coverage of negotiations for relocating Futenma Air Station. However, from the perspective of the alliance, the examination of roles, missions, and capabilities holds greater significance. The 10/29 Joint Document reaffirms the framework for regional level cooperation laid out in the 1997 *Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation* (hereinafter, "1997 Guidelines"), while also defining the role of the alliance as cooperation at the global level—the "US-Japan Alliance in the Global Context."

The key feature of the 10/29 Joint Document is that it reinforces the basic vision of Japanese defense policy systematically expressed in the 2004 NDPG. The latter document states that the two major objectives to be attained for Japan's security are "...to prevent any threat from reaching Japan and, in the event that it does, repel it and minimize any damage" and "...to improve the international security environment so as to reduce the chances that any threat will reach Japan in the first place." Moreover, the 10/29 Joint Document identifies two primary areas for Japan-US cooperation: defense of Japan and responses to situations in areas surrounding Japan, including responses to new threats and diverse contingencies and efforts to improve the international security environment, such as participation in international peace cooperation activities. These two areas perfectly mesh with the two objectives delineated by the NDPG. Furthermore, the NDPG states that those objectives are to be attained through a threefold approach: Japan's own efforts, cooperative efforts with the alliance partner, and cooperative efforts with the international community. Given this correlation with the NDPG, the 10/29 Joint Document can be seen as a compass for implementation of the second element, cooperation with the United States, Japan's alliance partner. When these documents are viewed in this light, the correspondence between the two objectives and the 10/29 Joint Document's examples of operations in bilateral security and defense cooperation to be improved can be categorized as shown in Figure 8.2. As described here, the types of cooperation indicated by the 10/29 Joint Document embodies considerable potential for accomplishing the NDPG's dual objectives.

Figure 8.2. Japan's security/defense objectives and possible areas for cooperation



Sources: Compiled from *On the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2005 and After* and *US-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*.

(2) USFJ Bases and the "Roadmap"

Another key element of the DPRI is the USFJ's force posture realignment. As expressed in the joint statement issued at the signing of the 5/1 Joint Document, the basic principle of the realignment requires Japan and the United States "...to strengthen their commitments under the US-Japan Security Treaty and, at the same time, to reduce the burden on local communities, including those on Okinawa..." A more detailed set of policies is outlined in the 10/29 Joint Document, which indicates the following guiding precepts concerning the realignment: (a) US military presence is indispensable; (b) capabilities are to be strengthened

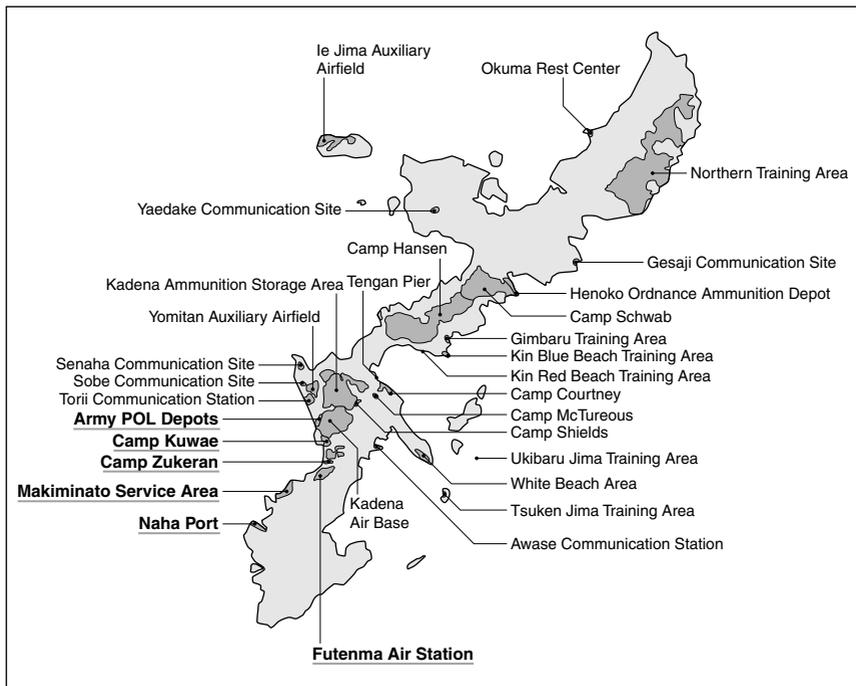
through realignment as well as adjustment of roles, missions, and capabilities; (c) enhanced coordination and improved interoperability between headquarters for flexible, responsive command and control is of critical importance; (d) training will be dispersed when it is consistent with military missions and operational requirements; (e) shared military use of both SDF and US facilities and areas is valuable in promoting effectiveness of bilateral cooperation and increasing efficiencies; (f) adequate capacity of US facilities and areas is necessary; (g) particular attention will be paid to possible realignment of force structure in such regions where US facilities and areas are concentrated in densely populated areas; and (h) implementation of civil-military dual-use of US facilities and areas must be compatible with military missions and operational requirements.

These precepts are the baselines on which the USFJ's force posture realignment has been carried out. While the 10/29 Joint Document provides an outline, the 5/1 Joint Document, the "Roadmap," spells out the details. The realignment plan as delineated in the 5/1 Joint Document is built on six pillars, the first of which is realignment in Okinawa. Included on the agenda are the construction of Futenma Replacement Facility on Henoko Point within Camp Schwab's area, the relocation to Guam of approximately 8,000 III MEF personnel (mainly headquarters personnel) and their approximately 9,000 dependents, and the total or partial return of the six facilities south of Kadena Air Base (Camp Kuwae, Camp Zukeran, MCAS Futenma, Makiminato Service Area, Naha Port, and Army POL Depot Kuwae Tank Farm No. 1). The other pillars of the 5/1 Joint Document plan are: (a) reform of US Army command and control structure at Camp Zama to improve command capabilities, and relocation of the GSDF Central Readiness Force headquarters to Camp Zama; (b) relocation of ASDF Air Defense Command to Yokota Air Base and partial return of Yokota airspace to Japanese control; (c) relocation of Carrier Air Wing squadrons from Atsugi Air Facility to MCAS Iwakuni; (d) missile defense; and (e) relocation of training fields.

Inspection of the realignment plans reveals two salient features. The first is the relocation of installations and units away from densely populated areas, where noise and accidents are more likely to become problems, and where the economic potential of the returned sites is significant. The aforementioned relocation of Futenma Air Station to Henoko Point and Carrier Air Wing squadrons from Atsugi to Iwakuni will do much to mitigate the noise impact on local communities. The six installations slated for total or partial return in

Okinawa are all located in the main island's central and southern regions, which are densely populated and stand to realize considerable economic potential from the return. As such, use of the returned areas can be expected to invigorate Okinawa's economy. The restitution of the six sites is commendable in that it will reduce the burden on the local populations not only in terms of shrinking the footprint of military facilities, but also in terms of offering greater economic opportunities to them. The second feature is the expansion of facility sharing by the SDF and the USFJ. As evidenced by the scheduled relocation of ASDF Air Defense Command to Yokota Air Base and GSDF Central Readiness Force headquarters to Camp Zama, the realignment roadmap promises to strengthen SDF-USFJ cooperative relationships at the command level as well. This, in turn,

Figure 8.3. Current disposition of USFJ facilities and areas in Okinawa



Sources: Compiled from the *United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation* and materials published by the Naha Defense Facilities Administration Bureau.

Note: Underlined installations are to be totally or partially returned to Japanese control under the agreement expressed in the 5/1 Joint Document.

will stimulate collaboration regarding roles, missions, and capabilities, and improve the effectiveness of the Japan-US alliance as a whole.

These force posture realignment plans are designed as a single package, and the plans for Okinawa in particular show distinct interconnections. The installation merger and land return for areas



Camp Schwab coastal area (Henoko)

south of Kadena Air Base are tied with the relocation of III MEF headquarters personnel and dependents to Guam, and the transfer of III MEF headquarters to Guam is coupled with the advancement of Futenma Replacement Facility construction and with Japanese funding assistance for facility development on Guam. The simultaneous implementation of these interlinked plans is a necessary strategy for achieving a force posture realignment that reduces the burdens on local communities as pledged by the 5/1 Joint Document.

(3) Challenges Ahead

The 10/29 Joint Document and the 5/1 Joint Document have provided a clear-cut direction for the USFJ realignment and Japan-US cooperation concerning roles, missions, and capabilities. If these agreements are executed as planned, the credibility of the Japan-US alliance will be enhanced and, at the same time, the burden posed by USFJ facilities and areas will be immensely alleviated. For this to happen, however, there are three challenges that must be tackled.

The first challenge is to counter the risk that the relocation of some 8,000 Marine personnel to Guam might diminish the level of deterrence. Marine operational formations are divided into three echelons according to size: Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), which comprises 1,500 to 3,000 Marines and can be mobilized in hours; Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), which consists of 3,000 to 20,000 Marines and can be mobilized in around ten days; and MEF, which is made up of 20,000 to 90,000 Marines and can be mobilized in about one month. Marine forces currently stationed in Okinawa include the headquarters and other elements of the III MEF—the highest of the three echelons. The 31st MEU is the local Marine unit with the highest level of readiness.

Since the 31st MEU and its related units will remain in Okinawa, there will

be no change in the ability to deploy this high-readiness force in response to emergencies. However, MEB or MEF mobilization raises concern. At present, it is not clear which units of the new MEB will be stationed in Okinawa and which will be deployed to Guam. Given that forces can be delivered from Guam to Okinawa by high-speed transport vessels in one and a half days, and that a MEB is mobilizable in approximately 10 days, the new MEB's overall readiness will not likely be diminished significantly if some of its units were to be relocated to Guam.

Likewise, since MEF mobilization takes about one month, the deterrent effect of the III MEF would not be undermined greatly if this force were to be fully repositioned to Guam. Moreover, since Guam offers easier access to Southeast Asia than does Okinawa, the planned relocation of the III MEF HQ to Guam would be a more efficient deployment for executing the war on terror in Southeast Asia.

To reiterate, the partial transfer of Marine units to Guam under the USFJ realignment agreement does not amount to an appreciable weakening of their deterrent effect, and any insufficiencies could be countered through Japan-US cooperation regarding roles, missions, and capabilities. Nevertheless, the maintenance of an appropriate level of deterrence in the increasingly worrisome East Asian security environment requires constant review of the adequacy of the existing deployment posture and defense cooperation systems. This task will not end with the accomplishment of the objectives of the 10/29 Joint Document and the 5/1 Joint Document; instead, it demands sustained commitment to its resolution.

The second challenge on the road ahead is to garner the understanding of local governments and residents so that the USFJ realignment can be smoothly realized. While implementation of the 5/1 Joint Document's agenda promises to reduce the overall burden on local communities surrounding existing USFJ installations, relocations within Japan will result in another burden for the municipalities that will host the repositioned forces. Hence, the Japanese government needs to carefully explain to those newly hosting communities that the relocations are intended to lessen the burden on Japan as a whole. Already, efforts in this regard have paid off by eliciting a certain amount of receptiveness from all municipalities surrounding the ASDF base in mainland Japan that will serve as the new site for flight training operations being transferred from Kadena Air Base. This accountability of the national administration towards local governments and residents should be sustained.

In particular, it is vital for the national government to obtain Okinawa Prefecture's understanding on the realignment. The results of Okinawa's gubernatorial election on November 19, 2006 provided a window on how this process of consensus-building is likely to unfold. The election pitted together three candidates—Hirota Nakaima, a former president of the Federation of Okinawa Chambers of Commerce and Industry, former Upper House Member Keiko Itokazu, and Chosuke Yara, the head of the Ryukyu Independent Party and a business operator—but the race turned out to be a contest between only Nakaima and Itokazu, whose debate revolved around developmental issues and USFJ installations. Both opposed the central government's scheme for replacement of Futenma Air Station, but they diverged in their stances. While Itokazu demanded that the facility be relocated outside Japan, Nakaima, though resisting the V-shaped runway agreement approved by the 2+2 meeting, expressed openness to relocation elsewhere in the prefecture, thereby leaving room for further negotiation with the national government. After intense campaigning by both sides, Nakaima won the election with a margin of 347,303 to 309,985, defeating Itokazu even in districts affected by the realignment plan, including the cities of Naha, Urasoe, Okinawa, Nago, Kadena, and Ginowan, as well as the town of Kin. Nakaima's indication of flexibility regarding construction of the replacement facility somewhere in the prefecture raises the possibility for the realignment program to be realized. It is the task of the central government to continue its dialogue with Okinawa Prefecture in order to smooth out the path toward realignment.

The third challenge is the creation of a new framework that fully outlines Japan-US cooperation in security and defense. As mentioned earlier, the basic course for defense of Japan and regional level cooperation regarding situations in surrounding areas is already charted out by the 1997 Guidelines, and thus the efficacy of Japan-US defense cooperation can be raised if study and planning are steered along that course. It should be noted, however, that the 1997 Guidelines do not mention BMD collaboration. Furthermore, a similar set of basic principles does not exist for worldwide cooperation under "the Japan-US alliance in the Global Context." The absence of such a framework means that, regardless of any future global level cooperation between Japan and the United States in such activities as humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance, Japan-US defense cooperation will continue to lack a well-defined direction.

In this respect, it is essential that Japan and the United States construct a new framework for achieving defense cooperation in a post-9/11 world where responding to new threats and diverse situations is becoming an increasingly crucial challenge. The joint statement issued by Japan and the United States on the adoption of the 5/1 Joint Document declares that both sides “emphasized the importance of examining the scope of security and defense cooperation to ensure a robust alliance relationship, and to enhance the alliance’s capability to respond to diverse challenges in the evolving regional and global security environment.” As this message indicates, Japan and the United States can be expected to comprehensively examine the ideal shape for security and defense cooperation and continue dialogue aimed at devising a new framework for that partnership.

4. North Korea’s Nuclear Tests and Japan’s Response

(1) Proactive Diplomacy at the United Nations

The issue of North Korea nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities took a serious turn in 2006, when North Korea launched a series of seven ballistic missiles over the Sea of Japan on July 5, and announced on October 9 that it had conducted a nuclear test. The international community took a strong stance against North Korea’s actions, expressing condemnation in two resolutions passed by the UN Security Council (UNSC). As a member of the council, Japan played a major role in shaping the international response by proactively engaging in diplomacy at the United Nations.

With regard to the July 5 missile launches, Japan immediately requested the convening of a closed meeting of the UNSC, where it presented a draft resolution that called for prevention of the transfer to North Korea of funding and technology for nuclear and missile-related development, pursuant to Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. China was unreceptive toward adopting the proposed resolution, and instead prepared a President’s Statement proposal that did not mention sanctions, and presented it at July 6 meeting attended by the permanent UNSC members plus Japan’s UN Ambassador Kenzo Oshima. This was followed by diplomacy between mainly Japan, the United States, and China to determine whether the UNSC’s response would be to adopt the draft resolution or simply the proposed President’s Statement, and whether, in the event that the resolution were selected as the mode of response, to invoke the UN Charter’s Chapter 7.

On July 7, Japan, the United States, and six other states formally presented to the UNSC their joint proposal for a sanction resolution against North Korea that required, based on Chapter 7, UN members to implement measures to prevent the importation of missile-related materials and technology from North Korea, and to block the transfer of funds to persons involved in North Korea's missile or WMD (weapons of mass destruction) programs. China asked that voting on the resolution be postponed since Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei was scheduled to make a state visit to North Korea on July 10. On July 12, China and Russia submitted to the UNSC, in the form of a joint statement, a draft resolution that excluded references to Chapter 7.

Responding to China's proposal, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso stated that mention of Chapter 7 was indispensable because Japan was more strongly threatened by North Korea's missiles than other nations, but he also showed a flexible stance by indicating his willingness to work out a concession on the draft. Starting on July 12, further talks were held primarily between Japan, the United States, China, and Russia, resulting in a compromise draft that left out reference to Chapter 7 but included the language, "acting under its special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security," and basically incorporated seven items from Japan's original proposal, such as condemnation of North Korea and a request for prevention of transfer of missile-related materials and technology to North Korea. The finalized version was unanimously adopted as UNSC Resolution 1695 on July 15.

Unlike the draft initially put forward by Japan, Resolution 1695 is not a resolution manifestly grounded on Chapter 7. Nevertheless, it goes well beyond the President's Statement draft tendered by China, representing a unanimously adopted resolution that retains the essential elements of Japan's first proposal, including the requirement that all UN members prevent the transfer of missile development-related items, materials, goods, technology, and financial resources to North Korea, and the strong call for North Korea to return to the Six-party Talks. As such, Resolution 1695 is an instrument that applies effective pressure on North Korea, and hence could embody Japan's diplomatic objectives. Furthermore, the UNSC's unanimous adoption of the resolution means that any Japanese sanctions against North Korea will represent not an isolated political decision by Japan, but action that reflects the international community's consensus. Following the resolution, the Japanese government began examining possible measures for

sanctions against North Korea, leading to the implementation on September 19 of a sanction restricting fund transfer to North Korea, pursuant to the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act.

However, a few months after the missile launches, North Korea announced on October 9 that it had conducted a nuclear test. This immediately prompted the UNSC to initiate working-level talks in the afternoon of the same day (New York time) based on a draft resolution prepared by the United States. This time, the question of whether to adopt a sanction resolution based on Chapter 7 became a moot issue, with discussion focusing instead on deciding the severity of sanctions to be placed on North Korea, particularly with regard to whether the measures should include compulsory inspections of ship cargo in international waters, and determining whether explicit invocation of Chapter 7's Article 41, which provides for economic sanctions, would patently exclude the use of military sanctions. In its capacity as the UNSC president for that month, Japan coordinated the discussion along with the five permanent members. After the main point of contention, the invocation of Chapter 7, was settled in a compromise between the United States and China that resulted in the text "acting under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, and taking measures under its Article 41," the finalized document was unanimously adopted as UNSC Resolution 1718 on October 15. The resolution obliged UN members to comply with a number of sanctions, including inspection of cargo on ships transiting to and from North Korea, freezing of financial assets related to North Korea's WMD program, banning of the transfer of WMD-related items, materials, and goods to North Korea, and prohibition of luxury item exports to North Korea.

Japan is taking a two-pronged approach of dialogue and pressure in its policies dealing with North Korea. Resolutions 1695 and 1718 coincide with Japanese policy for the most part, in that they step up international pressure for North Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, while also urging North Korea's return to the Six-party Talks. Accordingly,

the resolutions developed an environment for restarting the Six-party Talks against a backdrop of intensified international pressure. In this way, Japan's diplomatic goal of increasing international pressure against North Korea's development of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities was essentially achieved through the chain of diplomatic efforts at the UN.

All the same, it is a fact that such proactive diplomacy by Japan was made possible by Japan's position as a UNSC member in 2006. Furthermore, North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs represent more than just a threat to Japan; they are also a global threat in the form of WMD proliferation. The effectiveness of Japan's coleadership in shaping the international response to North Korea reaffirms the desirability of Japan's early installment as a permanent member of the UNSC.

(2) Inspection of North Korean Cargo and the SDF's Role

Japan has responded to North Korea's ballistic missile launches and nuclear test by implementing its own set of sanctions to place heavier pressure on North Korea. Sanctions pertaining to the July 2006 missile launches include denial of the passenger ship *Mangyongbong-92*'s access to Japanese ports, and a general ban on North Korean officials entering Japan. Sanctions dealing with the October 2006 nuclear test include the closing off of Japanese ports to North Korean-flagged vessels, and a general ban against entry into Japan by North Korean nationals. In addition to these measures instituted independently, Japan introduced in September 2006 a sanction for preventing the transfer of ballistic missile development-related funds to North Korea, as specified by Resolution 1695, and initiated in November 2006 an embargo on the export of tuna, caviar, liquor, cigarettes, and 20 other luxury items to North Korea under Resolution 1718, after making an implementation report to the UNSC.

In the context of UN member debate over the content of Resolutions 1695 and 1718, the question of feasibility and effectiveness of sanctions arises. The framework for conducting inspections of cargo transiting to and from North Korea is the key to the effectiveness of the prohibition on the transfer of WMD-related items, materials, and goods. To this end, the Japanese Diet has discussed the propriety of applying two existing laws, the Act on Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan and the Act on Ship Inspection Operations in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan (hereinafter, "Ship Inspection Operations Act").

Enacted in 2000, the Ship Inspection Operations Act is the sole law in Japan's legal system that allows the SDF to conduct cargo inspections of ships in Japan's territorial waters or in international waters even in cases that are not armed attack situations. As the formal name of this law indicates, it provides for ship inspection by the SDF in situations in areas surrounding Japan—meaning situations that will have an important impact on Japan's peace and security, including situations that, if left unaddressed, could develop into a direct armed attack against Japan. Note, however, that this law does not permit the SDF to fire warning shots or make any other use of weapons that is not for the purpose of protecting oneself or others from physical harm or death. In the current context, since Resolution 1718 has made as one of its legal requirements the implementation by UN members of restrictive measures concerning trade and other economic activities, it is theoretically possible to apply the Ship Inspection Operations Act in cases where a new UNSC resolution is adopted to require further measures for tightening the restrictions, provided that the flag state's approval of inspections is received. Then, if a particular state of affairs were judged to be a situation in areas surrounding Japan, the Japanese government would consider implementing ship inspections by the SDF based on the Ship Inspection Operations Act.

The term “cargo inspections” as used in Resolution 1718 represents a specific concept of the resolution that differs in meaning from mandatory ship inspections for state control of foreign vessels and ship inspections in which boarding rights are pre-authorized by the flag state. Under this concept, Resolution 1718 requests UN member countries to cooperate, when necessary, with cargo inspections and other such actions within the bounds of international law and each country's domestic law and authority. Moreover, it includes not only cargo inspections conducted on the open sea, but also those carried out in ports and on land. Japan, like other major nations, has established the measures necessary for cargo inspection operations in its ports based on domestic laws and ordinances. As of the end of December 2006, the Japanese government had not interpreted the existing state of affairs concerning North Korea to represent a “situation in areas around Japan,” and was not conducting ship inspection operations under the Ship Inspection Operations Act.

(3) The Impact on Japan's Security

In the mid-1990s, the suspicion arose that North Korea was acquiring a nuclear capability. Now that North Korea has announced its nuclear test, the suspicion is

transforming into a matter of fact. It is not yet known how many nuclear warheads exist in North Korea's arsenal, or whether those warheads are sized for ballistic missile delivery. Nevertheless, it is clear that the present situation represents a new risk for nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia, and thus signifies a change in the region's strategic environment that increases the direct threat posed to Japan.

For that reason, North Korea's announcement has heightened interest in Japan concerning the favorable shape of deterrence against North Korea's nuclear threat. One of the key focuses of debate has been the argument that any final policy on the form of deterrence should be built up from scratch, without excluding as a taboo subject the option of arming Japan with nuclear weapons. Rather than calling for Japan's creation of a nuclear arsenal, however, this argument is simply stating that the reason why Japan does not possess nuclear weapons needs to be explained in strategic terms. In fact, no fundamental opposition has arisen against Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's statement that Japan's Three Non-nuclear Principles would be firmly upheld, which he issued on October 10, 2006, directly after North Korea's nuclear test.

For example, in an October 27 meeting of the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee, Lower House Member Seiji Maehara of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) argued that attempting to create a nuclear arsenal for Japan would be an unrealistic move because: (a) it would undermine the current system of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which must be maintained to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear materials; (b) Japan's withdrawal from the NPT would possibly lead to the institution of economic sanctions against Japan; (c) Japan lacks a site where nuclear weapons could be tested; and (d) Japan would have to be prepared to radically revamp its security relationship with the United States since the latter would likely be unreceptive to Japan's possession of nuclear weapons. Foreign Minister Aso largely supported this conclusion, stating that efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation must be stepped up to resolve what has become a global concern, the Japanese government is working toward the global elimination of nuclear weapons, and the United States probably does not want Japan to develop its own nuclear capabilities. Moreover, in a debate between party leaders on November 8, Prime Minister Abe reaffirmed his position on firmly maintaining the Three Non-nuclear Principles, while DPJ President Ichiro Ozawa pointed out that possession of nuclear weapons would provide neither political nor military advantage to Japan.

As indicated by these statements, North Korea's nuclear test has not overturned the national consensus that Japan should not build a nuclear arsenal. One reason for this is the opinion that US extended deterrence is sufficiently functional to preclude the need for Japanese nuclear capabilities. During a meeting with Foreign Minister Aso in Japan on October 18, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice gave solid support for this opinion when she reaffirmed that the United States was staunchly committed to defending Japan in any circumstances, and thereby explicitly indicated that the United States would provide extended deterrence to Japan.

It can be argued that the credibility of extended deterrence is subject to disruption by two factors. The first is instability arising in the alliance itself, and the second is the risk that retaliation by the extended deterrence provider on the ally's behalf could lead to re-retaliation. Since the current relationship between Japan and the United States as allies is extremely robust, only the second factor needs to be examined in discussion of the credibility of extended deterrence in the context of North Korea's nuclear test announcement. Here, the key point is that North Korea has not yet developed an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), and thus lacks the means to launch a nuclear attack against the US mainland. As such, North Korea's nuclear test announcement does not affect the credibility of extended deterrence. Of course, the deterrence would fail if North Korea were to take some sort of irrational action, but such behavior would not be deterred by the US nuclear arsenal nor by nuclear weapons directly possessed by Japan. In this light, there is no need for Japan to develop its own nuclear deterrent capabilities.

However, in the event that North Korea successfully develops an ICBM, a different assessment of the credibility of extended deterrence would need to be formed, since the US mainland would become endangered by North Korea's nuclear arsenal. In this scenario, maintaining the credibility of the US nuclear umbrella would require a greater level of consultation between Japan and the United States concerning the latter's nuclear policies, enhancement of the reliability of the BMD deployed in Alaska for protecting the US mainland, cooperation for US air operations against North Korean ballistic missiles before launching, and implementation of other countermeasures. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that diplomatic efforts founded on Resolution 1718 represent the ideal approach for resolving the issue of North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities before they escalate into an even greater threat.