
Nuclear Arms Control and Disarmament: Views among Japan's National Security Community

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Japan has mixed feelings towards the promotion of nuclear disarmament. While it has welcomed the US initiative for abolishing nuclear weapons, Japan's changing strategic environment even increases its reliance on US extended deterrence to meet strategic pressures from neighbouring nuclear weapon states. As a result, Japanese strategic community remains opposed to major changes in US nuclear strategy and posture. In an evolving multi-nuclear world, unilateral reductions in US nuclear arsenals are seen as destabilizing and detrimental to Japanese security interests.

Japan's security environment is not conducive to fulsome promotion of nuclear disarmament. For one thing, Japan has a number of neighbouring nuclear weapons states, all of which it assesses to be increasingly non-benign in their behaviour. North Korea has been increasing the capabilities of its nuclear weapon programs, as well as its ballistic missile forces. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the People's Republic of China has also been constantly strengthening and modernising its forces. And with the increase in the PLA's capabilities, China has become even more assertive in challenging the status quo in the maritime security environment in East Asia. Japan is also concerned about a possible resurgence of hegemonic instincts on the part of Russia. On the other hand, however, a complicating reality is that China has also been Japan's largest trading partner since 2007. Japan also views Russia as an economic partner, particularly in the field of natural energy resources. China and Russia present a complicated matrix of issues for Japan's national security strategy. Simultaneously, problems related to natural disasters, infectious diseases as well as non-state actor-related issues (e.g., terrorism, organised crimes, piracy) are also increasing their salience in Japan's security debate.

Alongside these external problems, Japan also faces the internal challenge of decreasing resources for national security and a rapidly aging society. These challenges, both external and internal, make Japan-US security cooperation all the more important than ever before. Most particularly, US extended deterrence is seen as essential for Japan to meet the strategic challenges from its neighbouring nuclear weapon states, namely, China, North Korea, and Russia.

The changes in the US nuclear posture set out in the Obama administration's 2010 *Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)* occurred in the context of a security outlook that Japan regards as turbulent. While the Japanese government has maintained its position of support for global nuclear disarmament, Japan has been forced to strike a careful balance between the requirement to promote nuclear disarmament and the deterrence requirements that Japan feels it has in this changing security environment.

This article explains Japan's views on the increasingly complicated task of finding a balance between these requirements. The article focuses primarily on the general perspectives within Japan's national security community (comprised of officials, experts and journalists, working on the subject of Japan-US alliance and strategic affairs). It will first explain how Japanese stakeholders perceive the nation's security environment, and then deal with their response to the Obama administration's changes to the United States' nuclear posture.

Changing Strategic Security Environment

The August 2010 report by the Japanese Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, an advisory panel to Prime Minister Naoto Kan, established in the Prime Minister's Office, enumerates various major security challenges for Japan: changes in US deterrent capability; remaining uncertainty over the situation on the Korean Peninsula; changes in the power balance in Asia with the rise of China; and continuing instability along Japan's sea-lanes of commerce from the Middle East and Africa through Japan's near seas.¹

Despite this testing environment, the Japan-US political relationship deteriorated considerably in 2009/10 when an administration led by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) assumed leadership of the Japanese government, ending the Liberal Democratic Party's five decade-long governmental dominance.² Regarding the existing plan to relocate the US military base at Futenma to another location in Okinawa, Hatoyama, who advocated "*churyu naki anpo* (Japan-US security system without basing)", acknowledged that he did not listen to the advice of bureaucrats involved in the original Japan-US agreement over this military base relocation plan, and unilaterally argued for the removal of the Futenma Air Station from Okinawa without sufficiently understanding the deterrence

¹ Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, *Japan's Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era*, (Japanese version, August 2010), <<http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/shin-ampoboueie2010/houkokusyo.pdf>> [Accessed 12 November 2010].

² This sentence is cited from: Katsuhisa Furukawa, 'North Korea: Challenges for the US-Japan Relationship', a paper for a book project by the Henry L. Stimson Center's project on US-Japan cooperation for the Six Party Talks (forthcoming).

function performed by US Marines.³ By revealing incompetence in governance, Hatoyama lost public trust and was forced to resign after only nine months as prime minister. Hatoyama did acknowledge the strategic importance of the Japan-US alliance before his resignation,⁴ but not before the alliance had suffered significant stress and political damage.

The following DPJ administration, led by Prime Minister Naoto Kan, demonstrated a more pragmatic approach in its conduct of national security policy and endeavoured to repair the damage to the Japan-US alliance relationship. However, after DPJ lost in the national upper house election in July 2010, the Kan administration lost much of its political vigour, and the Okinawa prefecture very nearly reached a consensus to simply remove the Futenma Air Station out of Okinawa. As of the end of 2010, there is no prospect for the relocation of the Futenma Air Station, which remains a painful thorn in the alliance relationship.

CHINA AS THE MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

This is also the context in which Japan's relationships with China and Russia have become more contentious. In Japan's view, China is deemed to present the greater strategic challenges. As a US Department of Defense report has pointed out, China has the most active land-based ballistic and cruise missile program in the world, as well as the largest force of principal combatants, submarines, and amphibious warfare ships in Asia. China has short- and medium-range ballistic missiles as well as nuclear-capable cruise missiles that can strike targets in Japan. The PLA Air Force has been also transformed from a homeland defence focus to one that integrates air and space with both offensive and defensive capabilities, constituting a key element in China's access-denial/area-denial strategy vis-à-vis US forces with an emphasis on potential conflict over Taiwan. The PLA also has approximately 1.25 million personnel in its ground forces.⁵ In 2008, the PCR's announced military budget (about US\$60 billion) was already about 1.5 times larger than that of Japan (about US\$40 billion), while the high end estimate of China's military budget (over US\$150 billion) was almost 4 times larger than that of Japan's.⁶ The PLA's military budget has been increasing constantly since the 1990s, while Japan's defence budget has actually

³ Remarks by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama during his visit to Okinawa on 4 May 2010. See, 'Shushou Houchuu: Hatoyama Shushou Burasagari Intabyu (Prime Minister's Visit to Okinawa: Standing Interview with Hatoyama)', *Sankei Shimbun*, 4 May 2010.

⁴ US Secretary of State Clinton, US Secretary of Defense Gates, Minister for Foreign Affairs Okada, and Minister of Defense Kitazawa, 'Joint Statement of the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee', 28 May 2010, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc/joint1005.html>> [Accessed 6 September 2010].

⁵ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2010), pp. 1-4.

⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009*, (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2009), p. 35. All figures in 2007 US dollar.

shrunk since FY2002.⁷ The conventional power balance has been shifting in favour of China, in Japan's view. Furthermore, Japan is concerned about the lack of transparency and the uncertain direction of the PLA's defence strategy and operational doctrines, as well as about the growth of the PLA's anti-access/area-denial capabilities vis-à-vis US forces in Asia.

Particularly, in 2010, Japan experienced increasing tension with China over issues of maritime security and contested territorial claims. Chinese maritime behaviour has become notably active, leading to friction with Japan's maritime activities. Since the late 1990s, China has conducted oceanographic research activities in ocean areas surrounding Japan. Chinese research vessels and naval vessels often conducted these research activities in a manner not consistent with customary international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.⁸ For example, in November 2004, a Chinese nuclear submarine engaged in underwater navigation in Japan's territorial waters without any notification, which was a clear violation of Japan's territorial sovereignty.

In early 2009, Japan accused China of violating a June 2008 agreement providing for joint exploration of oil and natural gas fields in their contested waters in the East China Sea. China unilaterally drilled beneath the demarcation line and extracted samples from the Japanese side of the equidistant line between the two countries. Japan maintains that this line should separate the exclusive economic zones of both countries.⁹ China, on the other hand, claims an Extended Continent Shelf beyond the equidistance line to the Okinawa Trench, a position that extends its claim to points close to the Japanese coast.

⁷ Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2010*, Part II, Chapter 2, Section 5, <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2010/Part2_Capter2.pdf> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

⁸ Other notable cases of Chinese maritime activities include the followings: In March 2008, six Chinese LUZHOU-class destroyers passed through the narrow water areas between Okinawa and Miyakojima and headed for the Pacific Ocean; In October 2008, four Chinese naval vessels including Sovremenny-class destroyers, passed through Tsugaru Strait, a narrow strait between Japan's mainland and Hokkaido Island in the north, and then, circled around Japan; in November 2008, four Chinese LUZHOU-class destroyers passed through the water areas between Okinawa and Miyakojima and headed for the Pacific Ocean; in December 2008, two Chinese Oceanographic research vessels intruded into and stayed around the Senkaku Islands; in June 2009, five Chinese LUZHOU-class destroyers strayed through Nansei Islands and headed for water areas 260 km off the Okinotorishima Island; and in September 2009, Chinese Sovremenny-class destroyers navigated around the contested water areas above the natural gas reserve in the East China Sea. See, Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Bouei Hakusho Heisei 21-nendoban* (Defense of Japan 2009), <http://www.clearing.mod.go.jp/hakusho_data/2009/2009/figindex.html> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

⁹ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, '*Higashi Shina Kai ni okeru Shigen Kaihatsu ni kansuru Wagaguni no Houteki Tachiba* (Japan's Legal Position on the Resource Exploration in East China Sea)', November 2006, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/china/higashi_shina/tachiba.html> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

A spate of incidents in 2010, all with aspects that Japan construed as deliberately provocative, sharply intensified Japanese anger and concern. These incidents mostly concerned Chinese naval units manoeuvring close to Japan or transiting to the open Pacific through the narrow straits near Okinawa.¹⁰

Bilateral tensions escalated even more seriously on September 8, 2010 when the Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) arrested the captain of a Chinese fishing trawler which was engaged in "illegal fishing" according to Japanese law in the vicinity of the Senkaku Islands, Japanese territory that China has belatedly (only since the 1970s) contested.¹¹ On the previous day, the Chinese fishing trawler collided with the JCG's vessel intentionally, and the captain was arrested on the grounds of obstructing the JCG in the execution of official duties.¹² At around this date, over 100 Chinese fishing trawlers were observed engaging in illegal fishing in the same area.¹³

After a period of diplomatic tension, which included Chinese warnings of retaliatory action, the Japanese government released the Chinese captain.

¹⁰ 'Chuugoku Kantai no Okinawa Kinkai Nanka, Teisatsu, Chouhatsu no Kanousei (Chinese Navy Vessels Navigated toward South in the Sea Near Okinawa, Possibly Intended for Reconnaissance and Provocation)', *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 13 April 2010, <www.yomiuri.co.jp> [Accessed 13 April 2010]. Also see, Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Chuugoku Kantai Tousai Heri no Goeikan Suzunami heno Kinsetsu Hikou Jian* (An Incident by a Chinese Helicopter Carried on a Chinese Navy Vessel Approaching to a Close Vicinity of Suzunami), 2010. 'Chuugoku 2 Sensuikan, Nansei Shotou wo Fujou Koukou, Kongetsu 10ka (2 Chinese Submarines Navigated the Surface of the Water off the South-western Islands on April 10)', *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 13 April 2010; 'Chuugoku Kaigun, Okinawa Kinkai wo Tsuuka, Kei 2 Seki, Taiheiyou muke Koukou (2 Chinese Navy Vessels Navigate through the Water Near Okinawa toward the Pacific Ocean)', *Sankei Shimbun*, 4 July 2010; Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Chuugoku Kantai Tousai Heri no Goeikan Asayuki heno Kinsetsu Hikou Jian* (An Incident by a Chinese Helicopter Carried on a Chinese Navy Vessel Approaching to a Close Vicinity of Asayuki), 2010; 'Chuugoku Taishi "Shitsukoki Tsuiseki, Sinrai Somuku", Kaigun Sekkin Mondai (The Chinese Ambassador Said, "An Obstinate Pursuit Is against Trust" on the Problem of the Close Approach by the [Chinese] Navy)', *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 27 April 2010; 'Chuugoku Sen, Nihon no EEZ nai de Kaihosen ni Sekkin, Gaimushou ga Genjuu Kougi (A Chinese Vessel Approached Japanese Coast Guard Vessel in Japan's EEZ, Japanese Foreign Ministry Protested to China Severely)', *Sankei Shimbun*, 4 May 2010.

¹¹ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'The Basic View on the Sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands', <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/senkaku.html>> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

¹² Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 'Recent Developments in Japan-China Relations-Basic Facts on the Senkaku Islands and the Recent Incident', October 2010, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/pdfs/facts1010.pdf>> [Accessed 20 November 2010]. Also, see, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Major Exchanges between Japan and the People's Republic of China concerning the Collision Incident between Japan Coast Guard Patrol Vessels and a Chinese Fishing Trawler in Japanese Territorial Waters off the Senkaku Islands', October 2010, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/r-relations/major_e.html> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

¹³ 'Junshisen Senchoura ga Hatsu no Shougen, Chuugokusen 100 seki Sinnyuu (The JCG Vessel Captain Testified for the First Time, 100 Chinese Ships Intruded (into the Japan's Territorial Water)', *Sankei Shimbun*, 20 November 2010, <<http://sankei.jp.msn.com/>> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

In the event, the Chinese government elected to intensify its claim to the Senkaku Islands through dispatching “patrol vessels” (which also can carry heavy guns) to areas around the Senkaku Islands under the guise of monitoring Chinese fishing vessels.¹⁴

The above is seen in Japan as a typical pattern for China to establish *de facto* naval presence in contested ocean areas: First, a large number of Chinese fishing vessels enters a contested area. Then, Chinese patrol vessels belonging to State Oceanic Administration and/or the Coast Guard are also deployed into these contested areas to protect these Chinese fishing vessels. Additionally, PLA Naval vessels appear in these contested water areas when China deems it appropriate to exert additional political pressure. China’s efforts to establish a *de facto* presence in the South China Sea have followed a similar pattern.

Japan is now acutely aware of the increasing intensity of Chinese naval activities in the water near Japan. For one thing, these Chinese activities are perceived by Japan as a threat to national sovereignty. Also, Japan regards these Chinese activities as clear indications of China’s increasing operational capabilities to carry out an access-denial/area-denial strategy vis-à-vis US forces within the “first and second island chains”¹⁵ with emphasis on a potential conflict with US forces over Taiwan. The increasing access-denial/area-denial capabilities of the PLA Navy are emerging as a key factor in Japan’s construct of a deterrence strategy vis-à-vis China as Japan relies heavily on US forces.

This concern may loom even larger in the coming years. As of October 2010, the Chinese State Oceanic Administration announced a plan to build additional 30 patrol vessels within the next five years. According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, the PLA Navy increased deployments of nuclear-armed submarines in the South China Sea.¹⁶ On the other hand, the Southeast Asian countries, together with Japan and the United States, have been pursuing efforts to strengthen the 2002 ‘Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea’ of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), an institutional mechanism to avoid maritime conflict. In October 2010, ASEAN tried to establish guidelines to implement this Declaration, but abandoned this effort in the face of strong opposition from China. In Asia, the primary “solution” to territorial disputes over ocean areas remains the tactic of trying to secure *de facto* control and denying it to other claimants. This does not seem to be an

¹⁴ For example, see, ‘Sinei Chuugoku Kanshisen Higashi Shinakai he, Heri 2ki Tousai Kanou (The Latest Chinese Monitoring Vessels Dispatched to the East China Sea, Able to Carry 2 Helicopters)’, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 17 November 2010.

¹⁵ Office of Secretary of Defense, *Military Power of the People’s Republic of China* (Washington DC: US Department of Defense, 2006), p. 15.

¹⁶ International Institute of Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey 2010* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), p. 348.

approach that will assure the peace and stability of the Asian region over the coming decades. In 2010, alerted by the increasing confrontation with China over the Senkaku Islands, the Japanese Ministry of Defense (MOD) prioritised the defence of remote islands in Japan's Southwestern region as one of the key pillars of Japan's territorial defence.¹⁷

POSSIBLE HEGEMONIC RESURGENCE OF RUSSIA

Japan also has concerns about the possible revival of Russia's hegemonic posture in East Asia. As Russia regained its economic vigour, the Russian military has increased its operations and exercises in the Far Eastern region. The Defense of Japan 2010, Japan's defence white paper, analyses Russian military activities in far Eastern region in the following terms.

The current presence of the Russian military forces in the Far East region is comparatively much smaller than it was at its peak. However, a considerable scale of military forces, including nuclear forces, still remains in the region. Russian military operations in the vicinity of Japan appear to be increasingly active, including exercises and drills. Since 2003, Russia has conducted military exercises in the Far East region, including "Vostok", which is a large-scale anti-terrorism exercise that has been held four times so far, and "Mobility 2004", which was an exercise for the country's permanent combat-ready troops to deploy from the western part of Russia to the Far East region... Given that the overall Russian armed forces set their basis of operation on maintaining the combat readiness of their strategic nuclear unit as well as dealing with conflicts with the inter-theater mobility of its permanent readiness units, it is necessary to continue paying attention to the positioning and trends of the Russian armed forces in the Far East region with the movement of units in other regions also in mind.¹⁸

Also, the Japanese MOD analysed the Russian military operations in the vicinity of Japan as below:

The number of exercises carried out by Russian ground forces in areas adjacent to Japan decreased sharply from peak numbers; however, some activities seem to be on the rise again. With regard to naval vessels, their activities seem to be on the rise in recent years. For example, joint exercises and counter-piracy operations have been carried out, in extended voyages by vessels deployed in the Pacific Fleet, and nuclear submarines carry out patrols. Regarding aircraft, since the resumption of patrol activities by its strategic aviation units in 2007, Russia has been increasing flights by long distance bombers and carrying out flights of Tu-95MS long range bombers which are refueled in mid-flight. Moreover, due to an upturn in its fuel situation, etc., pilot training time is on an upward trend, and there also seems to be an increase in activities such as flights approaching Japan and exercises and training.¹⁹

¹⁷ This point was also reinforced by the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, *Japan's Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era*.

¹⁸ Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2010*, Part I, Chapter 2, Section 4 (Russia), 2010, <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2010/Part1_Capter2.pdf> (sic!) [Accessed 20 November 2010].

¹⁹ Ibid.

In July 2010, Russia's large-scale exercises (VOSTOK 2010) on Etorofu Island, one of the four islands contested between Japan and Russia, caught Japan's attention. In the same month, President Dmitry Medvedev signed into law a bill designating 2 September, which is the date in 1945 that Japan submitted instruments of surrender to the Allied Powers, as a memorial day for the end of the Second World War.²⁰ Japan regarded this as a highly provocative move. Japan lodged a diplomatic protest to the effect that it did not regard this initiative as "appropriate for today's Japan-Russia relationship."²¹ During Medvedev's visit to Beijing on 26-28 September, Russia and China jointly condemned "attempts" to change the history of the Second World War, a move widely interpreted in Japan as criticising its enduring territorial disputes with these two countries. Then, on 1 November 2010, despite a strong Japanese diplomatic protest, Medvedev visited Kunashiri Island, another one of the four disputed islands, the first such visit since the days of the Soviet Union.²² Even though Medvedev met with Japanese Prime Minister Kan later in November at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit meeting in Yokohama City, Japan senses that Russia has effectively suspended its negotiation with Japan over these disputed islands. As Russia has regained its national power, Japan perceives Russia's political and military postures as increasingly provocative. Russia's interest in the future of the Arctic Region, as articulated in the Russian document "Arctic 2020", may also be one of the driving factors behind Russia's increasing military capabilities in Far East region.

OTHER CHALLENGES

In addition to China and Russia, Japan also has territorial disputes with South Korea and Taiwan. Furthermore, Japan faces the direct threat of North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. North Korea has been developing a range of ballistic missiles, including SCUD B (an estimated range of 300km), SCUD C (500km), Nodong (1300km), Taepodong 1 (1500km), New IRBM (2500-4000km), and Taepodong 2 (6000km),²³ with on-going efforts to improve both range and accuracy. In addition, North Korea conducted nuclear tests, in 2006 and 2009, respectively. As of early December 2010, there is a speculation about a third nuclear test. North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs represent one of the major threats to Japan's national security. However, the North Korean challenge is not necessarily regarded as the sole determinant factor shaping Japan's

²⁰ 'Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on Kunashiri Island', *Japan Times* Editorial, 3 November 2010.

²¹ 'Taisen Shuuketsu Rosia no Kinenbika ni Kougi Gaimushou (Japanese Foreign Ministry Protested Russia's Designation of the End of the Second World War as a Memorial Day)', *Asahi Shimbun*, 27 July 2010.

²² 'Rosia Daitouryou ga Hoppou Ryoudo Houmon, Soren Jidai Fukumete Hatsu (Russian President Visited the Northern Territories for the First Time Including the Periods of the Soviet Union)', *Asahi Shimbun*, 1 November 2010.

²³ Material from the Japanese Ministry of Defense, March 2009, <<http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/defense/bmd/20090331.pdf>> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

national security strategy. On balance, there seems to be a widespread view in Japan that North Korea's military threats can be managed to a significant extent through multilateral diplomatic negotiation. The majority view in Japan is that, ultimately, North Korean leaders want regime survival, not to commit suicide.

Lastly, Japan also faces non-traditional security challenges, such as natural disasters, infectious diseases, man-made accidents, terrorism, international crimes, and cyber attacks. Japan has to meet with this diverse spectrum of national security threats with a shrinking defense budget. It is a mission impossible for Japan to address all these challenges alone, making the role of Japan-US alliance, and especially extended deterrence, more salient than ever in dealing with the above strategic challenges.²⁴

Japan's Strategic Posture

Despite this challenging security environment, Japan has not responded with counter-balancing changes in its own posture.²⁵ The steady decline in Japan's defence budget since 2001 is testimony to this.²⁶ The reduction of the government's accumulated deficit, already over 200 percent of Japan's gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal year 2010, remains one of Tokyo's top priorities, and even the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDFs) have been forced to cut back on personnel and procurement.²⁷ (Reportedly, in late 2010, due to the increasing diplomatic confrontation with China over the Senkaku Islands, the Japanese MOD decided to strengthen its submarine forces.²⁸ It remains unclear, however, how urgently this intention might be implemented).

After North Korea declared it would withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003, there were some discussions among a limited number of politicians, commentators, and scholars about Japan's pursuit of an indigenous nuclear option. Similarly, after North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006, some Japanese politicians argued for procuring and deploying an offensive weapon system to take out North

²⁴ For example see Narushige Michishita, 'Playing the Same Game: North Korea's Coercive Attempt at US Reconciliation', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 4 (2009), pp. 139-152.

²⁵ David C. Kang argues, "(B)alancing should not be the default hypothesis in international relations theory. Balancing is the expected outcome under certain conditions". David C. Kang, 'Hierarchy, Balancing, and Empirical Puzzles', *International Security*, vol. 28, no. 3 (Winter 2003/2004), p. 173.

²⁶ Japanese Ministry of Defense, 'Bouei Kankeihi no Suii (Change of Defense-Related Expenditure)', *Defense of Japan 2009*, <http://www.clearing.mod.go.jp/hakusho_data/2009/2009/datindex.html> [Accessed 6 September 2010].

²⁷ Hajime Izumi and Katsuhisa Furukawa, 'Far Away From Going Nuclear: Japan's Responses to North Korea's Nuclear & Missile Tests', a manuscript of a chapter for a book on the future of the Korean Peninsula, to be published from the Stanford University Press (forthcoming).

²⁸ 'Boueishou, Sensuikan 22-Seki Taisei ni Zoukyou, Chugokugun no Doukou Keikai (Ministry of Defense Increases the Submarine Force up to 22 Submarines, Alerted by the Activities of Chinese Military Forces)', *Kyodo News*, 21 October 2010.

Korea's missile launching sites. By 2010, however, such discussions had essentially faded away. Given the likely negative consequences associated with these offensive options, such as an accelerating arms race in Asia, the dominant view in Japan has been that its interests would be better served by alternative strategies to address these security challenges.²⁹

In fact, Japanese policymakers have been determined to strengthen deterrence capabilities through developing a comprehensive national security posture that reinforces Japan's non-nuclear position. Over the past decade, Japan has developed a multi-faceted national security posture that incorporates the concepts of assurance, dissuasion, deterrence, denial, defence, damage confinement, and crisis management.³⁰ More particularly, Japan will continue to strengthen its deterrence capabilities by improving ballistic missile defence (BMD) system and modernising conventional capabilities, especially naval and air power. So far, the objective of Japan's BMD has been limited to intercepting incoming North Korea's ballistic missiles, but not those from China or Russia as demonstrated by Japan's self-restraint on the number of BMD units. Japan has carefully constructed its BMD policy so as not to incite an arms race with China or Russia.

Furthermore, despite the political tension in the Japan-US alliance over the Futenma base issue under the Hatoyama administration, Japanese policymakers have been striving to sustain this bilateral alliance. As one senior Japanese diplomat said, Japan plays a critical role to "defend US forward military presence in Asia".³¹ In Japan's view, the credibility of deterrence is elastic since reassurance is ultimately a political phenomenon.³² Thus, Japan has always made every effort to ensure that US extended deterrence remain credible, and will continue to do so in the future.

During the Cold War, especially in the 1980s, Japanese officials were less concerned about the "decoupling effect" stemming from the Soviet-American nuclear confrontation. As Mataka Kamiya of Japan National Defense Academy points out, during this period, Japan's defence posture was predicated on the notion that if Japan was subjected to a Soviet nuclear attack, the strike would be undertaken in the context of a global nuclear war

²⁹ For further details, please see, Katsuhisa Furukawa, 'Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective', *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics, & Strategic Studies*, vol. 37 (2010), pp. 1-40; Michael J. Green and Katsuhisa Furukawa, 'Chapter 12. Japan: New Nuclear Realism', in Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in the 21st Century* (California: Stanford University Press, 2008).

³⁰ Furukawa, 'Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective', p. 23.

³¹ A comment by a senior Japanese official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during a meeting with Katsuhisa Furukawa and another US expert in Tokyo, Japan on 3 June 2010.

³² Ralph A. Cossa, *Chairman's Report, US-Japan Strategic Dialogue* (Lahaina, Hawaii: Pacific Forum CSIS, 25-26 February 2008).

between the United States and the Soviet Union.³³ Under these circumstances, the United States would probably be subjected to a nuclear attack as well. It was unlikely that Japan alone would face such a nuclear attack.³⁴ Today, however, “decoupling” is seen as more realistic and salient concern by Japanese policymakers. Hypothetically, China or North Korea may attack only Japan but not the United States. In these circumstances, it has become even more important for Japan to sustain the credibility of US extended deterrence.

Japan's Response to the US *NPR* 2010

In this context, Japan views US extended deterrence as more important than ever before in order to meet with the strategic pressures from neighbouring nuclear weapon states. Japanese interest in consultation with the United States on US nuclear doctrine and strategy has grown stronger. During the process of shaping the 2010 US *NPR*, an unprecedented level of consultation took place between the Japanese and US Governments. Indeed, since February 2010, Japan and the United States have been conducting an official dialogue on deterrence, allowing the regular exchange of views and information on issues related to deterrence between the two governments.³⁵ According to Japanese officials with knowledge of such matters, US consultation with Japan about its nuclear posture review has contributed significantly to sustaining Japan's confidence in the credibility of US extended deterrence.³⁶ This official consultation mechanism is expected to play a role somewhat similar to that of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG).³⁷ However, as Michito Tsuruoka of the National Institute of Defense Studies (NIDS) points out, a major difference remains in that the NPG process is based on NATO's nuclear-sharing mechanism involving the B-61, tactical nuclear weapons while the Japan-US dialogue lacks this physical element.³⁸

As Hirofumi Tosaki of Japan Institute of International Affairs points out, the “nuclear umbrella” provided to Japan has been the one of “existential deterrence,” in the sense that it was bereft of a detailed plans on how

³³ Remarks by Mataka Kamiya at a meeting in Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, Japan, 11 May 2007. Also see Shingo Nakajima, *Sengo Nihon no Bouei Seisaku* (Japan's Defense Policy after the Second World War) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2006).

³⁴ Furukawa, 'Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective', pp. 13-4.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ A comment by a senior Japanese diplomat in a meeting in Tokyo, Japan, 3 June 2010.

³⁷ Furukawa, 'Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective', p. 23.

³⁸ Michito Tsuruoka, 'Why the NATO Nuclear Debate Is Relevant to Japan and Vice Versa', *Policy Brief* (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 8 October 2010), p. 3.

conventional and nuclear forces might be employed in a time of crisis to yield a deterrent effect.³⁹ Even so, Tsuruoka states,

Sending a message to the outside world that the United States and its allies have a unified view on nuclear deterrence contributes a lot to the overall effectiveness of extended deterrence.⁴⁰

Japan's response to the 2010 US *NPR* (which presents an almost unified view of nuclear deterrence) has therefore been positive overall. In its declaratory policy, for example, the Obama administration has carefully balanced the security requirements (hedge) and the requirements for arms control/disarmament (lead).⁴¹ At the very beginning of the Obama administration, Japanese national security practitioners were concerned that President Obama might pursue nuclear disarmament with little regard for its consequences for extended deterrence. (In 2008, a Japanese diplomat asked a visiting US national security expert—who later became a senior official of the Obama administration—"How many nuclear weapons are desirable for the US to possess in your view?" The US expert replied, "Zero."⁴²) However, such concern has almost faded away in Japan. Japan's strategic community's responses to some of the key components of the 2010 US *NPR* are discussed in the following section.

NEGATIVE SECURITY ASSURANCE AND NO FIRST USE

Japan was especially pleased to see the "negative security assurance" articulated conditionally in the 2010 US *NPR*. This effectively preserved the status quo in US nuclear strategy vis-à-vis China (a nuclear weapon state) and North Korea (a country in violation of NPT).⁴³ Japanese practitioners were also pleased to see that there was no reference to "No First Use (NFU)" in the *NPR* as they are concerned that a declaration of NFU could degrade the credibility of US extended deterrence in the face of massive conventional or chemical/biological weapon (CBW) attacks from a potential adversary. As former Japanese Ambassador Yukio Satoh pointed out,

³⁹ Hirofumi Tosaki, remarks at an academic conference of Japan Association of Disarmament Studies, in Tokyo, Japan, 28 August 2010,

<<http://www.wilmina.ac.jp/ojc/disarmament/pdf/tozaki.pdf>> [Accessed 7 December 2010].

⁴⁰ Tsuruoka, 'Why the NATO Nuclear Debate Is Relevant to Japan and Vice Versa', p. 5.

⁴¹ Sugio Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', *Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 58, no. 7-8 (Takushoku University, July-August 2010), pp. 43-4.

⁴² Author's conversation with a Japanese diplomat, Tokyo, Japan, 17 November 2008.

⁴³ Specifically, the 2010 US *NPR* Report says: "the United States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states that are party to the NPT and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations ... In the case of countries not covered by this assurance—states that possess nuclear weapons and states not in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations—there remains a narrow range of contingencies in which US nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or CBW attack against the United States or its allies and partners. The United States is therefore not prepared at the present time to adopt a universal policy that deterring nuclear attack is the sole purpose of nuclear weapons, but will work to establish conditions under which such a policy could be safely adopted." US Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, April 2010), p. viii.

there is a certain distinction between declaring that we are not going to use nuclear weapons against biological (or chemical) weapons and not saying anything about the point, just to keep the target of deterrence rather ambiguous.⁴⁴

Similarly, Tosaki argues that reserving the option of the first use of nuclear weapon could be viewed by the allies as a symbol of a nuclear weapon state's commitment to providing extended deterrence, and that under some circumstances, it might be rather desirable to preserve a certain level of ambiguity over the possibility of the first use.⁴⁵ Additionally, the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era stated in its final August 2010 report (in a section which refers to Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles of non-possession, non-production, and non-introduction of nuclear weapons for the purpose maintaining Japan's security):

the most important point is 'not to allow any nuclear power to use nuclear weapons.' It is not necessarily wise to set out in advance a principle that seeks only to restrain the US.⁴⁶

While a majority in Japan's disarmament and arms control community support NFU for the sake of advancing disarmament, the strategists and practitioners favour the cautious approach articulated in the 2010 US *NPR*.

SOLE PURPOSE

Regarding the "Sole Purpose" of nuclear weapon, this concept is not equivalent with NFU since Sole Purpose leaves open the possibility of pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons if the deterrence (not only nuclear deterrence but also including conventional deterrence) is deemed to have failed.⁴⁷ Many in the Japanese strategic community attach major importance to the role of nuclear weapons in deterring a massive conventional attack or CBW attack. For example, former Japanese Ambassador Yukio Satoh stated in 2009:

without credible means for deterring the use of biological or chemical weapons it would be too early to limit the purpose of nuclear deterrence solely to deterring the use of nuclear weapons.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ambassador Yukio Satoh, comment by at a session entitled 'Are The Requirements for Extended Deterrence Changing?' at the Carnegie International Nonproliferation Conference, Washington, DC, 6 April 2009, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/npc_extended_deterrence4.pdf> [Accessed 7 December 2010].

⁴⁵ Tosaki, remarks at an academic conference of Japan Association of Disarmament Studies, in Tokyo, Japan, 28 August 2010.

⁴⁶ Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, *Japan's Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era*, p. 18.

⁴⁷ Satoshi Morimoto, 'The 2010 NPT Review Conference and Its Prospect for Future of Arms Control and Disarmament', *Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 58, no. 7-8 (Takushoku University, July-August 2010), p. 11.

⁴⁸ Satoh, comment by at a session entitled 'Are The Requirements for Extended Deterrence Changing?' at the Carnegie International Nonproliferation Conference, Washington, DC, 6 April 2009.

Even when the *Asahi Shimbun*, known for its liberal orientation, endorsed the “sole purpose” objective, it also noted a reservation to the effect that:

Some believe the threat posed to Japan by North Korea means that nuclear weapons should also serve to deter biological and chemical weapon strikes.⁴⁹

Even so, on this point, during the NPT Review Conference in 2010, the Japanese delegation dared to examine an option to propose to the United States to abandon the use of nuclear weapon to prevent an adversary’s CBW attack while retaining the option to use nuclear weapon as a second strike.⁵⁰ This construct was almost identical with the Sole Purpose concept, although it does not appear to have been advanced officially. Overall, Japanese government positively evaluates the US Government’s position on Sole Purpose as being carefully articulated in the *NPR*. The abolition of CBW has been made a condition for any Sole Purpose pledge by the United States.⁵¹

Sugio Takahashi, a Senior Fellow of NIDS and a rising strategist within the Japanese MOD, calls for a cautious approach when adopting the Sole Purpose criteria. Takahashi points out that, while the United States may narrow the roles for nuclear weapons in favour of increased reliance on conventional capabilities, a potential adversary will have to face ever increasing US conventional dominance. In such a case, a potential adversary may choose to counterbalance US conventional dominance with nuclear weapons. Put in the context of Russia and China, Takahashi argues that as long as Russia and China regard their nuclear weapons as a means to deter US conventional superiority, a unilateral US declaration of Sole Purpose may not trigger comparable declarations from Russian or China.⁵² On balance, many Japanese strategic thinkers take a cautious view on the potential merit of the United States seeking to get into a position that would allow a Sole Purpose declaration

⁴⁹ *Asahi Shimbun* Online in English, 16 April 2010, available in <opensource.gov>, JPP20100416969012. Cited in David Yost, ‘US Extended Deterrence in NATO and the Asia-Pacific: Similarities and Differences’, presentation at meetings in Tokyo, Japan, 20 May 2010.

⁵⁰ Morimoto, ‘The 2010 NPT Review Conference and Its Prospect for Future of Arms Control and Disarmament’, p. 11. Then-Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada was in favour of NFU if all nuclear weapon states pledged negative security assurance and Sole Purpose. However, he did not mention chemical or biological weapons. See Press Conference by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, Tokyo, Japan, 22 January 2010 (Japanese), <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/kaiken/gaisho/g_1001.html#4-C> [Accessed 7 December 2010].

⁵¹ Yost, ‘US Extended Deterrence in NATO and the Asia-Pacific: Similarities and Differences’. The 2010 US NPR Report says: “Continue efforts to strengthen regional security architectures and eliminate chemical and biological weapons, so that over time all states possessing nuclear weapons can be secure in making deterrence of nuclear attack the sole purpose of nuclear weapons.” See, US Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, p. 47.

⁵² Takahashi, ‘Nuclear Issues and Japan’s Security Policy’, pp. 40-1.

RESPONSIVE RECONSTITUTING CAPABILITIES⁵³

Japanese strategists also prioritise the importance of a responsive nuclear weapon complex in the United States, namely the capability to swiftly resume nuclear weapons production when needed. In other words, a responsive nuclear weapon complex will be a critical factor in sustaining Japan's confidence in extended deterrence in circumstances where the United States is also seeking to advance nuclear disarmament. Takahashi states that the Obama administration's decision to strengthen the nuclear weapon complex was a key factor in assuring allies that the US pursuit of nuclear disarmament would not have a negative impact on the credibility of US extended deterrence.⁵⁴

COUNTING RULE

Takahashi also points out that under the counting rule of the US-Russia New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), the United States will be able to retain sufficient capabilities to increase the number of deployed nuclear warheads when needed without breaching the terms of the treaty. The New START regulates only the number of deployed warheads, not the number of deployable warheads. Under the New START, the configuration of US strategic vehicles may be composed of about 1000 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) warheads, 420 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) warheads (420 MINUTEMAN II missiles), and less than 100 warheads deployed on strategic bombers (1 warhead/bomber). In reality, however, each strategic bomber can carry up to 20 warheads. This counting convention allows the United States and Russia to retain a substantial number of bomber-delivered weapons (of the order of 1500 in the case of the US) as a ready reserve.⁵⁵ Given that Russia has a less capable bomber force (with limited capability to upload nuclear weapons) relative to the United States,⁵⁶ this may give a strategic advantage to the United States at a time of crisis. Also, as Takahashi argues, the increased reliance on US TRIDENT D-5 (SLBM with high precision) will enhance the survivability of US nuclear forces and sustain its counter-force capability. Additionally, US Navy is investing in the development of a new ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), to follow the Ohio-class boats that make up the current fleet. Furthermore, the New START does not classify cruise missiles as strategic delivery vehicles although these weapons can carry nuclear warheads.⁵⁷ Overall, nuclear arms control as exemplified by New START is perceived in Japan as sustaining the credibility of US extended deterrence.

⁵³ On the role of responsive reconstituting capabilities in nuclear disarmament, see the following article, Christopher A. Ford, 'Deterrence to—and through—"Zero": Challenges of Disarmament and Proliferation', a paper presented to the Nonproliferation Forum sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Center and the Los Alamos National Laboratory at the Ronald Reagan International Building, Washington, DC, 14 November 2008.

⁵⁴ Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', p. 43.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁵⁶ A comment by a Russian scientist at a conference in the United Kingdom, 27 June 2010.

⁵⁷ Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', p. 38.

RETIREMENT OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The biggest controversy within the strategic community in Japan regarding the 2010 US *NPR* was the retirement of the Tomahawk Land Attack Cruise Missile-Nuclear (TLAM-N). Although Japanese government eventually endorsed this US plan, the issue is still debated among some Japanese officials and experts. Indeed, Tsuruoka argues,

To those concerned about TLAM-N retirement, the news that the B-61 will remain in Europe—implying that the weapon cannot be substituted—hardly sends a reassuring message.⁵⁸

US officials and experts have explained to Japanese counterparts that TLAM-N had been useless from a military point of view. The guidance and arming technologies employed by this system were both old and poorly suited to the Northeast Asian theatre. Moreover, as the system had been overtaken by newer capabilities, the US Navy no longer maintained a cadre of personnel trained in its use which meant, in turn, that the lead time for deployment would be measured in weeks if not months.⁵⁹

On the other hand, however, Takahashi argues that TLAM-N was originally expected to fill the gap in the escalation ladder between conventional and strategic nuclear responses. If the use of MINUTEMAN III or TRIDENT D-5 was seen as excessive escalation, the United States may be deterred from using these strategic nuclear weapons and deterrence would be weakened. TLAM-N was originally supposed to fill this potential gap in the escalatory ladder. Also, TLAM-N's was submarine based and therefore relatively invulnerable to the adversary's anti-access/area-denial capabilities. This is an important factor in Asia given the PLA's growing capabilities for anti-access/area-denial. Finally, the option to signal during a crisis that TLAM-N was being forward-deployed was seen as a potentially valuable means of conveying resolve.⁶⁰

Under the new US nuclear posture, TLAM-N is slated to be replaced by a forward deployment of dual-capable aircraft such as the B-2 (possibly from US mainland) or F-35. However, as Hirofumi Tosaki points out, the survivability of those dual-capable aircraft could be questionable as compared with TLAM-N.⁶¹ Indeed, as Takahashi also argues, forward deployed dual-capable aircraft are vulnerable to adversary's attacks and stealth capabilities may incline an adversary toward pre-emptive strikes against them, undermining crisis stability. Given these considerations, US adherence to a Sole Purpose declaratory policy may not deter an adversary

⁵⁸ Tsuruoka, 'Why the NATO Nuclear Debate Is Relevant to Japan and Vice Versa', p. 2.

⁵⁹ A comment by a former senior official of US Department of Defense, at a conference in the United Kingdom, 28 June 2010.

⁶⁰ Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', pp. 44-45.

⁶¹ Tosaki, remarks at an academic conference of Japan Association of Disarmament Studies, in Tokyo, Japan, 28 August 2010.

from attacking these forward deployed nuclear-armed US air force assets with conventional forces.⁶²

If tactical nukes could not be deployed to Asia and deterrence relied primarily or solely on strategic nuclear capabilities, allies in Asia may be concerned that this substantial gap in the escalatory ladder degraded the credibility of extended deterrence. In order to deal with this problem, Japanese experts, such as Tosaki or Takahashi state that the United States and its allies must jointly strengthen regional deterrence and construct a regional security architecture in Asia. The salience of a regional security architecture to Japan's national security has been widely supported within Japan's national security community.⁶³

Despite these concerns, it is worth noting that US allies in Asia actually agreed to the removal of forward-based tactical nuclear weapons from Asia during or immediately after the end of the Cold War. In Europe, however, the United States still has to keep tactical nuclear weapons (B-61) primarily as a measure to assure its allies, rather than of deterrence. The TLAM-N was stored in the US rather than operationally deployed to the Asian theatre, but B-61 remains physically deployed in Europe.⁶⁴ On this point, Elaine Bunn of US Institute for National Strategic Studies argues,

Nuclear weapons are kind of like the wedding ring of the marriage—there are those cultures that don't wear wedding rings who are perfectly committed to their spouses, and others who wear them who don't really have much of a commitment at all. But once you start wearing one, it means something entirely different to be seen without it than it does for someone who never wore one.⁶⁵

In Europe, some member states of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) apparently still see a strong connection between forward-deployed tactical nuclear weapon and the US commitment to protect its allies.⁶⁶

The different attitudes in Asia and Europe toward the presence of tactical nuclear weapons probably stem from differences in the manner in which the US conveys its security commitments to allies. In Asia, where the United States has bilateral alliances, an attack on Japan or South Korea is automatically regarded as an activator of US defence obligations to its allies.

⁶² Ibid.; Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy,' pp. 45-46.

⁶³ For example, see the following report produced by a group of rising Japanese experts: The Tokyo Foundation, *Ajia Taiheiyou no Chiiki Anzenhoshou A-kitekucha* (A Regional Security Architecture in Asia Pacific Region), August 2010, <<http://www.tkfd.or.jp/admin/files/2010-08.pdf>> [Accessed 7 December 2010].

⁶⁴ Tsuruoka, 'Why the NATO Nuclear Debate Is Relevant to Japan and Vice Versa', p. 2.

⁶⁵ Cited in Chris Jones, 'Process Over Politics: NATO's TNW Decision', CSIS, 7 May 2010, <<http://csis.org/blog/process-over-politics-nato%E2%80%99s-tnw-decision>> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

⁶⁶ A comment by a senior US defence official at a conference in the United Kingdom, 29 June 2010.

Asian allies do not necessarily have to stick to the “wedding ring” (namely, US deployment of tactical nuclear weapons). In Europe, in contrast, a response to any attack on a NATO member state must be authorised by NATO. Unless a consensus is achieved within NATO, a response will not be activated, and therefore, neither does the US alliance obligation come into play. This uncertainty associated with a multilateral alliance system, has led some of the US allies in Europe to bolster the assurance of US and NATO commitment to their defence through burden-sharing arrangements.⁶⁷ For these NATO member states, the “wedding ring” is an essential component of assurance. This difference in the character of the alliance mechanisms that give effect to the US commitment to defend its allies is a key differentiating factor in the approach toward the reduction of tactical nuclear weapon between US allies in Asia and those in Europe.

Conclusion: A Way Forward for Global Zero

The International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, co-chaired by Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi, makes the following statement:

United States conventional capability, when combined with that of each of the allies in question, constitutes a deterrent to any conceivable aggressor at least as credible as that posed by its nuclear weapons.⁶⁸

On the other hand, however, the same Commission also makes the following statement,

Nuclear weapons are the most inhuman weapon ever conceived, inherently indiscriminate in those they kill and maim, and with an impact deadly for decades. Their use by anyone at any time ... would be catastrophic.⁶⁹

David Yost of US Naval Post Graduate School points out that these two statements seemingly contradict each other.⁷⁰ Indeed, these statements by Evans-Kawaguchi Commission seem to indicate the complexity of the challenge of maintaining that delicate balance between promoting nuclear disarmament and meeting nuclear deterrence requirements. The extent to which conventional weapons can replace the deterrence capability of nuclear weapons is an ongoing inquiry in Japan.

Regarding the above report by the Evans-Kawaguchi Commission and an action plan by Global Zero,⁷¹ both reports assume that if the United States

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi co-chairs, *Eliminating Nuclear Threats: Report of the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament* (Canberra: International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament, 2009), p. 66.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷⁰ A statement by David Yost in a meeting with the author in Tokyo, Japan, 2 June 2010.

⁷¹ Global Zero, ‘Global Zero Action Plan’, February 2010, <http://static.globalzero.org/files/docs/GZAP_6.0.pdf> [Accessed 20 November 2010].

and Russia reduce their nuclear arsenals, other nuclear weapon states will also follow the path of nuclear reductions. Takahashi argues that this core assumption is contestable.⁷² Takahashi takes a hypothetical scenario where the United States and Russia continue to reduce their nuclear arsenals while China continues to increase its nuclear arsenal. Then, assuming that these three countries achieve some level of a trilateral parity at some stage, an important question may emerge: Can they then agree to simultaneously draw down their nuclear arsenals toward zero? Takahashi assesses that in a situation of trilateral nuclear parity, the stronger dynamic may well be for larger, not smaller, arsenals.⁷³ Each country will be concerned that the other two could bandwagon against it and generate an intolerable imbalance in nuclear capability. All three may feel compelled to hedge against this possibility by increasing their arsenals. Theoretically, it would be difficult to sustain a stable nuclear balance among three nuclear weapon states with something approaching trilateral parity.⁷⁴ What is more complicating, there are also other nuclear weapon states, including the United Kingdom, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and presumably Israel, in addition to countries with apparent nuclear ambitions, such as Iran. Maintaining a stable nuclear balance in such an increasingly multi-polar nuclear world would be exceedingly difficult, and possibly out of reach.

At a minimum, Takahashi argues, the second tier nuclear weapon states, especially China, the United Kingdom and France, must begin to reduce their nuclear weapons before the United States and Russia continue with further significant reductions. The nuclear weapon states other than the United States and Russia should not be allowed to dodge this responsibility until the two major nuclear powers achieve parity with them.⁷⁵

In general, there is a widespread view in the Japanese strategic community that the United States and Russia should not reduce nuclear weapons in such a drastic way that other nuclear weapon states, especially China, may be tempted to seek strategic parity with them. In other words, these Japanese strategic analysts consider that the process of nuclear disarmament should take into consideration the requirement to dissuade the lesser nuclear powers from seeking parity with the United States and Russia and preserve an adequate measure of US/Russian numerical superiority.

In addition, Takahashi and Tosaki urge that careful attention be paid to avoiding a “stability-instability paradox” in Asia.⁷⁶ Originally, the stability-instability paradox was articulated by Glenn H. Snyder in the following terms:

⁷² Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', pp. 40-2.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid. Also see, Japan National Institute of Defense Studies, *Higashi Ajia Senryaku Gaikan 2010* (East Asia Strategic Outlook 2010), pp. 239-40.

⁷⁵ Takahashi, 'Nuclear Issues and Japan's Security Policy', pp. 41-42.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 48-9; Tosaki, remarks at an academic conference of Japan Association of Disarmament Studies, in Tokyo, Japan, 28 August 2010.

“the greater the stability of the ‘strategic’ balance of terror, the lower the stability of the overall balance at lower levels of violence.”⁷⁷ When strategic stability is achieved between two nuclear weapon states based on mutual vulnerability, but without a maturing and constructive political relationship, it could destabilise the lower parts of the spectrum of violence.⁷⁸ Without political trust, nuclear weapon states may become more prone to provocations at the lower end of the escalation ladder. In fact, as noted, territorial disputes have already become an increasingly serious concern in Asia as China’s military power grows. Similarly, North Korea intensified provocation, as shown in an apparent torpedo attack on the South Korean warship Cheonan in the West Sea that killed 46 South Korean servicemen in March 2010, as well as the firing of dozens of rounds of artillery against South Korea’s Yeonpyeong Island on 23 November 2010.

In order to avoid the stability-instability paradox, Takahashi argues that the United States should not allow any potential adversary to feel that it has a secure second strike capability against the United States. The United States should also preserve a measure of ambiguity regarding the activation of its deterrent capabilities and not indulge the preferences of potential adversaries for greater clarity in this regard. A further important measure to minimise the risk of the stability-instability paradox, would be for the United States and its allies in Asia to coordinate closely and strengthen the fabric of regional deterrence, as the 2010 US *NPR* in fact argued.⁷⁹

In order to increase the effectiveness of Japan-US security cooperation in strengthening regional deterrence, many Japanese strategic experts take the view that Japan must be able to excise its right of collective defence, a right that Japan has unilaterally declared to be inconsistent with its constitution. As the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era points out,

the current interpretation of the Constitution does not authorize the [Self-Defense Forces] to protect US naval vessels involved in bilateral operations with Japan that are under attack by guerrilla operatives at a stage prior to an armed attack situation against Japan

and

⁷⁷ Glenn H. Snyder, ‘The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror’, in Paul Seabury (ed.), *The Balance of Power* (Scranton: Chandler, 1965), pp. 185-201. This point is made by Rajesh Rajagopalan, ‘What Stability-Instability Paradox? Subnational Conflicts and the Nuclear Risk in South Asia,’ *SASSU Research Paper*, no. 4 (February 2006), p. 5, <http://www.sassi.org/pdfs/R_Rajagopalan.pdf> [Accessed on November 20, 2010]. However, Snyder also suggested, “But one *could* argue precisely the opposite—that the greater the likelihood of gradual escalation due to a stable strategic equilibrium tends to deter both conventional provocation and tactical nuclear strikes—thus stabilizing the overall balance.” See, Snyder, ‘The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror’, p. 199.

⁷⁸ Takahashi, ‘Nuclear Issues and Japan’s Security Policy’, pp. 48-9.

⁷⁹ US Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, pp. xii-xiii.

Japan does not even have an option to consider, based on its national interest, whether or not it should protect US vessels or intercept ballistic missiles targeted at the US.⁸⁰

The Council further stated that “(t)he current interpretation of self-defense needs to be reviewed based on the political decisions that the government makes.”⁸¹ Furthermore, Japan also needs to strengthen the security organization of the Cabinet, by establishing a National Security Council within the Cabinet, for example, in order to enable smooth cooperation with the United States.⁸²

Finally, in tandem with the efforts on nuclear arms control and disarmament, robust efforts are needed in the area of CBW arms control and disarmament. As science and technology advances at a revolutionary speed, especially in the fields of life science, the potential risk of misuse of dual-use research activities relevant to CBW is growing at an alarming pace.⁸³ Given the relative ease with which CBW of higher lethality and virulence could be produced, some countries or non-state actors might be attracted to new types of CBW as a means to offset established conventional/nuclear asymmetries. Given this emerging risk, a renewed focus on CBW arms control and nonproliferation needs to become a priority for the international community.

As seen above, from Japanese strategic perspectives, various issues have to be addressed in order to pursue peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region while making practical steps toward Global Zero. As examined, those issues include (but not limited to) revisiting the role of conventional deterrence, dissuading the second tier nuclear weapon states, constructing a regional security architecture, strengthening the Japan-US alliance, and promoting effective CBW arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation. None of them is easy. However, Japan also recognizes that it should not grant an excuse to engage in work avoidance over nuclear disarmament. Japan faces this enormously complicated task to pave a narrow path toward Global Zero under a complex security environment. US extended deterrence is key here. Above all anything else, close consultation over extended deterrence and cooperation to address various security challenges between the United States and its Asian allies, will continue to remain an essential requirement for global nuclear disarmament in the future.

⁸⁰ Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, *Japan's Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era.*, pp. 55-56.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

⁸³ For example, see US National Research Council, *Biotechnology Research in An Age of Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2004); Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, *Globalization, Biosecurity, and the Future of the Life Sciences* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2006).

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