

Preface

To ensure peace and stability in East Asia, a precise understanding of the security environment in the region is essential. With this aim, researchers of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) have described the major developments that took place in 2006 relating to the security of East Asia, from their own perspectives and findings, in this *East Asian Strategic Review*. The period covered is primarily to December 2006.

Two chapters are devoted to medium- and long-term issues critical in assessing the security of the region. Chapter 1 analyzes the Chinese strategy for cooperation with East Asian countries, and Chapter 2 reviews the great-power relations of the United States, China, and Russia over Central and Southeast Asia. The following chapters focus on individual countries and areas. Issues addressed in Chapters 3 to 8 include, but are not limited to, the problem of North Korean weapons of mass destruction (WMD); increasing calls for China to act responsibly, and its relations with Japan; the move toward economic integration of the ASEAN countries, and the shadow cast on democratization in Thailand by a military coup; Russia's "resource diplomacy" using energy resources as a means of diplomatic pressure; US security policy shifting from unilateralism to multilateral cooperation; and, in Japan, the organizational development of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), the Japan-US alliance, and Japan's North Korea policy. We would be more than happy if this book proves to be of assistance to readers in deepening understanding of the security environment of East Asia and stimulates debate on the issues raised.

The Strategic Review was written and edited by NIDS staff members in their capacity as professional researchers, and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the official position of the Japanese government or the Ministry of Defense. It was written by Masafumi Iida (Chapter 1), Jun Tsunekawa (Chapter 2), Takeshi Watanabe (Chapter 3), Masayuki Masuda (Chapter 4), Tomotaka Shoji (Chapter 5), Shinji Hyodo and Toyoko Kudo (Chapter 6), Eiichi Katahara (Chapter 7), and Sugio Takahashi (Chapter 8). It was edited by Jun Tsunekawa (editor-in-chief), Masafumi Iida (deputy editor-in-chief), Marie Izuyama, Toyoko Kudo, Kentaro Oe, Yasushi Sukegawa, Katsuya Tsukamoto, Takeshi Watanabe, and Hikaru Yamashita.

This publication is a translation of the Japanese version originally published in

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March 2007. The translation was undertaken by The Japan Times, Ltd. and supervised by Yasushi Sukegawa.

April 2007

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Editor-in-chief