

# East Asian Strategic Review 2004

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## Foreword

The *East Asian Strategic Review 2004* covers trends in the security environment of East Asia over the twelve-month period ending December 31, 2003. Even today, more than ten years after the end of the Cold War, the situation in East Asia is fraught with tensions. North Korea's declaration of withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has reignited the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula and has exposed Japan to the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The use of force by the U.S.-led coalition forces against Iraq and the turmoil that ensued have brought the threat of WMD and the war against terror to the fore.

In order to ensure peace and security in East Asia, one must begin with an objective understanding of the region's security environment. Aware of this need, researchers at the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) have analyzed the security environment of East Asia from their own perspectives, and presented their analyses in this *Strategic Review*. The NIDS conducts research on international security and military history, and carries out defense college-level educational programs for uniformed and civilian personnel of the Self-Defense Forces and the Defense Agency. In addition to this, the NIDS has been promoting security dialogue and defense exchanges with countries neighboring Japan such as China, South Korea and Russia as well as member countries of ASEAN. It has been holding exchange programs with the United States, Australia, and India. The findings of its research and exchange programs were disseminated in various ways, through the *NIDS Security Reports*, the NIDS Web site (<http://www.nids.go.jp>) and the *Strategic Review*.

The *Strategic Review* discusses major incidents that occurred in each preceding year and long- and medium-term issues that it considers critical in reviewing the security of East Asia. It contains analyses of internal and foreign affairs, and defense policy issues relating to the two Koreas, China, Southeast Asia, Russia, and the United States, as well as Japan's own defense policy. We hope that readers will find the *Strategic Review* helpful in deepening their understanding of the security environment of East Asia, and that it will spur debate involving issues of common interest.

The findings and arguments presented in this report are those made by NIDS staff members from the standpoint of a professional researcher. They do not necessarily represent the official view of the government of Japan or the Defense

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