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Quantico, Virginia 22134-5068

MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

HERE COMES THE SUN: JAPAN'S REEMERGENCE AS A GLOBAL POWER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

Major Edward J. Blackshaw

AY 15-16

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Executive Summary

Title: HERE COMES THE SUN: JAPAN'S REEMERGENCE AS A GLOBAL POWER

Author: Major Edward J. Blackshaw, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: Japan's government recognized that with globalization and the shifting balances of military and economic power, it must step out of the shadow of the United States (U.S.) in order to protect its national interests. Examination of Japan and the U.S.-Japan Alliance brings to light the importance of Japan to the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Discussion: Since the end of the Cold War, Japan has been steadily modernizing its military capability to meet regional and global threats to its security. Politically, Japan needed to adapt its constitution to address these same threats. The U.S.-Japan alliance enabled Japan to focus internally while relying upon the U.S. for its security from outside threats since the end of World War II. For the U.S., the ability to project power from forward bases supplied by Japan ensures it is able to address its National Security Strategy objectives for the Asia-Pacific region. Meeting its foundational requirements to support and defend U.S. military forces while on Japanese soil, Japanese forces could not conduct any "collective defense" type actions due to Japanese law. This limitation no longer exists with the reinterpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution by the Japanese government. Ever conscious of its imperial past, Japan has slowly taken steps to rejoin the international community and with the reinterpretation of Article 9, Japan is poised to assume a greater Japanese role in the international community.

Conclusion: The importance of the Asia-Pacific region to the global community cannot be understated. Maintaining and strengthening the strategic partnership with Japan provides regional stability, supports the strategic security objectives of both nations, and ensures the United States maintains its global leadership role.

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INTRODUCTION

“The United States will strengthen our alliances, build new partnerships and will be part of multilateral efforts and regional institutions that advance regional security and prosperity. We have to understand that the future of the United States and Asia is inextricably linked. Our goal remains the same, and that's to provide for the defense of Japan with minimal intrusion on the lives of the people who share the space, and I have to say that I am extraordinarily proud and grateful for the men and women in uniform from the United States who help us to honor our obligations to the alliance and our treaties.” – President Barack Obama-
November 2009

The Asia-Pacific region is complex and strategically important to the United States. Economically, the region represents 56 percent of total U.S. trade and contains the world's most dynamic trade and energy routes. What happens in the region has global impact.¹ Japan recognizes that along with globalization there is a shifting global balance of military and economic power. The security environment around Japan has become increasingly dynamic and it must step out of the shadow of the U.S. in order to protect its national interests. Historically, Japan has relied upon the U.S. for its national security and will continue to do so for the near future.² China's continued economic growth and military expansionist activities, coupled with the rise of India as a regional power, underscore the global significance of the region. In order to remain a “Proactive Contributor to Peace” Japan must continue to adapt its security policies and activities within the region and internationally while coordinating with other countries including its ally, the United States.³ This paper explores post-World War II Japan, its government, the Japanese Self Defense Force and the U.S.-Japan Alliance in support of this thesis.

For over fifty years, Japanese security has been defined by the bounds placed upon the state by Article 9. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution outlaws war as a means to settle international disputes. In its text, the state formally renounces the sovereign right of belligerency and aims at an international peace based on justice and order.⁴ Through time, Japan has pushed the boundaries and extended its global reach. It has done so while still working closely with the U.S. and other regional nations. Considering Japan's history, it must continue to do so. Recent changes within the Japanese government signal that Japan is unshackling itself from the postwar controls placed upon it by the U.S. In doing so, one could argue that Japan will become a more effective partner for the U.S. As such, Japan must tread lightly as many regional actors are weary of a rise in Japanese militarism. South Korea and the Philippines for example, may misinterpret Japanese security sector developments.

Aftermath of World War II

World War II left Japan in a state of ruin, its major cities severely damaged or destroyed, and its industrial and agricultural capability devastated. The Allied powers (U.S., Britain, Soviet Union, and Nationalist China) placed the United States in charge of Japan's occupation and restoration.⁵ In September 1945, General MacArthur became the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) force in Japan. The U.S. would go on to lead the rehabilitation and occupation effort until its conclusion in April 1952.⁶ The U.S. understood that for Japan to remain peaceful and eventually rejoin the international community it would have to make changes politically, economically, and culturally. To this end, SCAP took a two-phase approach: reform and recovery. The reform phase would address politics, military, education, and industry

while the recovery phase focused on shaping conditions in Japan and internationally for the signing of a peace treaty and the official end of the occupation.⁷

SCAP addressed the political makeup of Japan by amending the Meiji era constitution and its form of government through the creation of a constitutional monarchy.⁸ Three guiding principles serve as the foundation of the constitution: the renunciation of war, sovereignty of the people, and respect for human rights. A priority for SCAP was the dissolution of the Japanese military and the dismantlement of the military industrial capability. This matter is specifically addressed in Chapter II, Article 9 of the constitution wherein it states, “Land, sea, and air forces as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.”⁹The new constitution was officially adopted on May 3, 1947.¹⁰

The Peace Treaty signed on September 8, 1951 and ratified on April 28, 1952 eventually gave Japan independence. The same day, the U.S. signed a security treaty with Japan, which gave the U.S. the sole right to maintain military forces in and around Japan (Figure 1). U.S. forces would provide security for Japan while simultaneously assuring Japan’s former regional enemies that Japan’s military would not rise again to attack them. The treaty called for Japan to request United Nations membership and in keeping with the charter of the United Nations, Japan has the right to raise military forces for the purpose of individual or collective self-defense.¹¹

Deployment Map of the U.S. Forces in Japan

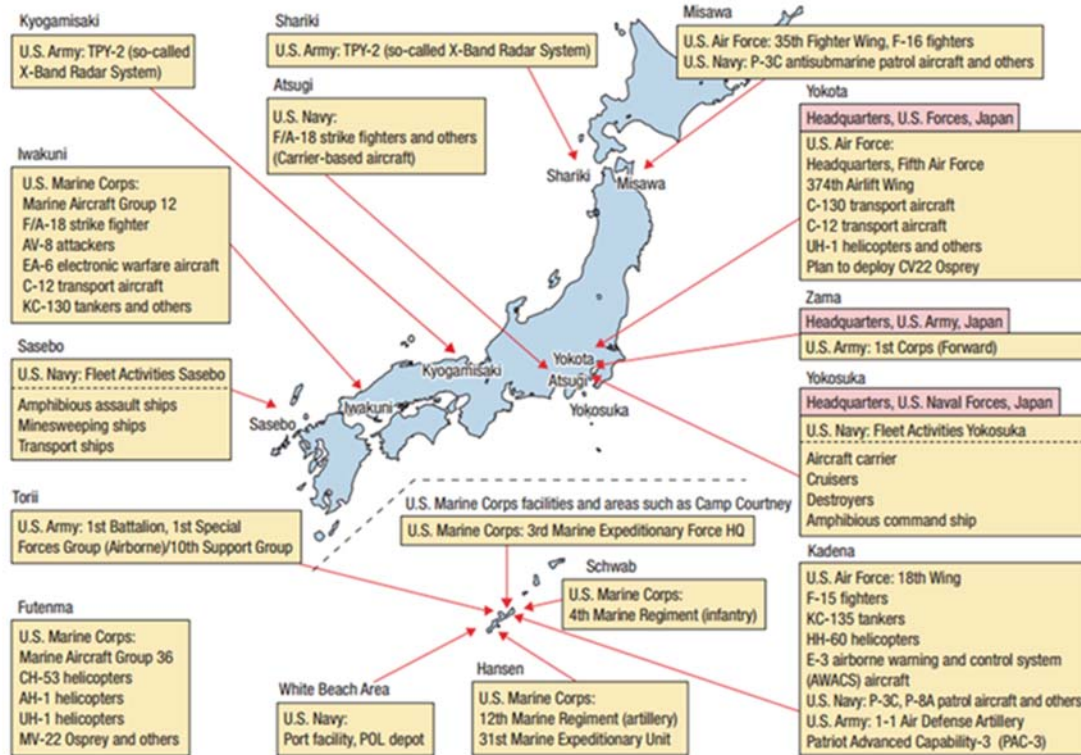


Figure 1

Since the end of World War II, the U.S.-Japanese Alliance has held fast. The U.S.-Japan security alliance is the region's most important military relationships and serves as an anchor of the U.S. security role in Asia. Through the Korean War, Vietnam, and numerous smaller conflicts and contingencies, the alliance has been stable. However, due to changes in the national interests of both countries over time, there have been significant changes to the documents. The documents reflect the evolving dynamic of the security alliance; they are the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States,¹² the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation of 1978,¹³ 1997,¹⁴ and 2015,¹⁵ and the Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security-Alliance for the 21st Century of 1996.¹⁶ Exposure to these documents provides a greater level of understanding of the complexities associated with U.S.-Japan alliance.

The foundational document of the U.S.-Japan alliance, the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States established roles for each nation. The U.S. supports Japan by providing an external security capability. For its part, Japan provides military bases from which the U.S. can operate. Article VI of the treaty states “For the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East, the United States of America is granted the use by its land, air and naval forces of facilities and areas in Japan.”¹⁷ The treaty stated “the Allied Powers and Japan are resolved that henceforth their relations shall be those of nations which, as sovereign equals, cooperate in friendly association to promote their common welfare and to maintain international peace and security”¹⁸ The Japanese, for their part, were able to focus on rebuilding their country and their economy. These efforts, known as the “Yoshida Doctrine” named for Japanese Prime Minister (PM) Shigeru Yoshida¹⁹ who, through force of will and determination made economic reconstruction efforts a priority while pushing for the establishment of a small self-defense force. PM Yoshida understood that although no formal protections for Japan existed in the treaty, the U.S. military presence in Japan would act as a deterrent for any nation or force seeking to attack Japan. Rather than spending what little resources the Japanese had on a military, he smartly chose to invest in Japan’s economy. New documents derived from it address the threats and changes to the political and economic landscape.

The U.S. produced the United States Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region in 1995 and the Japanese produced the National Defense Program guidelines in the same year. The United States Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region identified the strategic importance of forward deployed forces within the Asia-Pacific region. The report stated “There is no more important bilateral relationship than the one we have with Japan” and it further

identified that the relationship between the U.S. and Japan is “fundamental to our Pacific security policy and our global strategic objectives.”²⁰ The Japanese National Defense Program identified four major focus areas for the future defense policy of Japan: 1. Security cooperation and participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations; 2. Strengthening of bilateral security with the United States; 3. Improvements to Japanese self-defense capability; 4. Domestic development of defense and technology. The joint declaration identified and addressed regional issues of importance to include the troubled relationship of the U.S. military forces stationed on Okinawa and the on-going destabilizing activities of North Korea and its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security-Alliance for the 21st Century of 1996 reaffirmed the importance of the U.S.-Japan Alliance to both nations in the post-cold war era. The Joint Declaration signed by President Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro in April 1996 is a result of studies conducted by both Japan and the U.S. concerning their security objectives for the Asia-Pacific region.

The U.S.-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation has been formally reviewed and revised more times than any other document related to the relationship. As a result, this document represents and addresses the evolving nature of the relationship. Originally focused on the defense of Japan against Soviet aggression in 1978, the guidelines failed to address other regional security concerns. Recognizing the need to identify a response to a regional crisis, a revision to the guidelines was completed in 1997, the genesis of this being the provocative actions of North Korea. Signed in April of 2015, the “Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation provide the general framework and policy direction for the roles and missions of the United States and Japan, as well as ways of cooperation and coordination, with a view to improving the effectiveness of bilateral security and defense cooperation.”²¹ The revised

guidelines move the document forward with emphasis on coordination at all levels and across multiple domains including space and cyberspace, maritime defense, airspace defense, and counter ballistic missile. The establishment of the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) facilitates all these coordination activities. The purpose of the ACM is shared situational awareness through information sharing. The 2015 guidelines “transform the alliance, reinforce deterrence, and ensure that we can address security challenges, new and old, for the long term. The new guidelines will update our respective roles and missions [and] enable Japan to expand its contributions to regional and global security.”²²

EVOLUTION OF THE JAPANESE SELF DEFENSE FORCE

The aforementioned alliance has been the catalyst for the establishment, growth, and evolution of the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF). Due to the nature of Japan's constitution after the end of World War II, Japan lost its military capability and relied on the U.S. for security and protection. The Japanese constitution rejects war. Chapter 2, Article 9 of the Japanese constitution states:

“Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes...The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”²³

Under the American occupation authority's recommendation, the Japanese government authorized the establishment of a National Police Reserve in July 1950. The SDF, established in 1954 falls under the Ministry of Defense (MOD). Created to deal with internal threats and natural disasters, The SDF consists of the Ground Self-Defense Force (Rikujou Jieitai, GSDF),

Maritime Self-Defense Force (Kaijō Jieitai, MSDF), and the Air Self-Defense Force (Kōkū Jieitai, ASDF). The SDF is a volunteer force and consists of approximately 250,000 active and 58,000 reserve personnel.²⁴

The National Security apparatus, which did not exist in post war Japan, has now matured and mirrors that of the United States in many respects. In 2013, Japan established a National Security Council and for the first time adopted a National Security Strategy (NSS) that resulted in the establishment of a comprehensive defense architecture.²⁵ Designed around the longstanding alliance with the U.S. and its burgeoning relationships with Australia and India, Japan remains positioned to respond quickly to any situation, whether from armed attacks or large-scale natural disasters. The NSS also stresses the importance of Japan's ability to shape the security environment through a whole of government approach, which encompasses its political, military, and security needs. The strategy focuses on Japan's ability to maintain access to global sea-lines of communication and natural resources, which are deemed to be in the national interests of Japan. In order to meet the national security objectives outlined in its NSS, Japan must expand its military capabilities and role within the international community, strengthen the alliance with the U.S., and develop regional and international partnerships with nations that share Japan's visions for peace.²⁶

SELF DEFENSE FORCE – U.S. MILITARY COOPERATION

Japan falls within the geographic combatant command responsibility of United States Pacific Command (Figure 2). As such, the SDF is strategically linked to the U.S. Combatant Commander who is responsible for the execution of all U.S. theater security cooperation activities within the Asia-Pacific region. The most visible of which are bilateral and multilateral

military exercises. Through these bilateral and multilateral exercises, the SDF is able to work with the U.S. and other regional and international partners to conduct a wide spectrum of security cooperation activities, which support the National Security Strategies of both nations.

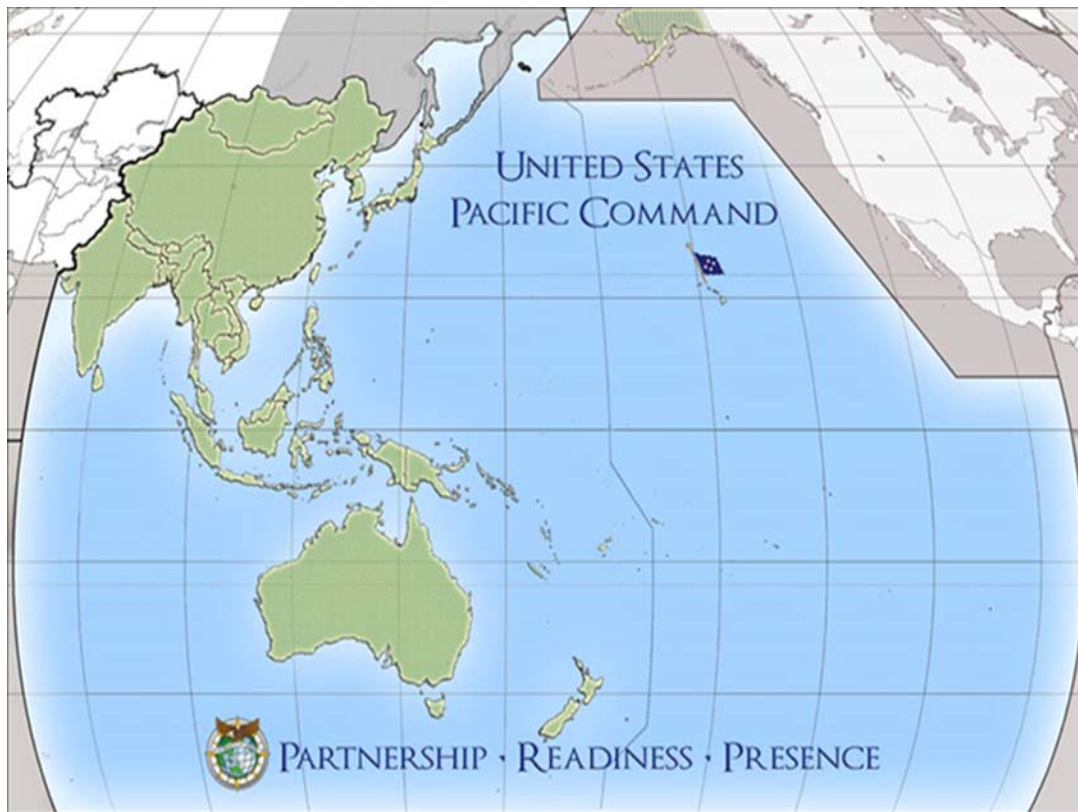


Figure 2. USPACOM Area of Operation

Essentially taking the friend of a friend approach, Japan has skillfully used the U.S.-Japan alliance to garner support for its participation in numerous military exercises of varying scale and difficulty (Table 1). Understanding the historical bias which it faces, Japan has focused on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, security, and peacekeeping operations to allay the fears of its regional neighbors.²⁷ These efforts are aligned with Japan's foreign policy and security policy in that Japan, as a "Proactive Contributor to Peace," will actively seek ways in which to contribute to the peace and stability of the region and the international community, while coordinating with other countries including its ally, the United States.²⁸

Exercise	Type	Participant Nations	Area of Focus	Frequency
FOREST LIGHT	Bilateral	Japan, United States	Command Post and Field Exercise, Interoperability, Command and Control, Helo-borne, Fire support	Semi-Annual
IRON FIST	Bilateral	Japan, United States	Amphibious planning and operations, marksmanship, fire support	Annual
KEEN EDGE	Bilateral	Japan, United States	Command Post Exercise, Interoperability, Command and Control	Bi-Annual, opposite Keen Sword
KEEN SWORD	Bilateral	Japan, United States	Field Exercise, Interoperability, Command and Control	Bi-Annual, opposite Keen Edge
MALABAR	Multilateral	Japan, India, United States	Maritime security, Command and Control, Interoperability	Annual
CARAT	Bilateral, Multilateral	Japan, United States, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand	Maritime security, Command and Control, Interoperability, Regional cooperation	Annual
COBRA GOLD	Multilateral	Japan, United States, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand. *Observers from Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Vietnam	Maritime security, Command and Control, Interoperability	Annual
COPE NORTH	Bilateral, Multilateral	Japan, United States, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea. *Observers from Singapore and Vietnam	Aviation centric Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response, Interoperability, Air-to-Air and Air-to-Ground Combat	Annual
RIMPAC	Multilateral	Japan, United States, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Tonga, the United Kingdom	Maritime security, Littoral activities, Command and Control, Interoperability	Bi-Annual

Table 1. U.S.-Japan Military Exercises

These exercises, initially conducted only with the U.S., have grown to include numerous nations from within the region and across the globe. Through a crawl-walk-run approach, Japan's capabilities have grown exponentially. Key to the development of strong, interoperable, and mutually beneficial relationships within the Asia-Pacific region, the emphasis of the exercises has been consistent from the very beginning: maritime security, interoperability, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response.

The largest exercise is the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), which depending on the year has participants from up to 25 different countries. The Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, sponsors the multinational maritime exercise. RIMPAC, which takes place every two years, provides a

training opportunity that assists the participating nations and, to a smaller extent, the observers build cooperative relationships. The exercise is about more than just relationships though; the training syllabus during the 2014 edition included amphibious operations, gunnery, missile, anti-submarine, and air defense exercises, as well as military medicine, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, counter-piracy, mine clearance operations, explosive ordnance disposal, and diving and salvage operations. The multinational growth of these exercises signals a slight change of attitude towards Japan. There is much for Japan to do in order to get into the good graces of its former enemies within the region. Through these exercises, Japan is slowly making in-roads towards this end. RIMPAC 2014 marked the first time that Japan led the scenario-driven humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) response portion of the exercise. They facilitated the training and certification of the expeditionary forces taking part, enabling them to respond to foreign disasters as a crisis response force.²⁹

Further recognition of Japan's maritime military prowess came in 2015 when India invited Japan to become a permanent participant in the Indian Naval-sponsored Malabar exercise. Though priorities change yearly, the Malabar exercises focus on carrier strike group operations, Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) operations, maritime patrol and reconnaissance operations, anti-piracy operations, search and rescue exercises, helicopter cross-deck landings, underway replenishment, gunnery and anti-submarine warfare exercises, and Liaison officer exchanges.³⁰ Originally, a bilateral exercise between the U.S. and India, the Indian government recognized that India, Japan, and the U.S. share common interests related to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and the U.S. Asia-Pacific Rebalance.³¹ Japan's participation in these exercises demonstrates Japan's commitment to security and prosperity while building the SDF's capacity to address the ever-changing security environment

surrounding Japan. Furthermore, through these exercises, the participating nations gain a better understanding of their combined capabilities.³²

During the last few years, Japan has taken part in the regional Multilateral Naval Exercise Komodo (MNEK). Exercise Komodo, sponsored by Indonesia, emphasizes the non-warfighting aspects of naval operations. MNEK 2014, which included 18 ASEAN-Plus Navies, focused on Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR). Following the success of this event, MNEK 2016, focused on maritime peacekeeping operations. The biennial exercise enables the navies of the Asia Pacific region to work together better through improved coordination and enhanced interoperability.³³

GLOBAL INFLUENCE

Japan's willingness to demonstrate its ability to support international crisis response and its own national interests has changed significantly in the recent past. This was not always the case. The Gulf War of 1991 played a major role in shaping Japan's perspective towards the participation of the SDF in international crisis and conflict support. When Saddam Hussein's Iraqi military invaded Kuwait, Japan imposed sanctions against Iraq.³⁴ Due to restrictions placed upon it by its war-renouncing constitution, Japan was unable to send troops to support the U.S. led coalition to liberate Kuwait. The U.S. requested logistical support from Japan and received "no" as a reply. These refusals fomented a growing distrust from the U.S. ultimately leading to the U.S. Congress cancelling preexisting agreements between the Japanese and US governments and amended plans for the joint development of the FSX, a planned new support fighter for Japan's Air Self-Defense Force.³⁵ Instead of troops or ships, Japan contributed money; \$13 billion was provided to help fund the military operation. At the conclusion of the War, Japan's

status within the international community was degraded. Japan learned from the Gulf War that just sending money and not people would not earn the trust and respect of the international community.³⁶

Because of the shame, it felt from the lack of support it provided during the Gulf War, in April 1991, Japan deployed five minesweepers and one support vessel to the Persian Gulf to join a multinational post-Gulf War mission to remove 1,200 mines laid by Iraq forces in the Persian Gulf off the coast of Kuwait. Understanding the importance of providing forces for the good of the global community, Japan has contributed forces and supplies since the 1990s to United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UN PKO). Authorized by UN Security Council Resolutions, the UN PKOs support the peaceful resolution of conflict and recovery/reconstruction after ceasefire through diverse missions such as ceasefire monitoring to prevent a relapse into conflict and infrastructure development for further peace building.³⁷ Since the passing of the International Peace Cooperation Law in 1992, Japan has participated in numerous UN PKOs, international disaster relief activities, replenishment support activities in the Indian Ocean, and humanitarian, and reconstruction assistance operations in Iraq.³⁸ As of February 2015, Japan has deployed more than 10,000 personnel to 13 UN PKOs. Around 350 SDF personnel currently serve with the UN PKO mission in South Sudan where they are developing infrastructure, supporting internally displaced persons (IDP), and establishing UN facilities.^{39,40}

More than just a security force provider, Japan has established a cadre of trained Disaster Relief Teams whom are globally deployable to respond in the event of a humanitarian crisis. These teams consist of civilian personnel and designated SDF Units. Depending on the scale of the event and the requesting governments' permission, these teams will deploy globally

to provide aid. To date, Japan has dispatched over 130 Disaster Relief Teams to 41 countries and regions, and SDF has dispatched its unit for 17 disasters and conducted support activities such as transportation and medical assistance.⁴¹

Due to Japan's desire to improve its image globally and demonstrate its newfound willingness to support international security efforts, the SDF has been making strides to be a proactive member of the international security community. Since 2013, the SDF has been an active member of Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151). CTF 151 is a multinational force that in conjunction with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union Naval Force Somalia (EU NAVFOR), conducts counter-piracy operations through the conduct of maritime and aviation patrols in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf Aden.⁴² In May of 2015, the Japanese took command of the CTF, the first time a Japanese officer has commanded a multinational force in the post-war period. In doing so, Japan expanded its role in global security in a non-threatening manner, which affirmed its commitment to peace and stability and confirmed Japan as a global actor at home and abroad. Japan relinquished command of the CTF to Turkey in August 2015. The positive global impact of these actions for Japan is significant. Japan's Prime Minister Abe recently stated, "Our activities will not be limited to situations that have an important influence on Japan's peace and security. Japan is determined to contribute even more actively to global peace and stability."⁴³

The proven successes away from home have equipped Japan to address the challenges it faces locally associated with the provocative acts of China and North Korea as opportunities. The majority of disputes gaining recent public attention concern the Senkaku (Diayou) islands and atolls located in the East China Sea. The dispute is between Japan, Taiwan, and China.

Japan claims that when it conducted a survey of the islands in 1895 they were uninhabited and unclaimed. China and Taiwan both claim historical rights to the islands. On 29 November 2012, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved an amendment to National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 stating the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands fall under the scope of a Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan, and Washington would defend Japan in the event of armed attack.⁴⁴ The disputes with Taiwan, China, Russia, and North Korea are high profile and a point of tension and instability for the region. All, save Taiwan, involve parties that possess a nuclear capability. In the case of North Korea, the rationality of the leadership is questionable and is a cause for great concern.

At home, the SDF and U.S. responded quickly to the earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck Japan on March 11, 2011. Operation Tomodachi, a Joint SDF-U.S. disaster relief effort, commenced on March 12 and lasted until May 4. The operation involved over 20,000 U.S. service personnel, 24 naval vessels, and 189 aircraft. “Operation Tomodachi was the first time Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) helicopters used U.S. aircraft carriers to respond to a crisis. The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan provided a platform for air operations as well as a refueling base for SDF and coast guard helicopters.”⁴⁵ Furthermore, experts from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Department of Energy provided on-the-ground expertise to assist the Japanese in dealing with the Fukushima No. 1 plant nuclear disaster. The operation required coordination across the whole of the Japanese and United States governments to bring about its successful conclusion.

Following up on the success of Operation Tomodachi, the SDF responded to the aftermath of the typhoon disaster in the Philippines in November 2013. In addition to sending in

the Japanese Disaster Relief Medical Teams and other emergency response personnel, Japan deployed the largest-ever contingent of SDF personnel, approximately 1,200, deployed to the stricken area to assist in the recovery operations. Most recently, Japan sent emergency assistance personnel and supplies to Nepal after the 2015 earthquake.⁴⁶

REINTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE 9

Japan's regional and global ambition coupled with the growing threat to regional stability posed by China and North Korea has compelled Japan to revise its long-standing policies.⁴⁷ The reinterpretation of Article 9 and the defense reform legislation of September 2015 passed by the Japanese government have legally transformed the role of the SDF. These changes allow Japan to take on a greater responsibility in regards to the security challenges facing Japan regionally and globally. While regional concerns have driven the desire for change, the result will reinforce Japan's ability to expand its global reach. The new legislation eliminates geographic constraints, expands the range of allowable logistics support, authorizes support to U.S. troops and third nation troops,⁴⁸ addresses "gray-zone" interactions,⁴⁹ updates rules of engagement,⁵⁰ shortens SDF deployment timelines for multilateral operations, and allows the SDF to defend friendly nations' military assets. The security legislation allows Japan to take collective self-defense action only when an attack on an ally threatens Japan's own survival. The previous limitations placed upon the SDF ran counter to the requirements identified within the constitution and current National Security Strategy. Japan can now seek to develop and strengthen bi-lateral and multilateral ties with regional partners, which were not possible before.

Japan and Korea have a history of mistrust; however, the two countries are inextricably linked because of U.S., and United Nations defense plans for South Korea. The plans identify

naval and air bases in Japan to act as a staging point for logistics, military strike packages, and alternate command posts. Although not a formal agreement, by virtue of the reinterpretation of Article 9 and the new authorities for collective self-defense, if the U.S. were to go to the defense of South Korea, and U.S. forces were attacked at their bases in the Japan, the SDF would conduct operations to defend U.S. forces and bases from air, missile, and submarine attacks and possibly conduct other maritime related activities to defend the home islands.⁵¹ This is not to say that Japan would be deploying forces to the Korean peninsula as that is extremely unlikely and would require the permission of the South Korean government. The SDF is concerned with defending the homeland and ensuring its survivability.⁵²

The reinterpretation allows Japan to take actions to protect its national interests outside of the region and take part in military operations and exercises without receiving mission specific permissions from the Diet. Though not providing carte blanche for military action globally, the SDF will be more responsive for operations, which have been preapproved by the Diet. The Japanese government is addressing the shortcomings of the security legislation and reinterpretation of Article 9 by seeking to have the constitution amended. Japan's ability to expand its global influence and support international security efforts hinges upon the results of the reinterpretation and amendment of its constitution. Japanese Prime Minister Abe is currently pushing to have the restraints of the current collective self-defense model removed.⁵³ He argues that "Japan should be able to engage in collective self-defense without any restraints by amending Article 9."⁵⁴ Prime Minister Abe did not make this decision on his own; he relied upon a panel of security experts who recommended that exercising collective self-defense would enable the SDF to provide better security for Japan and reinforce international order.

Furthermore, proponents of his plans noted that the reinterpretation reforms focused more on the creation of regional security partnerships and less on the SDF's use of force.⁵⁵

There is opposition to the reinterpretation of Article 9. Internally, there have been mass protests and physical altercations within the Japanese halls of government.⁵⁶ Externally, China, South Korea, and the Philippines view the reinterpretation as the first step back towards the remilitarization of Japan from the imperial past.⁵⁷ Japan contends that the changing security environment requires a change to its security posture.⁵⁸ Longstanding distrust and territorial disputes with Russia, China, and South Korea continue, however the reinterpretation does not foretell an attempt by Japan to reclaim old or new territories through military action.⁵⁹ Despite U.S. assurances, any cooperation on security issues with South Korea will continue to face major domestic challenges in both countries; Japan will continue to develop closer relationships with potential partners such as the Philippines and Australia, countries that already have security arrangements with the United States.⁶⁰ The development of these relationships will take time and the way in which Japan goes about building the relationships is important. Taking a slow approach while clearly messaging its intentions, focusing on humanitarian assistance, and fully acknowledging its war crime past will do much to get Japan into the good graces of its regional neighbors.

CONCLUSION

Japan's government recognized that with globalization and the shifting balances of military and economic power, it must step out of the shadow of the U.S. in order to protect its national interests. This is not to say that Japan does not need the U.S. or the U.S. does not need

Japan. To the contrary, the history of the Japanese post war military is the history of the security relationship of the U.S. and Japan.

Japan's military has evolved from an internally focused national police force to a respected regional player and global security force provider. The reinterpretation of Article 9 has fundamentally changed the role of the Japanese Self Defense Forces. Japan's forces have successfully responded to natural disasters, conducted United Nations peacekeeping operations, and led a multinational naval task force. Japan is actively seeking ways in which to contribute to the peace and stability of the region and the international community. These efforts align with Japan's foreign policy and its security policy. The U.S., for its part, has facilitated this growth by sponsoring military exercises, which enabled Japan to build its military capacity and refine its military capability. Furthermore, the U.S. military has increased the number of nations invited to attend and observe these exercises while simultaneously increasing their complexity through the addition of air, land, and sea components to the exercise syllabus.

The growth of these exercises provides international exposure for the SDF and Japan's forces are able to refine their tactics, techniques, and procedures. Additionally, SDF interoperability increased resulting in an increase to its capacity and capabilities. The U.S. as the sponsor of the exercise provides the overall command and control, which supports the U.S. goal of providing global leadership. A strong Japanese military is good for the region as it serves to provide additional advantage against the growing threat to regional stability posed by China, Russia, and North Korea.

The U.S.-Japan alliance is vital to the national interests of the United States and Japan. Japan's willingness to take on a greater leadership role in the region supports the strategic

interests of the U.S. Loss of access and basing in Japan would reduce the U.S. presence in the region leaving a power vacuum to be filled by either China or Russia as both nations seek to expand their influence throughout the region. The U.S.-Japan Alliance has enabled the U.S. to ensure the unimpeded flow of commerce through the Asia-Pacific region, which is vital to the economy of the United States and the international community writ large. The presence of the U.S. military within the region serves as deterrence to any regional aggression, which may upset the status quo. Additionally, it provides assurance to regional nations and allies that Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9 though, controversial and alarming to some, should not be considered as a sign that the U.S. is leaving the region. In fact, it is quite the opposite, the U.S. is strengthening its military and economic ties with regional partners, and Japan's improved defensive posture aligns with the National Security Strategy of the U.S.⁶¹⁶²

The importance of the Asia-Pacific region to the global community cannot be understated. Maintaining and strengthening the strategic partnership with Japan provides regional stability, supports the strategic security objectives of both nations, and ensures the United States maintains its global leadership role.

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