

Japan and Asian Security

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Right now, the world is at a critical juncture: economic and financial crisis on a global scale; a fight against terrorism; and climate change issues. These are the agenda which have acutely necessitated the international community to jointly address, and which would steer the course of the future world and. In the midst of that, there was a change of the US administration. Most of the pundits anticipate and expect that President Obama's taking power will be a big turning point. As for foreign policy Middle East will continue to be a case in point, in light of the situation in Gaza. At the same time, Washington's emphasis is moving on to the stability of Afghanistan and Pakistan as well. The first President Obama did was the appointment of two special envoys, namely George Mitchell for Middle East and Richard Holbrooke for Afghanistan and Pakistan. This must be a clear demonstration of his diplomatic priorities. With a bit of digression, I would say the world expectation is mounting and it seems the United States is now ready to mobilize everybody (country and organization) to pursue its policy goals. Every stakeholder is brought on board (inclusive style of diplomacy). On CTBT and climate change, you have already seen certain signs of change.

I wish to point out at the beginning that our bilateral relations are truly in good shape and it is opportune that Japan and India have been advancing the "strategic and global partnership" over a couple of years now. In this critical moment it would be extremely important for our two peoples to see further progress in the concrete cooperation in various fields. If one agrees that the 21st century will and must be "an Asian century," it is logical for our two countries to play an important role for maintaining the peace, stability and prosperity of the world through cooperation, on the basis of common values and shared interests. Last October, when Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Tokyo, he and Prime Minister Taro Aso signed the joint declaration on the security cooperation between the two countries. This was an epoch making document and the two sides continue to make an effort along the lines of the document. I would like to come back to our bilateral relations later.

Much has been talked about "Asian century", because the gravity of world economy has been moving to Asia, including India. Already 25% of world GDP is from Asia. In addition, intra regional trade is increasing. The ratio of ASEAN plus six's intra trade stands at 58% in 2006. This figure is closer to that of EU, which is 65% and exceeds that of NAFTA. Economic integration has been taking place. Let me share with you,

moreover, in the process of the making of the new international political and economic framework and rules, Asian voices have been heard with increasing weight. Such examples are the Doha Round negotiations, G 20 talks on the future of Breton/Woods system, and COP meetings on climate change, not to mention the United Nations Security Council reform.

It should be noted, however, peace and stability of the region are the premise to constitute the basis of realizing Asian century. Do we have enough of them? One could say that the US continued presence (hub and spoke of the US alliance), as well as confidence building measures countries in the region have taken contributed to the maintenance of peace and stability. The hub and spoke of the US alliance, namely Japan-U.S., Korea US, and Australian US have consolidated a foundation of security. At least in the eyes of East Asians, that seems to be the case. And, since the end of the cold war, the region has been relatively stable.

However, we still face the unstable situation which needs to be resolved. First, the situation in the Korean Peninsular. Second, the situation in the Taiwan Strait. These two show that there still exist remnants of the cold war or post ww2 paradigm in the region. Third, stable development of the Indian subcontinent. (I do not intend to further take up this issue, but the world pays more attention to it as the gravity is shifting to this subcontinent.) Lastly, security architecture. What you would do with the architecture on security requires further serious consideration.

On the Korean Peninsular. The North Korean issues have made the regional security environment extremely difficult since the beginning of 90's. Denuclearization of North Korea is an urgent task for northeast Asian peace and stability. The Cold War structure will never cease to exist in the Korean Peninsular and new peace order there will not be established unless and until the nuclear question is resolved. Since its inception in September 2003, six party talks have been the framework of aiming at eliminating nuclear development programmes of North Korea. A basic framework of staged disablement of all existing nuclear facilities and complete abandonment of nuclear programmes of the DPRK has been agreed upon and in place. Corresponding to actions taken by the North, economic and energy assistance is to be accorded by participating countries in the talks. The process has not shown a remarkable progress and the US new administration's stance on the issue is much awaited, in particular by Pyongyang. I am given to understand that Secretary of State Hilary Clinton showed her readiness to keep the framework, by characterizing six party talks as a framework to put pressure on North Korea to change its behavior. The agreement envisaged the improvement of bilateral relations of North Korea with the US, Japan and South Korea

at a later stage of the process, which would alter the peace structure of the peninsula.

As you will be aware, the Japanese stance in the talks has been that the cooperation in the energy field would not be provided unless the abduction issues make certain progresses towards resolution. Diplomatic normalization is only possible after abduction, nuclear, and missile issues have been solved in a comprehensive manner between Japan and North Korea. This is on the very basis of negotiations laid by the visit to North Korea of the then Prime Minister Koizumi in September, 2002. On that occasion PM Koizumi signed the Pyongyang Declaration with Kim Jong Il (Second visit was made by PM Koizumi in May, 04.) In addition, it is worth noting that China is in the chair of six party talks and Russia participates, too. At this stage the focus is on nuclear, but, it has been pointed out that this framework of negotiations would have a potential in dealing with the larger regional security issues in northeast Asia in the future.

About the Taiwan Strait, improvement of the interchange between China and Taiwan is being witnessed. We should expect that working level cooperation will advance. Unilateral change of the current situation should not be made by either side.

In this regard, I wish to talk about China briefly. It is commonly understood that China will grow economically and increase its political prowess in the years to come. In 2008, however, its economic growth rate dropped to a single digit for the first time in 7years. Stable development of the Chinese economy is significant, as that would provide an opportunity for the regional economic growth. Of course, there are some determining factors of the future development of the Chinese economy, such as sluggishness of export owing to the downturn of the developed markets, income gaps between cities, development gaps between rural and urban areas, and an employment problem in case the pace of economic development slows down to the level below 8%. Environment, climate change, limitation of water, technology level could affect the future of the country.

A source of concern is the continued military build-up. Double digit increase of the military expenditures continues for 20 years. China is already the third largest military power in the world. Though recently the white paper came out, the transparency is still insufficient. It was at the ARF 15 years ago where others requested China to start issuing a white paper on defense. Yes, there has been an improvement. This year's white paper mentions that China will not seek hegemony. One would have felt very much uneasy if it had said it would. Some even say that the military build up (sea power and nuclear capabilities) is intended beyond Taiwan. Openness and predictability are to enhance. If the current trend continues, none of

the neighboring countries would be able to match the Chinese military capabilities. This should necessitate closer strategic cooperation in the region.

Last December, trilateral summit meeting among Japan, Korea and China took place for the first time independently of a multilateral meeting of ASEAN. This would advance functional and future oriented cooperation of 3 countries and serve as a built in stabilizer of the relationship.

Identification of common interests is very important between Tokyo and Beijing. Both governments are keen to forge the “mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests.” Of course, there is Japan-China competition. The balance games are being held in Southeast Asia, Africa and elsewhere. It is unavoidable. There remain outstanding issues between the two countries. However, it is needless to say that important is to share interests and harmonize strategic directions. Then, a process to manage relations will be made. We are of the view that we need to encourage China to take a constructive role in maintaining and reinforcing the international order, being a responsible member of the Asian community. (This can be said to all major players in the region.)

Let me discuss at this point Japan-India ties. The document on security cooperation two prime ministers signed covers a wide range of areas. That entails traditional security as well as nontraditional security issues such as disarmament/nonproliferation, terrorism, maritime security, disaster prevention, and PKO. Except for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, Australia was the only country with which Japan signed a document on security cooperation at the leaders’ level. A follow up work to hammer out an Action Plan is necessary. This year it is Japanese prime minister’s turn to come to India. With India as one of the rare cases, shuttle diplomacy of the leaders has been established. The dates of Prime Minister’s visit have yet to be discussed. General elections are due this year for both Japan and India. Nevertheless, officials of the two countries will accelerate their work on the action plan, bearing in a mind a possible visit of Japanese Prime Minister later in the year. There has been a framework of so called “two plus two” meeting. That is to discuss security matters jointly by Foreign Office and defense of the two countries. The meeting of “two plus two” could be held as early as in February. In addition, there held staff talks of the naval officers for the first time last November in Delhi.

What constitute importance between Japan and India is probably to pile up concrete cooperation one by one. Japan attaches high importance to a joint exercise and participation in Malabar. The scope of cooperation can be widened to include the area of safety of sea lanes which cover from the Bay of Bengal to the Strait of Malacca

and measures against terrorism. To Indonesia and Malaysia, Japan has granted technical assistance and related equipment for counterterrorism through the scheme of ODA (Official Development Assistance). Capacity building of the counterterrorism including the police agency is another possible area for significant cooperation. Whatever the differences may be reflecting the respective policy stances in postwar period, we should not lose sight of the long term implication our security dialogue and cooperation have upon bilateral relations and future stability of Asia. To cope jointly with today's threats which transcend national boundaries, Japan and India can focus on three categories of security: (1) maritime security; (2) human security (including terrorism and disaster management); and (3) energy security (climate change)

Finally, on security architecture. This is a difficult issue. There is not the Asian Institution, which is comparable to EU and NATO. The ARF has played a role for confidence building as well as for preventive diplomacy in the region. APEC has its significance, too. But, originally that is a frame of economic cooperation. And membership is wide and complicated. Yet, India is not a member. There is EAS. India has been there from its inception. That is a very important framework. Prior to its foundation, in January 2002, PM Koizumi originally launched an idea of an East Asia Community, with the membership open to India, Australia and New Zealand. However, U.S. is still missing. When we talk about regional security, American presence is a must. There is ASEAN + 3, too. Indeed, there has been multilayered functional cooperation, conducted through various fora. Should I say this is a reflection of where we are in Asia in terms of its integration?

Nevertheless, even in Asia, zero-sum game of the Cold War period must come to an end, and the world of positive-sum should emerge. To that end, key words of the future frame are openness and transparency, rule-based, and universal values. And then, in the long run, an Institution that is equipped with a capability to solve a dispute through talks and negotiations should become a reality in order to effectively maintain the peace and stability in this region.