

Foreword

In order to ensure peace and stability in East Asia, it is necessary to have an objective understanding of the security environment in the region. Working from this premise, researchers of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) have analyzed the situation from their own perspectives and present their findings in the *East Asian Strategic Review 2006*.

The *Strategic Review* looks at the major developments that took place in 2005 relating to the security of East Asia, with chapters devoted to different countries and areas. It also analyzes under separate chapter headings long- and medium-term issues considered important to the security of the region. Chapter 1 analyzes the impact that the realignment of US forces will have on the security of the Asia-Pacific region. Chapter 2 takes up the assistance given by countries around the world to the nations affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004, and reviews the challenges facing international cooperation over disaster relief in the future. Other chapters deal with the problems of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (WMD); China's "neighboring diplomacy," Japan-China relations, and handling of the Taiwan question; the situation in Southeast Asia after the tsunami; Russia's Asia policy; US security policy in the Bush administration's second term; and the international peace cooperation activities of Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF). We would be more than happy if this publication proves helpful in deepening readers' understanding of the security environment of East Asia and stimulates in-depth debate about 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 Defense Agency or the Japanese government. It was written by Sugio Takahashi (Chapters 1 and 8), Yoshihide Matsuura (Chapter 2), Takeshi Watanabe (Chapter 3), Masayuki Masuda (Chapter 4), Jun Tsunekawa (Chapter 5), Shinji Hyodo (Chapter 6), and Eiichi Katahara (Chapter 7). It was edited by Jun Tsunekawa (editor-in-chief), Shigeo Kikuchi (deputy editor-in-chief), Masafumi Iida, Kentaro Oe, Toyoko Kudo, Yasushi Sukegawa, and Masayuki Masuda. This publication is a translation of the Japanese

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