Postscript

This publication is a collection of the discussions of the Council of Defense-Strategic Studies, chaired by Professor Akio Watanabe. It is published to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the National Institute for Defense Studies. We hereby express our sincere appreciation towards Professor Watanabe, and Chief Researcher Professor Masahiro Akiyama, who continuously led the project. We would also like to acknowledge the authors’ dedicated contribution to the volume.

Professor Seizaburo Sato, who chaired the inauguration of the Council of Defense-Strategic Studies (1999), mentioned during his final lecture at Keio University the three main fundamental trends, which continue to remain critical in the 21st century. They were 1) the universalization of “industrialization” beyond the background of classical civilization and the deepening of the information revolution, 2) the expansion of “nationalism” and movements for national integration, and 3) the development of “Equalization” (democracy and respect for human rights—) as a result of industrialization. The significance of those trends is reinforced by the following three events that occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. These events were, 1) the 9/11 terror attack in 2001, 2) the global financial crisis of 2008, and 3) the complex disaster associated with the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011.

In the last chapter, —Professor Akio Watanabe argues that— not only is there a need to “know the enemy, to know yourself,” furthermore it is “necessary to know the ‘time and place’ in a broader sense” in the course of history. He appropriately indicates that “even if it is possible to forecast, forecasting beyond expectations includes extremely difficult discontinuity.” We in Japan tend to avoid such thorough analysis and turning them into a concrete form.

Readers of this report, “who are engaged in strategic decision making in Japan,” are required to examine the “power shift” with comprehensive and multifaceted view, and with strategic agility, meaning that the strategies are “constantly reviewed and modified whenever necessary.”

It is necessary to cope with the diversity and complexity of challenges appropriately and to sustain support for planning and implementation of strategies with flexibility. Building on the achievements made by the Council
of Defense-Strategic Studies, as members of the “Foreign/Security Policy Community,” we at the National Institute for Defense Studies will continue to promote advanced research activities while seeking integrated cooperation in the fields of policy studies, regional studies, theory, history and education.

Lastly we sincerely hope that this report will be of great help to the public. We would appreciate your feedback.

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