

Preface

This edition of the *East Asian Strategic Review (EASR)* marks the twenty-fourth year of the flagship publication of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), Japan's sole national think-tank in the area of security affairs. Over those years, *EASR* has built up an established reputation as the only annual report in both Japanese and English that provides domestic and international audiences with insight into the Japanese perception of the increasingly challenging security situations of East Asia.

EASR comprises chapters examining strategic trends in regional countries that may affect Japan's security and covering timely topics in East Asian security. This edition deals with diverse themes such as Sino-American confrontation ranging from trade disputes to hegemonic competition, the Xi Jinping administration's response toward Hong Kong rocked by street protests, shaky situations of the Korean Peninsula over the "recurring crisis," and impacts that the termination of the INF Treaty would bring about. It also offers an explanation about the significance of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" vision for which Japanese government agencies have been working together.

EASR 2020 presents NIDS academics' analyses of major security developments that took place mainly during the period from January through December 2019, and is based on information compiled from public sources in Japan and overseas. The views contained herein do not necessarily represent the official position of the Government of Japan or the Ministry of Defense. The titles and ranks of people mentioned herein are, in principle, those that were current at the time of the events described.

As part of our editorial policy, this publication provides the names of the authors responsible for each chapter as well as chapter notes indicating information sources, so as to further strengthen its standing as a scholarly work founded on analyses personally made by the contributing researchers.

Japanese personal names throughout the text are presented according to Japanese custom (family name followed by given name) in reversal of standard Western order but in the same fashion as the Chinese and Koreans.

This edition was written by: Hashimoto Yasuaki (Introduction); Ichimasa Sukeyuki (Chapter 1); Momma Rira and Iwamoto Hiroshi (Chapter 2); Watanabe Takeshi and Koike Osamu (Chapter 3); Matsuura Yoshihide, Tomikawa Hideo

and Manabe Yuko (Chapter 4); Hyodo Shinji, Hasegawa Takeyuki, Sakaguchi Yoshiaki and Sawada Hiroto (Chapter 5); Arakaki Hiromu and Kiridori Ryo (Chapter 6); and Satake Tomohiko (Chapter 7). It was edited by Kikuchi Shigeo, Sukegawa Yasushi, Fukushima Yasuhito, Hasegawa Takeyuki, Oshite Junichi, and Asami Asaki.

With East Asian security issues attracting the world's attention, it is our hope that *EASR* will help build interest in and understanding of the strategic environment in the region and will promote an intellectual discussion among the public with the aim to support Japanese security policymaking.

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