



## Japan's Global Engagement:

A Mapping Study of Japan's Global Role and International Contributions

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## About this Project

This project, *Japan's Global Engagement*, began as a joint initiative of the Project 2049 Institute and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in May 2011. The objectives were to generate a future vision for Japan's role in international affairs in the aftermath of March 11, to highlight Japan's international contributions, and to infuse greater opportunities for people-to-people exchanges between the United States and Japan.

During the past year the Institute made two trips to Tokyo. In August 2011, a group of 8 U.S. participants visited Japan as part of a Leaders Program initiative to meet with experts and political leaders and exchange perspectives on Japan's global engagement. In December 2011, the Project 2049 Institute initiated a research trip to Tokyo to conduct a "mapping" study examining Japan's engagements with strategic regions. The Project 2049 Institute is deeply grateful to Masahiro Sakurauchi, Hiroto Ito, Shoichi Itoh, Yutaka Arima, Kenichi Kobayashi, Noriaki Abe, Ryo Nakamura, Masatoshi Sugiura, Akira Kadomoto, Fumio Goto, Tadashi Yokoyama, Asuka Tsuboike, Noriharu Masugi, Tomonori Nagase, Jun Watanabe, Kenji Kanamoto, Hideyuki Satsuma, Kyohei Iwaori, Noriyuki Shikata, Astushi Segawa, Sugio Takahashi, and Andrew De Wit. They kindly accepted our invitation to meet with them and shared their knowledge and insight with us.

We hope that our report, which was made possible by the support and encouragement of those noted above, will launch further dialogues on Japan's global engagement.

## Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors, and do not represent the views of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation or those of the many specialists who were consulted in the course of this project.

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## About the Project 2049 Institute

The Project 2049 Institute seeks to guide decision makers toward a more secure Asia by the century's mid-point. The organization fills a gap in the public policy realm through forward-looking, region-specific research on alternative security and policy solutions. Its interdisciplinary approach draws on rigorous analysis of socio-economic, governance, military, environmental, technological and political trends, and input from key players in the region, with an eye toward educating the public and informing policy debate.

[www.project2049.net](http://www.project2049.net)

## Contents

Foreword.....	5
Executive Summary.....	7
Recommendations.....	8
Ongoing Challenges to Japan's Global Engagement.....	9
Introduction .....	11
Evolution of Japan's Foreign Policy and Practice.....	11
Gulf War (1990 -1991): Lessons Learned.....	11
The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity.....	12
What Comes After the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity?.....	13
From Policy to Practice .....	14
Mapping Japan's International Engagements.....	15
Peacebuilding and International Security.....	15
PKOs: Significance beyond Peacekeeping.....	16
Japan "Re-Entering Asia" .....	20
Official Development Assistance .....	22
Conclusion.....	26
References .....	27

## Foreword

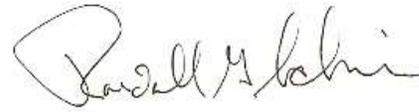
A nation's character and the strength of its people are called to a test in times of great calamity. The March 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent nuclear meltdown were tragic by all measures. Through this ordeal, Japan's experience demonstrated the strength and resilience of its people and underscored the value of its allies and friends. The Japanese people from across all walks of life united to assist in the disaster relief efforts and to rebuild their country. In response to the crisis, the United States initiated *Operation Tomodachi* (Operation Friends) to assist in the relief effort and mobilized 24,000 U.S. service members, 189 aircraft, and 24 naval ships in an unprecedented demonstration of the partnership embedded in the U.S.-Japan alliance.

In the disaster's aftermath, some scholars and experts suggested that Japan was in a period of 'relative decline' and in need of 'reviving.' Those views, however, did not take into account the innate strength and the external support that Japan could call upon in its time of great adversity. To be sure, however, Japan was on the brink of turning inward to respond to its domestic challenges. One year after the triple disaster, Japan was still coping with the challenges of Tohoku reconstruction, nuclear cleanup, and its future energy security. Yet at the same time, Japan's democracy has reawakened as the public began re-investing themselves in public life and taking a keen interest in national policies. Perhaps more importantly, the leadership-starved nation has found in the self-proclaimed "bottom-feeder" Yoshihiko Noda, a capable leader and prime minister, devoted to expanding Japan's global role.

Contrary to the prevailing rhetoric on Japan's decline and disengagement, Project 2049 Institute's research and findings uncovered a more important direction in Japan's global engagements. That is the profound transformation in Japan's global security engagements. Indeed, the year 2012 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan's participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Japan is contributing to counter-piracy operations around the world; promoting disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants in conflict zones; protecting and promoting human rights; supporting and monitoring elections; participating in mine countermeasures; and fighting infectious diseases in post-disaster areas. Through these joint efforts, the Japanese Self-Defense Force has demonstrated its capacity to promote global peace and security, and has become an important as well as effective vehicle for Japan's global engagement and diplomacy.

The year 2012 also marks the centennial of U.S.-Japan friendship. By any count, Japan is the most important ally for the United States in the Asia-Pacific (Japan is the third largest economy, a top contributor to foreign aid programs and international organizations, a liberal democracy and market economy with shared common values and interests with the U.S.). Increasingly, the U.S. ability to tackle global issues is tied to the strength and the capabilities of the U.S.-Japan alliance. As the two most technologically advanced economies and militaries, the United States and Japan should employ the wherewithal that status brings to advance cutting edge solutions to emerging security challenges.

In light of the evolving strategic landscape in the Asia-Pacific and ongoing challenges, I am confident and hopeful of Japan's continued role on the global stage and a growing role in the Asia-Pacific, where the U.S. – Japan Alliance has been and will continue to serve as the cornerstone of peace and stability.



Randall G. Schriver

*President & CEO  
Project 2049 Institute*

## Executive Summary

The culmination of events in Japan since the turn of the century has led some experts to conclude that the “Land of the Rising Sun” is on the decline. The debt is 200 percent of annual gross domestic product (GDP), Japan’s population is aging at the fastest rates in the world while birth rate is decreasing steadily, and the nation’s energy security faces an uncertain future. While Japan may appear on the decline, Japan is in fact reemerging and reshaping the sources of its national power. The source of Japan’s national strength and resilience is its people and culture. By extension the foundation of Japan’s renewed regional and international engagement is the U.S. – Japan Alliance. Since *Operation Tomodachi*, the U.S. – Japan alliance has never been stronger or more comprehensive. For the first time, Japan is conducting simultaneous peacekeeping operations (PKO) abroad with Self-Defense Forces (SDF) actively stationed in both Haiti and South Sudan. Japan has also opened its first overseas facility since World War II at the Horn of Africa, where Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) are combating piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

Japan watchers and politicians alike allude to the necessity for Tokyo to “get Japan’s house in order” before engaging with the world. Yet, by strengthening its commitments abroad while getting its house in order—as opposed to after the fact—Japan appears to be building domestic confidence and the international support it needs to overcome its political, economic, and cultural quandaries.

This study seeks to examine Japan’s global engagement and international contributions by mapping Japan’s role in the international arena. It transcends the traditional conceptualization of global engagement and takes the view that global engagement is a continuous process that goes beyond the narrow definition of a nation’s diplomatic relationships. Global engagement includes a nation’s economic and security diplomacy as well as participation in multilateral fora, and addresses global issues in both bilateral and multilateral fora. This report outlines the stages of Japan’s foreign policy-making and hones in on Japan’s more recent global engagements, namely its regional and security focus. Japan appears to be shedding its previous “allergy” to international security and is taking a proactive stance on promoting global peace and stability.

The report identifies a number of key trends and issues:

- Japan has recalibrated its foreign policy focus to the Asia-Pacific. This is demonstrated in both official development assistance (ODA) and security operations.
- The monetary value and global span of Japan’s ODA has decreased in the last decade. Nonetheless, the depth of Japan’s ODA programs and the impact that they have in Asia has significantly increased. This is demonstrated by the successful graduation of Singapore and Thailand from grant recipient to grant donor in the 1990s and Japan’s diversification of type of assistance to the region.
- In the midst of increased Chinese naval presence in the Sea of Japan, the East China Sea, and South China Sea, as well as China’s increasingly assertive military posture, Japan has adopted a “hub-and-spoke” foreign policy model with the U.S. – Japan Alliance as the cornerstone. Japan

has reaffirmed its security partnerships with Australia, the Philippines, and India and contributed to their defense needs.

- The latest National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), the most fundamental Japanese defense policy document, marks a significant shift in security policy. NDPG 2010 replaces the “Basic Defense Force Concept” with a “Dynamic Defense Force.” Rather than divide the nation’s defense into separate roles of “deterrence in peacetime” and “response to emergencies” Japan seeks to operate actively in between extremes of peace and military contingency in order to be better prepared at any given moment.
- Japan is involved in simultaneous peacekeeping operations (PKO) in Haiti, South Sudan, and the Golan Heights. While the missions contribute to global peace and stability they also act as “confidence building measures” for allies and security partners. Moreover, Japan’s contribution to international peacekeeping is carving a role for Japan’s SDF that is normalized and constant.
- In 2011, the Government of Japan revised the *Three Principles on Arms Exports*. The revisions enable Japan to jointly develop military equipment and to export defense-related equipment to support peace-building or humanitarian objectives. The revisions demonstrate Japan’s initiative to expand its role in antiterrorism, antipiracy, peace-building, and peacekeeping operations.
- During the Tokyo International Conference on African Development IV (TICAD IV), Japan pledged 4 billion USD over five years, beginning in 2008, for Africa’s development. Japan’s assistance to Africa is based on the principles of development that is African in ownership, inclusive, and based on cooperation among all development actors.
- Japan is a world leader in environmental initiatives and has developed the highest efficiency coal-burning thermal power plants and photovoltaic cells for solar power panels. Notably, the country has also set some of the highest standards for reducing green house gas emissions.<sup>1</sup>

## Recommendations

In light of these findings, the Project 2049 Institute recommends the following basic principles for Japan’s continued and future global engagement:

- Continued focus on Asian development and regional integration. Singapore graduated from the Japan International Cooperation Agency’s (JICA) development program and is currently a partner in implementing joint development programs. Thailand, likewise, graduated from recipient to donor in 1993. Japan is well-positioned to contribute to similar development success stories in Vietnam and Burma (Myanmar). With its emphasis on normative values, Tokyo’s development assistance model can serve as a unique capacity and institution building framework for other developing countries in the region.
- Despite cuts in grant-based ODA, Japan should maintain loan-based aid for hard infrastructure projects such as bridges and roads, all the while emphasizing technical training and soft infrastructure.
- Japan is well-positioned to fill gaps in international diplomacy with developing green technology, disaster management relief, and energy cooperation (including in the Arctic).

Japan's leadership in these sectors has the potential to better its relations with South Korea, which faces similar natural resource deficiencies and susceptibilities to natural disasters.

- Japan's international contributions and peace building efforts require a new vision. The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity in the mid-2000s was the latest example of a foreign policy vision. While short-lived, it was an attempt at garnering domestic and international attention to Japan's global contributions and foreign policy goals.
- The U.S. – Japan Alliance, while a cornerstone of both nations' Pacific security policies, has room to expand beyond the scope of security. The Alliance is in danger of becoming one reserved for politicians. The United States and Japan should continue on the momentum of *Operation Tomodachi* and create public diplomacy efforts such as increasing student and scholar exchanges between Japan and the United States.
- Japan has much to offer in terms of soft power (human resources, technology, and culture). As a non-religious and non-Western nation without an Islamic or Jewish population, Japan can play an important diplomatic role in Iran, Pakistan, Burma, and in the Philippines.
- Japanese leaders both central and provincial can do more to engage their constituents. This includes more transparency in government engagement and public diplomacy efforts with an aim at improving political efficacy and securing support for foreign policy goals and initiatives. Japan must be perceived by the Japanese themselves and by other Asians as being embedded in Asia and not detached from Asia.
- Leaders should continue discussions on the challenges of increased international cooperation (legal/Constitutional, capacity, PKO Act) at senior political levels and commence discussions on potential for operations of peacekeeping forces (PKF). The government should initiate dialogue and research on ways to expand peacekeeping, humanitarian, and disaster relief operations under a national mandate in addition to the current United Nations directive.

## Ongoing Challenges to Japan's Global Engagement

Despite respectable international contributions over the years, continued global engagement is confronted with new and existing challenges.

- 1) **Article 9** in the Constitution prohibits an act of war and renounces the use of force to settle international disputes. The Constitution permits armed forces known as the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), but it constricts the parameters of Japan's national defense and security and limits the types of security engagements that Japan can participate in.
- 2) **The historical memory of World War II** and public perceptions of the Japanese military restrict Japan's potential global role and encourage an inward-looking Japan.
- 3) **Psychological pressure to look inward** took hold following the triple disaster that took place on 3-11 with some in Japan content with middle power status and a sole focus on domestic issues.
- 4) At the outset of the **March 2011** earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent nuclear melt-down, the nation's future energy mix remains unknown. Moreover the decommissioning of the **resource-**

**deprived nation's** nuclear power plants requires new energy imports, placing a burden on the nation's economy.

- 5) **Strong institutional gridlock** brings forth challenges for collaboration with international partners, who experience difficulties in making personal connections with political leaders.
- 6) The **budget deficit** is placing new pressures on Japan's economy and restricting the role it can play in development assistance and international contributions.
- 7) The combined challenges of an **aging population, a high yen, and high operational costs** for domestic firms, bring about an economic burden and occupy much of the political agenda.

## Introduction

The current discourse on Japan questions Tokyo's ability and willingness to become a major player on the international stage. The words "revival," "indecision," "challenges," and "crisis" mark up the pages of news articles and scholarly works on Japan. While Japan is scaling back some of its international commitments (i.e. ODA), this hardly means that Japan is not internationally engaged. In fact, Japan remains engaged and is engaging the international community on a number of key issues and with new partners on deeper levels. On an international scale, Japan is engaged in its first ever simultaneous active peacekeeping operations (PKO) in Haiti and South Sudan. On a regional level, Japan is enhancing its security partnerships with Australia and India and embarking on new cooperative partnerships with Thailand, the Philippines, and Singapore. Despite a history of cautious detachment from international security concerns, Japan is pursuing a proactive foreign policy that responds to its neighbors' calls for greater regional engagement. Japan's leadership is increasingly of the view that international security concerns are closely linked to its national interests. To continue to enjoy peace and prosperity at home, Japan is assuming a regional and international leadership role.

## Evolution of Japan's Foreign Policy and Practice

### Gulf War (1990 -1991): Lessons Learned

The Gulf War (1990-1991) marks a break in how Japan traditionally viewed its role in the international community after World War II. Following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations authorized the use of military force. Tokyo was careful to abide by Article 9 in the Constitution and offered financial support to the coalition forces (ultimately valued at \$13 billion USD<sup>2</sup>), but refused to put "boots on the ground."<sup>3</sup> Most nations expected Japan to contribute to the military action, especially in light of Japan's commitment to an UN-centered foreign policy,<sup>4</sup> its security alliance with the United States, and its own energy security interests in the region. In spite of its large financial contributions, Japan emerged from the Gulf War with a tarnished international reputation—a loss of face that Japan felt when it was omitted from Kuwait's official expression of gratitude. The war marked a failure in Japan's "checkbook diplomacy" and reaffirmed the point that in military conflict the soldier gets more respect than the banker.<sup>5</sup>

The Gulf War catalyzed a shift in how Japanese leaders view their role in the global arena and how Japan wants to be perceived internationally. Indeed, the Gulf War was a turning point in Japanese thinking on international security contributions. Shortly after the war's end, Japan enacted the PKO Law (1992), which enabled Japan to send SDF on (periphery-level, non-engagement) peacekeeping missions. An accelerated trend towards greater global engagement continued after the tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

*"It is about time that Japan should quit paying to see the game and get down to the baseball diamond."*

--Richard Armitage  
Former Deputy Secretary of State

*Source: Japan Focus*<sup>6</sup>

Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi intended to stretch the limits of Article 9. Under Koizumi's leadership, the Japanese government enacted the Anti-Terrorism Special Law (2001) and Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq (2003). The Anti-Terrorism Law enabled Japan to dispatch tankers to the Indian Ocean to support U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan. Over an eight year period the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) supplied over half a million kiloliters of oil to warships from 12 countries—the equivalent of half of all fuel needs of the allied forces in Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup> Japan also contributed to reconstruction activities in Iraq (notably without a UN mandate) by dispatching 600 SDF to participate in humanitarian projects alongside Dutch, British, and Australian troops. The post-9/11 context demonstrated the synergy between international security and Japan's national interests. During this period, Japan engaged in some of its most substantial international contributions to date.

The counter-terrorism efforts during the early part of the 2000s were made possible largely through the personal leadership of Prime Minister Koizumi and the daring and new, but temporary laws with set expirations. Efforts to expand international contributions were arranged within the legal framework at the time. The government did not attempt to create new lasting public or foreign policies until 2006 with The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity (AFP). The AFP represents a concerted effort to build off of the post-9/11 activities and institutionalize Japan's international engagements—the next stage of Japan's global engagement.

## **The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity**

The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity (November 30, 2006) was an attempt by then Foreign Minister Taro Aso to create a new framework for Japan's foreign policy. The policy addressed the lack of a cohesive framework and vision for Japan's international engagements. It called for a values oriented diplomacy, support for nascent post-Soviet economies, and placed an emphasis on democracy, freedom, human rights, rule of law, and market economy.

The AFP was both ambitious and politically controversial at home. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) criticized the plan as a right-wing foreign policy that sought to alienate China in exchange for warmer relations with the United States. While the plan was both acclaimed and denounced, one could argue that it simply put a name to a blueprint of international assistance and diplomatic engagement that Japan had participated in since the Gulf War. Designating a title to a diplomatic strategy gives it value



while making it identifiable and memorable. Moreover it offers the government and public (both international and domestic) an understanding of a nation's overall foreign policy plan.

Due to controversy over the AFP's intentions, the AFP waned and when Yasuo Fukuda became prime minister the following year, in 2007, he replaced the strategy with the East Asian Community policy, which was ostensibly more amicable towards China. Aso's vision had become so politically tainted in the public's perception that when Aso himself became prime minister in 2008, he could not revive the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity vision. The AFP had stirred the water in Japan. It was too aggressive and too assertive.

During DPJ governance, the AFP statutes laid untouched until the fall of 2010, when a Chinese trawler collided with Japanese Coast Guard patrol boats near the disputed Senkaku – Diaoyu Tai Islands which led to the subsequent cooling of Japan – China relations. Since then, however, Japan has revitalized the U.S. – Japan Alliance and its bilateral relations with India and Australia—actions that notably fall in line with principles laid out in the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity. Furthermore, some remnants of the AFP have carried over into Japan's most recent diplomatic efforts including the latest *Diplomatic Bluebook* (2011) and *National Defense Program Guidelines* (NDPG 2010).

The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity began in Northern Europe and traversed the Baltic States, Central and South Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent, then crossed Southeast Asia finally to reach Northeast Asia. The Arc was envisioned as a region of stability and prosperity where fundamental freedoms, human rights, and the values of a market economy were upheld.

Image Source: MOFA

## What Comes After the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity?

The *Diplomatic Bluebook* is an annual publication on Japan's foreign policy and activities produced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latest edition (2011) has an element of sober realism but also quiet optimism. The report candidly admits that Japan's international status and influence have declined due to drop in rank from the number two to the number three global economy, general apathy to international affairs, and a "sluggish economy." However, the report does not dwell in self-pity. It calls on Japan to set clear goals, stand at the forefront of international society, conduct an active diplomacy, and pursue its own national interests.<sup>8</sup> According to the report, to develop a proactive diplomacy Japan should deepen the U.S. – Japan Alliance and Japan's regional networks, advance economic diplomacy, and continue addressing global issues.

While the Diplomatic Blue Book calls for a proactive diplomacy, the 2010 *National Defense Program Guidelines* includes a Ministry of Defense perspective on what proactive diplomacy looks like. It should be mentioned here that the discussion of the NDPG 2010 as a stage in Japan's foreign policy development does not signify a remilitarization of Japan's foreign policy. Instead, this study seeks to demonstrate a bipartisan, whole-of-government approach to Japan's global engagement. Japan's security partnerships and contributions to international peacekeeping operations fall under the security umbrella and are best described in the NDPG. Furthermore, unlike the *Bluebook*, which is a document published annually, the NDPG is only published when changes are needed to Japan's overall security strategy. The latest NDPG therefore marks a significant stage in Japan's overall foreign policy.<sup>9</sup>

The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) is the most "fundamental document in Japanese defense policy." It analyzes the country's basic security situation and defines the roles and basic composition of the SDF.<sup>10</sup> The latest NDPG argues that the SDF must maintain three postures at all times: readiness, joint operations, and international peace cooperation activities.<sup>11</sup> In practice this translates to a defense strategy centered on the U.S. – Japan Alliance (with provisions for closer networks with Australia, India, and South Korea) and operational capabilities ("dynamic deterrence"). While the document stops short of calling for offensive operations, it is a clear departure from prior NDPG documents which based security policy on the "Basic Defense Force Concept" (BDFC).<sup>12</sup>

In addition to strategy there is a clear departure in the diction used from previous NDPG. Proactive language such as dynamic deterrence (as opposed to basic defense) and peace-building (as opposed to peacekeeping) have replaced previously passive language. The enhanced diction is powerful in the Japanese context. It stretches the boundaries of Japan's global role as defined in Article 9 of the Constitution and signifies Japan's intent to play a more active role in the international arena.<sup>13</sup>

## From Policy to Practice

In line with the evolving diction in Japan's defense guidelines, policies are also witnessing significant changes. In December 2011, the Government of Japan revised its *Three Principles on Arms Exports* policy that had precluded Japan from participating in joint arms development and had limited arms exports.<sup>14</sup> The new revisions enable Japan to jointly develop and produce military equipment and export defense-related equipment to support peace-building and humanitarian objectives. Already, Britain and Japan have agreed to jointly develop defense weapons. This arrangement is unprecedented and the first outside of the U.S.-Japan security alliance.<sup>15</sup>

An additional legal change that increases Japan's ability to contribute to security challenges is the government's recent naming of islands in Japanese territorial waters.<sup>16</sup> In May 2011 the government named ten islands in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ). In March 2012 Tokyo followed this effort by naming thirty-nine additional islands (including the Senkakus) that border the four main islands of Japan. The islands are claimed by Japan, China, and Taiwan.<sup>17</sup>

Lastly, legal discussions on SDF weapons use standards during peacekeeping operations are taking place.<sup>18</sup> Under the current International Peace Cooperation Law, the use of weapons during PKO is limited to self-defense. The Noda Administration is deliberating potentially allowing the use of weapons for the protection of civilians working for international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and for defense of camps jointly shared with other countries.

The new legal revisions and discussions demonstrate Japan's willingness to expand its global role in antiterrorism, antipiracy, peace-building, peacekeeping operations, and joint military equipment development projects. The security environment in Asia is undergoing significant transformations including: China's assertive military posture, North Korea's leadership transition, and the U.S.'s foreign policy focus on the Asia-Pacific. A proactive and authoritative Japan is indispensable to the region's peace and stability. To match changes in its immediate environment, Japan is recalibrating cooperative partnerships with entities that share common interests and values—a shift that resonates former Foreign Minister Aso's (Arc of Freedom and Prosperity) value-oriented diplomacy.

## Mapping Japan's International Engagements

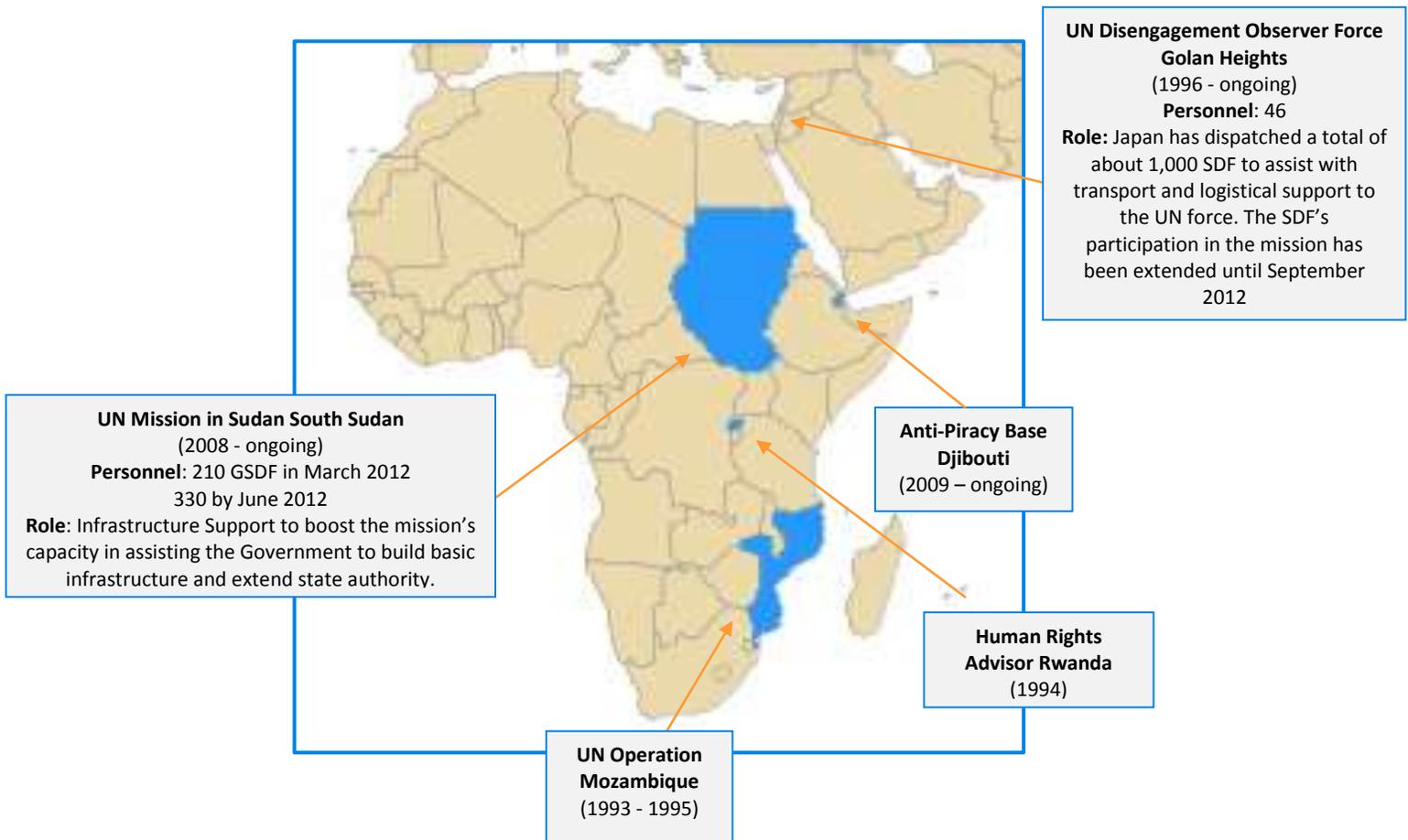
### Peacebuilding and International Security

The year 2012 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan's participation in UN PKO. In October 2010, the Government of Japan (GOJ) established a multi-ministerial senior level study group to evaluate Japan's role in UN PKOs. The group's findings were published in an official report—the first of its kind to set a specific agenda on more substantive contributions to international peace and prosperity. The report outwardly acknowledges global issues such as fragile states as national security concerns. The authors write:

“Japan must take the initiative in actively addressing global issues and regarding them as its own problems...Rather than being content with its current status, the country should consider expanding its cooperation while achieving a balance between specific peacekeeping needs and its own capacity.”<sup>19</sup>

The GoJ is devising new creative ways to ensure that the SDF is prepared and operationally ready for any military contingency—whether during peacetime or war. The SDF's international engagement is on the rise with joint operations, PKOs, and anti-piracy operations. Under the blanket of “self-defense” and “international stability” Japan is preparing its military forces for operations beyond basic deterrence and enhancing its expertise in counterterrorism, nuclear nonproliferation, humanitarian support, disaster relief, and human security. “It is now becoming normal for military forces to be used at all times and on a constant basis for humanitarian aid, disaster relief, peacekeeping operation and the suppression of piracy.”<sup>20</sup> In short, Japan is in the process of and will continue to adopt a more proactive stance on global security within the confines and gray areas permitted by its Constitution.

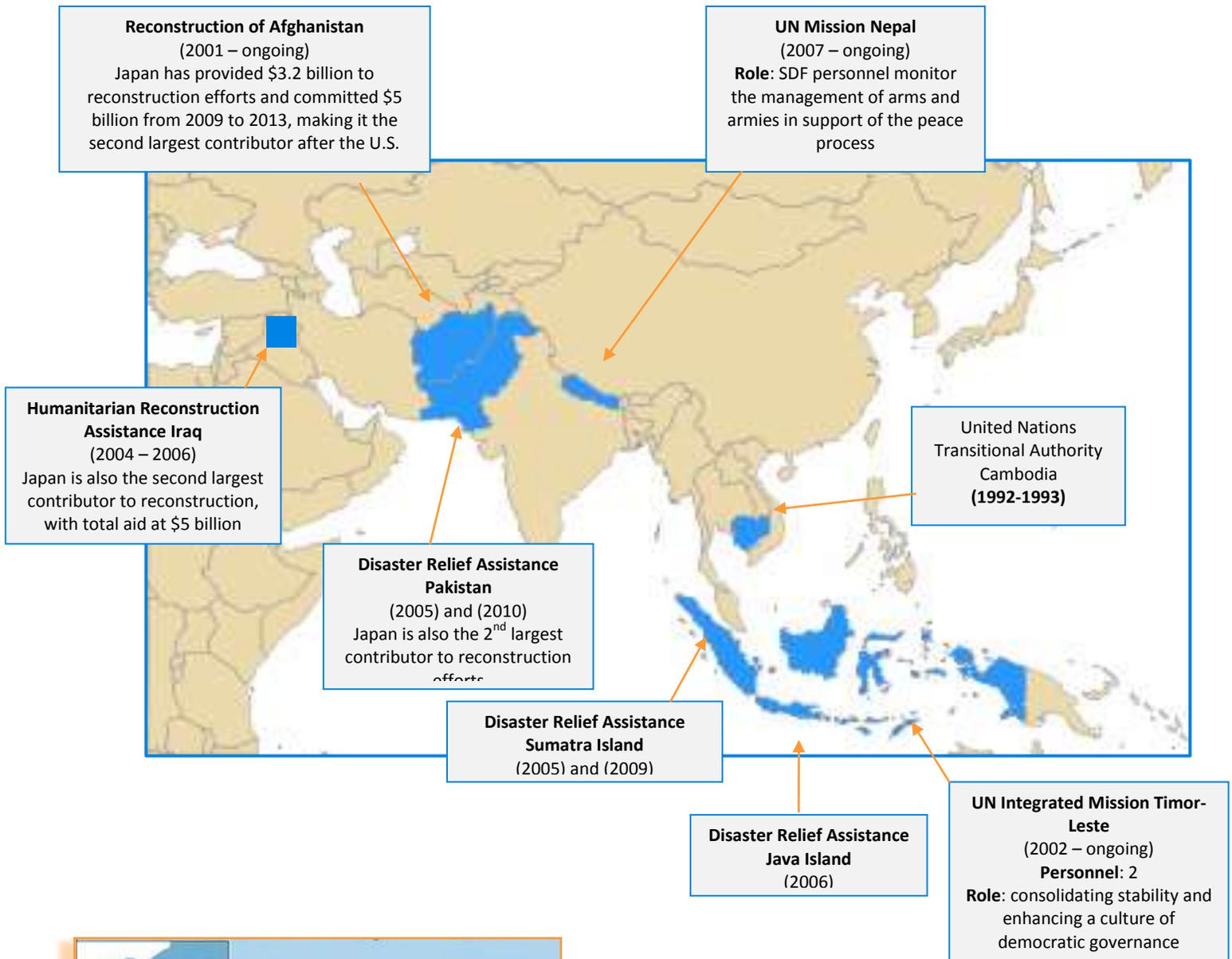
*Japan's PKOs and Humanitarian Assistance*



**PKOs: Significance beyond Peacekeeping**

*Managing Partnerships*

The SDF has been engaged in disaster relief efforts in Haiti since the 2010-7.0-magnitude earthquake. Haiti is 8,000 miles from Japan and at the outset, a relatively low priority for Japan's immediate national security concerns. Japan's efforts in Haiti, however, serve an additional purpose besides reconstruction and stabilization. According to a Ministry of Defense official, Japan's presence in Haiti can also be seen as U.S. – Japan "alliance management." Japan's active engagement within 700 miles of the United States' shores demonstrates that Japan values the Alliance and supports its security ally and partner. Similar "alliance management" arguments can be made for MSDF refueling missions in Afghanistan and SDF in Iraq.<sup>21</sup>



**UN Stabilization Mission Haiti**  
(2010 – ongoing)  
**Personnel:** 350  
**Role:** SDF participate in post-disaster reconstruction and assist in containing and treating infectious diseases. This mission has been extended until January 2013.

### *Developing Capabilities and Soft-Balancing*

Stationing SDF in distant, combat-prone regions is difficult for the GOJ to accomplish. As a result of the hazardous PKO in Rwanda and the 2002 PKO mission in East Timor, in which Ground SDFs were caught in a burst of violence,<sup>22</sup> the Japanese public lambasted the government over the potential loss of innocent lives and questioned the need for involvement in violence-prone areas. According to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, it is easiest to send SDF on missions that are in Asia or as part of a global initiative such as anti-piracy.

South Sudan stands as a unique case for Japan's engagement. The world's youngest nation is undoubtedly in a precarious situation. Moreover the nation is land-locked and geographically distant from Japan. Yet, Tokyo seeks a presence in South Sudan because it broadens Japan's scope of peacekeeping activities.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, peace building operations in South Sudan are also an attempt for it to regain influence in Africa. Through continued engagements, Japan seeks to remind Africa—a continent that seems dominated by Chinese influence—of Tokyo's commitments to Africa's peaceful development and security. In turn, Japan hopes that the nations of Africa will remember Japan's role in South Sudan when Security Council Reform discussions begin in 2016.

### *Developing Partnerships and Contributing to Maritime Security: Djibouti Anti-Piracy Mission*

Since March 2008, Japan's SDF forces have been stationed in the Horn of Africa on an anti-piracy mission. Japan has very clear national and international interests in these missions: 90 percent of exports depend on the crucial sea lanes in the Gulf of Aden and 10 percent of traffic in the region originates from Japan.<sup>24</sup> To protect its assets and contribute to an international cause, Japan constructed a facility at Djibouti, where approximately 180 Maritime SDF are actively stationed.<sup>25</sup> The \$40 million facility demonstrates Japan's commitment to combating piracy in the region. Similar to the PKO in South Sudan, it also seeks to win broad support for Japan's bid among Africa's 53 nations to become a permanent member on the UN Security Council.<sup>26</sup>

The mission at Djibouti is Japan's first foreign facility since World War II, and with its benign purposes, it has sparked little controversy among Japan's pacifist public. The base demonstrates Japan's intention to increase MSDF's peaceful presence overseas and gain valuable experience working with security partners and allies. Recent reports show that the anti-piracy missions have improved India-Japan security ties. The two nations now share escort schedules of naval vessels deployed in the Gulf of Aden and coordinate their anti-piracy efforts.<sup>27</sup>

### *Impacting Public Perceptions of SDF*

In part due to the humanitarian aspects of PKOs and in part to the SDF's heroic performance in Tohoku during the triple disaster, Japanese perceptions of SDF are at an all-time high. Increased engagement in violence-prone and distant areas such as South Sudan and Haiti seems more politically acceptable. In the government's *Opinion Survey* on Japan's diplomacy conducted in 1994, 58.9 percent of all respondents believed that "Japan should participate more actively" in UN PKO, whereas in 2010 the percentage increased by nearly 30 percent to 85.2 percent.<sup>28</sup>

In January 2012 the Cabinet Office surveyed 3,000 people to learn about public perceptions of SDFs and defense-related issues relative to earlier survey years. The findings in this survey indicate an increased interest in security-related issues and increased support for the SDF.

#### Impressions toward the SDF

	January 2009	January 2012
Have a positive impression	80.9%	91.7%
Have a negative impression	14.1%	5.3%

#### Defense Capabilities of the SDF

	January 2009	January 2012
Should be increased	14.1%	24.8%
Current strength is sufficient	65.1%	60.0%
Should be decreased	10.7%	6.2%

#### Point(s) of Interest Concerning the Peace and Safety of Japan (Multiple answers allowed, top 4 items)

	January 2009	January 2012
Situation in Korean peninsula	56.8%	64.9%
Modernization and/or maritime activities of Chinese military forces	30.4%	46.0%
Relations between U.S. and China	30.9%	45.5%
Activities of international terrorist organizations	43.7%	30.3%

Source: Cabinet Office, Japan, March 2012<sup>29</sup>

Taking into consideration the findings of the high-level inter-ministerial study group on Japan's cooperation in UN PKO, the increasingly favorable public perceptions of the SDF and the changing security environment, prospects for future SDF engagements are promising. According to the GOJ study on PKO missions, it is likely that future engagements will entail:

- 1) Coordination between ODA and diplomatic activities;
- 2) Civilian – military cooperation, i.e. NGOs working side-by-side with SDF and deployment of civilian personnel such as police officers;
- 3) Greater UN PKO presence in areas of maritime cooperation;
- 4) Further public relations efforts to promote understanding among the Japanese public for Japan's participation in UN peacekeeping and other operations

In sum, although Japan retains the Article 9 clause, it has worked within the limits and gray areas of its Constitution to actively prepare itself for military contingency, disaster response, and potential future conflict. Japan's engagement in peacekeeping operations remains a vital component of the nations' international contributions. It provides Japan's SDF with firsthand experience in disaster response, dealing with hostages and violence-prone surroundings, and experience working in severe weather conditions. Secondly, PKO remains a tangible and laudable international contribution. Lastly, they

provide Japan the opportunity to work with counterparts to achieve shared goals on multi-national missions as well as build the capacity of Japan's troops and personnel.<sup>30</sup> Perceptions of the SDF are changing and the SDF are viewed as a viable instrument of Japan's foreign policy.

### Japan "Re-Entering Asia"<sup>31</sup>

While PKOs make a vital international contribution, Japan's more recent engagements focus on Japan's immediate neighborhood. In the Asia-Pacific, Japan is reasserting itself and playing a large role in maintaining regional peace and security.

*Japan's renewed diplomatic outreach in Asia is not all about China. It's clearly about Japan, and Japan's need for a proactive agenda of strategic engagement in the region.*

Japan's foreign and defense policy as defined in the NDPG emphasizes partnerships with nations in the region that share common values and stem from the U.S.–Japan Alliance. In this sense, Japan's foreign policy has adopted a "hub-and-spoke" model with the U.S.–Japan Alliance as the cornerstone upon which mutually reinforces partnerships with Australia, India, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines as well as other partners. The following case studies represent the most recent developments in Japan's regional engagements that reflect the "hub-and-spoke" foreign policy with the U.S.–Japan Alliance at the center.

#### *Japan-India*

A case in point for the "hub-and-spoke" framework is Tokyo's renewed and deeper engagement with New Delhi on a host of issues ranging from defense to economic and energy cooperation. In recent years high-level meetings between India and Japan have been more frequent. Provisions are in place for annual top leadership dialogues and consultations.

What began as a relationship based on common values has progressed to one based on common interests and goals. The number two and number three economies in Asia seek to maintain a peaceful and lawful maritime environment, to ensure unhindered sea-based trade, and promote overall economic and security wellbeing. These mutually-shared goals are manifested through recent developments in bilateral naval engagements and efforts towards naval interoperability. For instance, *Japan Times* dubs the Japan-India relationship as the fastest growing bilateral relationship in Asia today.<sup>32</sup>

Peacekeeping operation trainings and exchanges are another area of cooperation between the security partners. The purpose of these new engagements is multi-fold: to foster maritime security, combat piracy, maintain the security of sea lanes of communication, and facilitate unhindered trade. Japan is

also providing soft diplomacy in a hard power framework by training 4,000 Indian and East Asian nationals at the Japanese Coast Guard Academy in Hiroshima in military preparedness and intelligence.<sup>33</sup>

From an economic perspective, Japan and India relations also face an optimistic future. The number two and number three economies in Asia formerly entered a free-trade agreement known as the comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) in 2011. Trade is expected to double to \$25 billion by 2015 (from \$10.3 billion in 2009-10) as 94 percent of tariffs are eliminated within a ten year period.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Japan is investing massive funds into Indian infrastructure such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor project.

### *Japan-Australia*

The security partnership between Japan and Australia is second only to Japan's security alliance with the United States. Japan and Australia signed their first treaty-level defense agreement, the Acquisitions and Cross-Servicing Agreement, in May 2010.

The Australian Defense Forces (ADF) and SDF have jointly operated since UN Cambodia PKO in the 1990s and again in East Timor. Moreover, a driving factor for SDF participation in Iraq in 2003 was partnership management and cooperation with Australia. Tokyo had learned from its mistakes during the Gulf War. It would not take the passenger seat as partners fought for global security. The ADF and SDF worked side-by-side on humanitarian reconstruction efforts in Iraq and helped launch the Australia-Japan bilateral partnership onto a new level.<sup>35</sup> Today, Japan and Australia participate in multilateral military exercises such as KAKADU (2008), annual RIMPIC, and Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) as well as anti-piracy operations.<sup>36</sup> Most recently bilateral intelligence cooperation is also a growing area of cooperation.<sup>37</sup>

### *Japan-Philippines*

Partnership strengthening mechanisms are also taking place between Japan and the Philippines. During Philippine President Benigno Aquinos III's visit to Japan from September 25-27, 2011, the Philippines and Japan signed a military cooperation agreement to expand joint naval exercises and initiate regular talks between maritime defense officials. President Aquino proclaimed the U.S. and Japan as his country's greatest friends.<sup>38</sup>

Japan has been supportive of the Philippines through generous development assistance and regional contributions to maritime security. Most recent assistance to Philippines is security-based in nature. Japan is mulling contributing patrol vessels and a sea-ground communications system as part of its ODA to the Philippines.<sup>39</sup> Noteworthy to mention is Japan's support of the Philippines in recent South China Sea spats. While Japan is not a claimant in the disputed maritime zone, Japan does seek an active role in Southeast Asia.

### Japan's Interests in the South China Sea

The South China Sea holds vital trade routes for Japan. Approximately 88 percent of Japan's supplies pass through the contentious area and the sea routes are also crucial shipment points for Japan's outgoing goods.

A hegemonic China could threaten the critical sea lanes. China's dominance in the South China Sea could translate to greater assertiveness over the Senakaku (Diaoyu) Islands, which Japan, China, and Taiwan all lay claim to. Moreover, China's territorial and resource claims in the South China Sea challenge Tokyo's historically strong position in Southeast Asia.

Tokyo can take advantage of the maritime disputes to reposition itself in Southeast Asia. From 1977 to 1992 Japan's development assistance to Southeast Asia skyrocketed from \$1.42 billion to \$50 billion. However, since the 1990s Japan's influence in the region has waned due to a faltering economy, domestic political constraints, and the economic rise of China.

Japan has an important role to play in the South China Sea. Tokyo has voiced concern over Chinese assertiveness in the waters through multilateral fora such as ASEAN meetings. In early 2011 Japan deployed MSDF to the South China Sea for joint military exercises with the U.S. and Australia off the coast of Brunei.

Lastly, with the newly relaxed arms export ban, Japan can provide friendly countries with enhanced capabilities to maintain good order at sea. Japan is also looking for new ways to contribute to capacity building of ASEAN maritime forces.

Source: Stratfor<sup>40</sup>

In policy and now in practice Japan has effectively adopted the hub-and-spoke model. In an age of austerity, the U.S. and Japan need partners that share common values to ensure continued regional freedom and prosperity. By basing its networks on the U.S.-Japan alliance, Japan has effectively enhanced its security, economic, and diplomatic ties with neighbors. In addition to closer regional ties, Japan has actively contributed to a variety of global efforts, based on the understanding that ensuring peace and prosperity of the international community upholds the peace and prosperity of Japan. Japan's ODA among other forms of international cooperation is an important means to that end.<sup>41</sup>

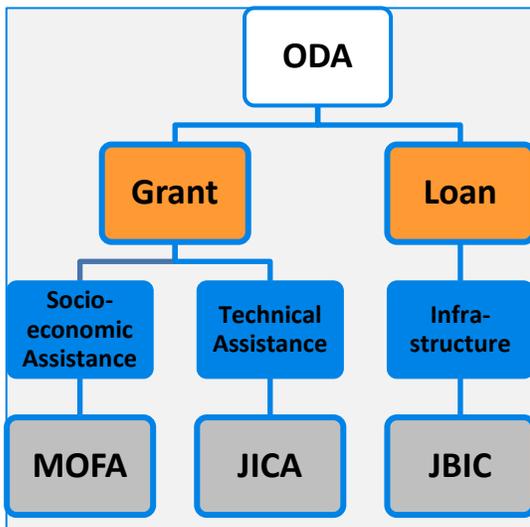
### Official Development Assistance

Japan's most visible and significant global contribution over the last two decades has been its ODA. From 1993 to 2000 Japan was the world's top contributor of ODA to developing countries. In the last decade, a growing budget deficit and decreasing tax revenue have limited Japan's ODA contributions. Currently, Japan ranks fifth among the member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for development assistance.<sup>42</sup>

Japan has utilized ODA as a tool for diplomacy in the absence of other means. Some scholars worry that a reduction in ODA may weaken the nation's diplomatic power.<sup>43</sup> Yet, Japan's growing emphasis on

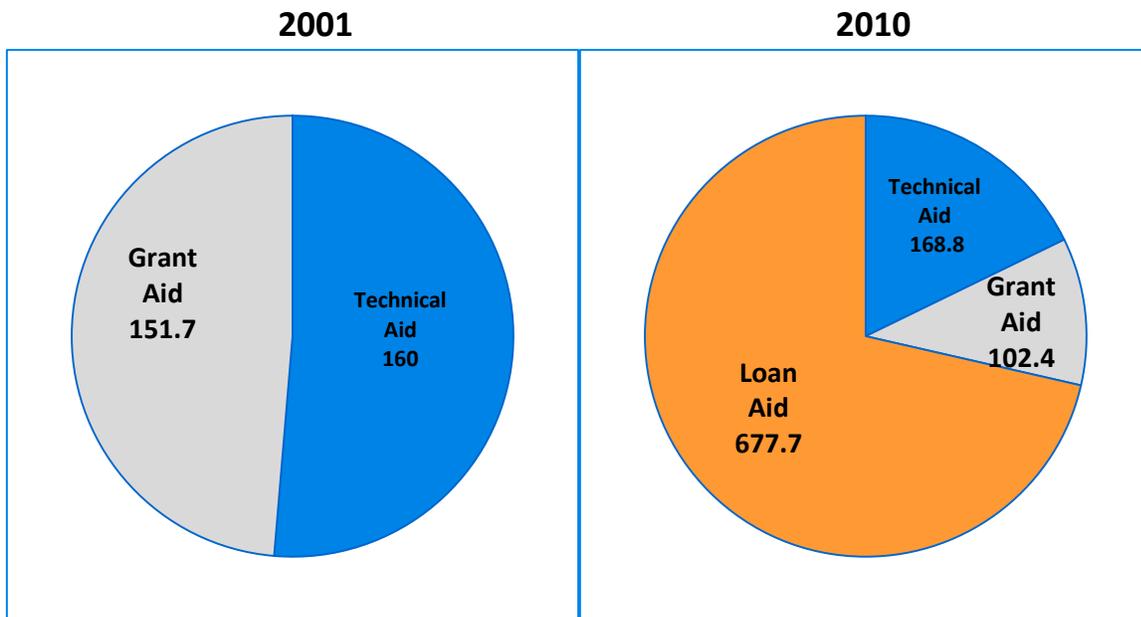
peacekeeping, anti-piracy, and maintaining the freedom of the seas, in conjunction with ODA provides Japan with a more visible and coherent international presence.

Japan has three types of ODA – technical, grant, and loan aid. Technical refers to joint collaboration with partner countries on developing and improving technologies, setting up institutional frameworks, training participants, and dispatch of experts. Grant aid promotes socioeconomic development, and consists of both soft and hard infrastructure. It ranges from promoting education to building bridges. Loan aid provides developing nations with capital necessary for development under long-term, low-interest rates. Unlike technical assistance or grant aid, loan aid requires full repayment.



In 2010 Japan's unveiled its newest development initiative, the "New Growth Strategy." The plan aims to foster dynamic and sustainable development in Asia that embodies the principle of mutual prosperity. This New Growth Strategy is also in line with Japan's budget shifts. With ODA contributions decreasing annually, Tokyo has shifted the types of loans available away from grant aid towards loan aid, which were made possible through public-private partnerships (PPP) and the high value of the yen. Grant aid is still an important component of Japan's ODA and is presented primarily to Africa for the achievement of health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

**ODA through the Japan Agency for International Cooperation (in billions of yen)**



The emphasis on Asia in Japan's ODA is clear: Asia accounts for 34.1 percent of technical assistance, 75.8 percent of loans, and 39.9 percent of grant aid.<sup>44</sup> The large ODA disbursements to Asia further attest to Japan's intention to play a greater role in this part of the world.

The emphasis on Asia in official in ODA is a pragmatic strategy for six main reasons. First, most Asian nations possess the necessary financial infrastructure and capacities to repay loans, enabling the vast majority of Japan's loan aid to go to Asia. Second, Japan seeks to alleviate the economic disparities between Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) developed and emerging economies, to promote regional integration. Third, the resource-poor nation is interested in potential opportunities to develop energy and resources. Fourth, development assistance in Southeast Asia is mutually beneficial. As household incomes in Southeast Asia increase, new markets for high-tech Japanese goods will emerge. Fifth, as a foreign policy mechanism that is sustained through tax dollars, ODA needs to consider public perceptions. Aid to Asia is the easiest sell because of the region's cultural similarities, shorter geographic distances, and more practical mutual benefits.

Lastly, ODA in Southeast Asia has a proven record of being effective. Aid to Singapore and Thailand<sup>45</sup> facilitated their shift from aid recipients to aid donors and partners. Singapore graduated from JICA's ODA assistance program in 1998; since then it has cooperated with JICA on joint training courses for ASEAN nations and implementing joint development programs.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, Japan and Thailand have worked out partnerships between their respective aid agencies, JICA and Neighboring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA), for joint regional assistance, economic cooperation, environmental concerns, and alleviating climate change. Japan is using a similar model of development in Vietnam, where it is indirectly strengthening governance and promoting the rule of law. A similar approach to assistance is likely in Burma (Myanmar).

#### *Japan's ODA in Africa – TICAD*

Japan has attempted to replicate the Asian experience in sub-Saharan Africa. Admittedly, this has proven difficult due to weaker institutions and relatively less complementary trade integration. Nonetheless, Japan has been engaged in Africa since the end of the Cold War, when most of the international community suffered from "aid fatigue." Today, Africa remains the largest recipient of its grant aid.

Africa remains a top priority for Japan's ODA and foreign policy goals. First, Japan is committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the MDG deadline fast-approaching in 2015, Japan is focusing its efforts on areas where the least progress has been made—health and education. Japan has revamped its commitments to the MDGs by announcing an additional commitment of \$500 million for maternal and child healthcare at the G8 Muskoka Summit and pledged \$5.0 billion at the UN MDGs Summit primarily to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria and promote education.

Second, Japan's focus on human security elevates Africa as a top ODA priority. Japan's ODA reflects the shift in thinking that addressing individual needs also meets national and global agendas.<sup>47</sup> In short,

improving the individuals' access to health care and education will build the foundation for development to prevent the recurrence of conflict and achieve sustainable peace.

Third, it is no secret that the GOJ seeks to strengthen bilateral relations with African countries to win their support for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the upcoming 2016 Security Council Reform discussions.<sup>48</sup> The Japanese government learned a valuable lesson from the failure of its 2005 campaign for permanent membership at the Security Council—support from African countries, which account for one-fourth of U.N. membership, is indispensable if Japan is to succeed in its bid.

In addition to the MDGs, Japan has provided most of its support to African development through the institutionalized Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). Tokyo began TICAD in 1993 with the intention of promoting high-level policy dialogue between African leaders. TICAD works on the principle that development in Africa should be African in ownership and international in partnership.<sup>49</sup> The program has had success in empowering women, increasing the accessibility of public health, and improving farming techniques. More recently, however, these development initiatives have been overshadowed by China's overwhelming assistance. In 2000, China launched the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). In 2009 FOCAC took the limelight from TICAD by pledging an astounding \$10 billion low cost loan to Africa for clean energy technology, education opportunities, and public health cooperation.

Nonetheless, TICAD is still making strides at development in Africa. Since 1993 there have been four TICAD meetings. At TICAD IV, held in 2008, Japan sought to revive its presence in Africa by doubling its ODA pledge to \$4 billion worth in soft loans over five years to improve infrastructure and by doubling grant and technical aid from 700 million USD to 1.4 billion USD.<sup>50</sup>

#### Grant Aid Expenditure by Region

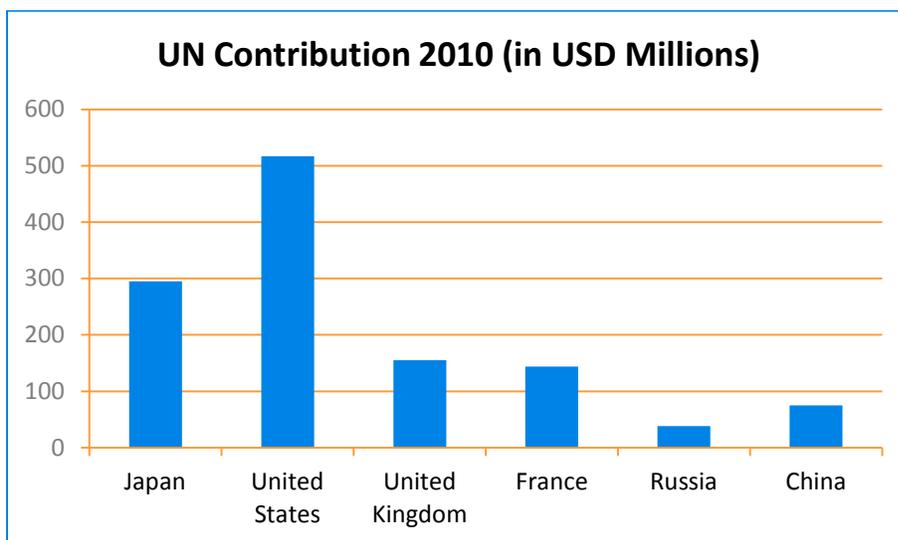
	JFY 2008	JFY 2009	JFY 2010
Asia	30.85%	24.8%	39.9%
Middle East	6.01%	8.6%	4.1%
Africa	46.82%	52%	42.8%
North and Latin America	11.07%	8%	6.6%
Pacific	5.25%	5.7%	4.7%
Europe	0.00%	.9%	1.9%

#### Loan Aid Expenditures by Region

	JFY 2008	JFY 2009	JFY 2010
Asia	75.59%	66.9%	75.8%
Middle East	12.71%	16%	0%
Africa	1.3%	4.8%	10.7%
North and Latin America	5.17%	3%	5.6%
Pacific	0%	0.9%	0%
Europe	5.17%	8.4%	7.8%

### *Japan's Contributions to Multilateral Institutions*

In addition to bilateral aid, Japan makes significant contributions in multilateral aid through international institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and regional banks. In 2010 Japan contributed 3.68 billion USD to multilateral institutions, its largest amount since 2006.<sup>51</sup> Relative to OECD countries (without counting disbursement to the European Development Fund (EDF) and European Union budgets) from 2005-2009, Japan made up the single largest share of DAC gross multilateral ODA disbursements, with 16 percent of OECD contributions.<sup>52</sup> Through its support of multilateral institutions and participation in international organizations Japan effectively contributes to global issues such as climate change, human trafficking, and nuclear non-proliferation.



(Source: UN, OECD/DAC)

## Conclusion

To accurately describe Japan's trajectory and global role we need more nuanced language. We cannot immediately subscribe to the mainstream wisdom that Japan is or is not in decline without first critically examining the scope and depth of the nation's global engagements. Japan's humanitarian contributions, peacekeeping operations, and security engagements point to a nation that is still – if not more – involved on the international stage. In other words, Japan is not destined for decline. Like many developed nations, there are always new challenges and constraints ahead. Especially in an age of budget austerity, there is a practical need for smarter use of resources. The phrase "smart power" has been gaining ground in the United States, and Japan serves as a good example of it being put to practice. Japan is using all the tools available to it and increasing the use of its soft power. While this report outlined Japan's global engagements, it is noteworthy to mention that much of Japan's international role and contributions will depend on how Japan responds to its domestic demographic, energy, and economic challenges. If Japan can address its these challenges in a timely matter, the research in this

report shows that Japan's will continue to play a larger and more comprehensive global role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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