

# **The Security Architecture in East Asia**

**—the Problems of Bilateral Security System and the Dilemma of the US-Japan  
Security Alliance—**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Militarized Asia

The regional security environment in Asia and East Asia in particular today is perceived to have undergone considerable deterioration. China's rise both in economic and in military realm, North Korean's nuclear development, and the maritime security issue have accelerated the uncertainty in the region. China's rise and growing assertiveness in the South China Sea in such as the South China Sea conflicts (Spratly Islands and Paracel Islands), and building of a Chinese naval base in the Indian Ocean have placed the maritime security issue at the top of the regional security concern.

This upward trend in military spending is a reflection of the international security environment in the region. Asia-Pacific is highly militarized region in the world today. Four of the top 15 military spenders in the world are found in the Asia-Pacific region: China (ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>), Japan (8<sup>th</sup>), South Korea (10<sup>th</sup>), and Australia (13<sup>th</sup>). Additionally, there are two major non-Asian military super powers, the U.S. (1<sup>st</sup>) and Russia (3<sup>rd</sup>), which have strong strategic commitments in the region. Noteworthy is the increasing military spending in the region. Military spending in the region has increased by 59% between 2008 and 2017. This overall increase is heavily driven by the increase of China, which accounted for 48% of the region's total arms spending in 2017 (SIPRI 2018:156).

Following the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the consequent end of the Cold War, the international relations of Asia nonetheless remains hostage to the legacy of the Cold War. The strained relations between China and Taiwan, and between North Korea and South Korea remain a threat to peace and stability. Besides, there is no overarching regional security institution in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of principles in their relations with one another, and they should be subject to certain limitations in exercising force against one another.

The present article explores the security order in Asia today through three perspectives. First, I briefly survey the security system in Asia today. I then elaborate why there is no meaningful multilateral security institution in Asia. Second, I explore how Japan-US alliance survived despite the change of the international security environment since the end of the Cold War, and I also discuss the emerging new hierarchical security systems in Asia. I then contend the reasons why the US and China are not active in building a regional security institution in the region. Finally, I discuss Japan's dilemma in pursuing Japan-US security alliance and the difficulty to shift its security policy to multilateralism.

## 2 The Security Structure of Asia

### 2.1 Hub and Spokes Alliance System

The US relations with Europe are organized around multilateral economic and security cooperation, whereas the US relations with East Asia are organized around bilateral ties and loose multilateral economic relations. The US extended nuclear deterrence as regional linkage are at the heart of this East Asian order, and Japan and South Korea are dependent on the US military protection and the US market.

The US has been the most critical factor in shaping the Asia-Pacific region's security order. In the decades after World War II, the US played a different hegemonic role in Asia than it did in Western Europe. The US policymakers saw in their Western European allies relatively equal members of a shared community, willing to create a range of multilateral institutions. In Asia, on the other hand, what the US created was a network of deep, asymmetric bilateral alliances, formed around a hub-and-spokes relationship with the US as a hub, and Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, and Australia as spokes in this set of relationships.

Why did the US prefer a hub-and-spokes relationship? The US faced a different array of states—less developed and few being democratic—while it pursued bilateral security pacts that provided more control. The US did not need to give up policy autonomy to secure its objectives in Asia because the US had much more unchallenged hegemonic power in Asia than in Western Europe. The US power in Asia being much greater than in Europe, it was not in the interest of the US to form multilateral security institutions in Asia that would constrain the power of the US to make independent decisions. Consequently it had fewer incentives to secure its dominant position within international institutions. Relying on bilateral relations in Asia, the US opposed an “Asian Helsinki” because of justifiable fears that the Soviet Union would try to manipulate a regional security institution because it was vulnerable to collective opposition from its alliance on specific issues.

### 2.2 Regime Security of Weak States

Unlike Europe, the Asia-Pacific region does not have a tradition of regional institutions to address security concerns. Apart from the US disinterest in the multilateralism in Asia, there is another reason on the part of Asian states stemming from the peculiar security concept inherent in ‘weak states’. Most states in the region have authoritarian governments, and these Asian states have been receptive to the patron-client partnership on their own part.

Major debates over the meaning of security revolve around two key questions: security against what, and whose security. The orthodox view of national security is state-centric external oriented. Implying protection of the core values of the state especially its political sovereignty and territorial integrity, security is defined as the physical protection of the state from external threats that are predominantly military in nature.

The security concept shared by most Asian states, on the other hand, tend to be concerned with the maintenance of societal cohesion and enduring regime survival in the domestic context. They are concerned with both external and internal threat, and the internal threat generally originates from the governance structure of the “weak states.” According to Barry Buzan, “weak or strong powers” will refer to the traditional distinction among states in respect of their military and economic capability in relation to each other. “Weak or strong states”, on the other hand, will refer to the degree of socio-political cohesion. Where the state is strong, national security can be viewed primarily in terms of protecting the political independence and territorial integrity from outside threat. Newly independent post-colonial states are basically weak states in terms of domestic governance (authority to rule) and/or in terms of social and territorial integrity.

Many weak states are found in the Third World and the fact points to the decolonization as one of the causes of weak state. Decolonization created large numbers of new territorial states in the European image, but for the most part it neither took much account of existing cultural and ethnic boundaries, nor created new nations to fit within them. Therefore the political legacy of most developing states was a state without a nation, or even worse, a state within many nations.

During the Cold War, the protection of security of weak states in fact came to mean the protection of incumbent regime and the threat was perceived not only from external threat but also from internal threat such as insurgency which was usually supported from outside ideological rival state, and separatism which threatened territorial integrity from within the state. Because of their narrow political bases within their own societies over which they rule, weak states regimes are concerned with nation-building and state-building, and strengthening state legitimacy, and tend to be concerned less with the larger well-being of the state than with their own self-preservation.

Narrowly based regimes often seek greater legitimacy by rapidly bringing to their people the fruits of their policies of national development. As economic growth has been the main goal of the Asian states as well as the foundation to their leaders’ rule, Governments in the Asia realized the state legitimacy is mostly dependent on the success of developing economically and protection of the regime from challenges to the regime

internally and externally. If the leaders were not able to make economic growth, their ruling legitimacy was soon to be in danger. When the leaders are not able to maintain good economic performance, they tend to emphasize the nation-building issue such as territorial disputes, or historical issues expecting to create the national integrity.

### 2.3 Political Bargains

The fact that Asian states are receptive to the US-led hub-and-spokes system, is the reflection of international balance of power system in Asia, and also reflection of the concept of weak state regime security in Asia. States tied themselves to the US or the Soviet Union for their security protection based on hub-and-spokes relationship. The hub-and-spoke relationship, which both the US and the Soviet Union pursued during the Cold War, is in essence patron-client partnership based on a set of consensual political bargains. This political bargains mean that the US exports security and imports good. The patron states provided security protection to bolster client regimes providing them with open market, arms, military training, economic aid, and at times troops. Client states in return agreed to affiliate themselves with the patron state providing it with logistical, economic, and diplomatic support within the broader US-led international system. Through this patron-client partnership, the US tied these client states down to an American-centred security system.

Through the bilateral security alliance patron states were bound to the region, establishing fixed commitments and mechanisms that have increased certainty and predictability about the exercise of the patron states. The patron-and-client alliance system thus provided the political foundation for the projection of superpowers influence into the region.

### 2.4 Japan—US Alliance

How do great powers maximize their influence in regional security? By cultivating a deep bilateral tie with Japan, while building similar bilateral ties with South Korea and Taiwan, the US created little incentives for the region to seek out relationships with Japan. This security arrangement impeded multilateral structures being built indigenous to East Asia, but it maximized the US influence and secure its position permanently in post war Asia.

Japan might be expected to play major role in the international arena. Despite a region wide economic presence, Japan remains to a large extent politically and militarily apart from the region around it. Two main factors have militated against a global role for

Japan, both of them legacies of the World War II. The first is a lingering distrust of Japan, felt especially by China, Korea and other victims of Japanese invasion during the war. Second, is the reluctance on the part of Japan to assert itself internationally, a reluctance which reflects the Article 9 of Japanese Constitution and Japanese security policy.

Japan's security policy is highly remains controversial domestically, regionally, and internationally. The balance of power in East Asia depends heavily on the presence of the US, the only country with both economic and military power. The US military role does and should involve not only deterrence of nuclear threats from Russia, China, and North Korea, but also reassurances for Japan's neighbours that Japan will remain a benign power.

Although the US seeks to boost Japanese support for the US-led bilateral security alliance system, which is intended to preserve the existing balance of power in the region, there are some good reasons on the part of Japan to seek to be benign middle power. Based on the Article 51 of the UN Charter, self-defence covers both individual and collective defence, but Article 9 of Japanese Constitution is usually viewed as meaning that only acts of individual defence permissible<sup>1</sup>. Since 1950s Japan has strictly adhered to interpretations of Article 9 that its military force can only be exercised for the national defence of Japan's territory, and thus Japan devoted to defensive defence. In other words, Japan cannot exercise the right of collective self-defence to defend the ally of the US outside its immediate territory. The US and Japan jointly meet armed attack against either party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety (Japan-US security treaty, Article 5). But there is no duty on the part of Japan to defend the US when the latter is attacked by a third party.

Based on the asymmetrical nature of Japan-US alliance the security arrangement is provided as follows: Japan provides the facilities, while the US provides the armed forces to defend Japan. Moreover, because Japan's constitution renounces the use of force, it was deemed illegal for the Self-Defence Forces to engage in overseas military operations.

The role of Japan-US alliance during the Cold War was therefore to prepare for the attacks on Japanese territory by hostile forces. Japan's mission was to defend Japan based strictly on the right of self-defence. Besides, in light of its geopolitical perspective, Japan was naturally expected to play an important role in the anti-Soviet strategy of the Western bloc.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 9 of the Constitution reads as follows—the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international dispute(para 1). In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

### 3 Disinterest in Multilateral Security System

#### 3.1 The End of the Cold War

The Cold War's end destabilized the US.-centric hegemonic system across the world, and the Soviet-centric hegemonic system collapsed totally. The elimination of a major perceived threat brought a structural change in the international security order. In fact, with the demise of the Soviet bloc, many people both Japan and the US regarded the bilateral Cold War alliance as obsolete, and would be dissolved because its primary rationale was no longer operative. The implication of the disappearance of the rival pole is that one benefit of aligning with the US also disappears, or is radically reduced the benefit of security protection.

Although the security discourse began in late 1980s starting with M. Gorbachev's Vladivostok proposal, several ideas concerning security institution in Asia have been proposed so far. There have been some modest multilateral efforts to improve dialogue and proposals to expand its membership and revitalize the international institutions such as ARF and CSCE. Since the end of the Cold War, Asia's institutional landscape has changed dramatically and ASEAN played an important role in forming regional institution such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Yet there is no effective security institution in North-East Asia, where Western approaches to multilateral security are not widely accepted.

East Asia is neither institutionally prepared to handle serious security challenge cooperatively. The building of security institution which started in South East Asia does not seem to expand as far as North East Asia. Unlike Europe, post-Cold War East Asia still lacks a dense web of international institutions. The East Asia particularly remains hostage to the legacy of the Cold War—the strained relations between mainland China and Taiwan, and between North and South Korea, and nuclear development of North Korea—all these remain a threat to peace and stability in the region.

A number of factors that have exerted negative influence on the underdevelopment of Asian regional security order include China's opposition to the institutionalization of security and the US preference of bilateralism.

#### 3.2 China's Challenge

China's motivations of security policy are twofold: first, China wants the US. out of East Asia, and second, China wants to expand its power around its dramatically rising economic power. For many years, China has been suspicious of the US dominated alliance

system in Asia. China has also been traditionally wary of any security organisation because China fears that other states—most of which were US Cold War partners—would use new mechanisms to interfere in China’s internal affairs including the Taiwan issue and territorial disputes.

With a number of its own initiatives, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the ASEAN–China Free Trade Area, and more recently the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), China has sought to lure Asian states away from the US-led security architecture and toward one that is more regional, within which it would potentially exert greater influence. Consequently, many Asian states today face a complicated strategic situation. They increasingly look to China for their economic future. But they are also wary of increasing Chinese dominance and are consequently eager to see the US remain a provider of regional security protection.

### 3.3 The US Opposition

Despite some evidence of embryonic multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific region as mentioned above, East Asia still depends heavily upon the military presence of the US. The US may be able to reduce the costs and reap more gains from providing security in Asia through creating new regional security institutions to reshape its existing structure of bilateral alliance.

However, the US shows no signs of wanting to transform the bilateral hegemonic order in East Asia into a fully functioning multilateral security community because the US views new institutional mechanisms as direct challenges to the US interests and arrangements.

In fact, for nearly half a century the US—as the hub in the network—did not encourage connections among the spokes into larger multilateral groupings such as a “Pacific NATO”. It was not in the interest of the US to create institutions in Asia that would constrain the US ability to make independent decisions. Nor was it in the interest of subordinate states in Asia-Pacific to enter institutions in which they had minimal control.

In fact there were initial concerns of the US at the end of the Cold War that any regional initiatives for multilateralism could undermine the US leadership in Asia. In November 1990, for example, Secretary of State James Baker, criticised as inappropriate the notion of regional security dialogues replacing the American hub-and-spoke system, which had been at the centre of Asian security and prosperity for four decades.

### 3.4 Japan's Disinterest

Besides, the key bilateral allies of the US in Asia, including Japan and South Korea, have not been uniformly enthusiastic about developing region-wide multilateral security institution. Japan's disinterest in multilateral security stemmed from both structural and historical factors. Structurally, the bilateral alliance provided all that Japan needed. The US support of Japan in Asia effectively removed any motivation for Japan to explore the opportunities of building security institution in the region. Japan's disinterest in multilateral security system also stemmed from an acute sensitivity to the region's lingering historic suspicions. Any multilateral security arrangements would by definition require a larger Japanese leadership role than would be deemed acceptable by many in the region because colonialism and Japanese imperialism prior to World War II left a legacy of wariness of regional cooperation that might involve new forms of Japanese domination.

### 3.5 The Emerging New Hierarchy

The collapse of the Soviet bloc led to watershed changes in both the membership and working of NATO in Europe. In Asia, on the other hand, the bilateral alliance system has grown stronger since the end of the Cold War. Some might argue that the threat of a rising China provides the glue to the alliance' longevity.

The most significant structural challenge to peace and stability in Asia are two distinct hierarchies. One is a security hierarchy dominated by the US. and the other is an economic hierarchy dominated by China. China is the dominant economic power in the region, and the economic fortunes of states across Asia are being increasingly tied to China, while the US continues to be the dominant security provider. However, neither the US nor China has been especially interested in forming new regional institution.

China does have ample resources to use for patronage, including military and economic power. Now recent model of China's patron-and-client partnership, seeking policy support from clients, relies heavily on economic inducement. Using the considerable economic power, China has cultivated many clients of developing states in Africa and Asia by providing substantial benefits to incumbent government leaders without requesting democratization. It should be noted that China's aid policy without precondition is particularly appealing to internationally ostracized states such as North Korea, and transitional states of post-conflict states such as Cambodia and Sri Lanka. For example, after a few decades of terrifying internal conflict and mass murder that took place under Khmer Rouge regime, the United Nations deployed the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), and Japan and France proactively assisted in

peace-building of the state after the UNTAC withdrew, supporting democratization and implanting good governance in Cambodia. In fact the peace building process supported by Japan and France was seen as a successful blueprint for further instances of Japanese diplomacy. In the years that followed, however, as China rose to become Cambodia's largest donor of economic and military aid (Saudi Arabia, second), Prime Minister Hun Sen's administration came to be inclined toward China in order to have political and economic breathing space. Through this the peace building process of Cambodia was thwarted leaning towards authoritarian state.

#### 4 The Japanese Security Policy in a Dilemma

##### 4.1 Persistence of the Japan-US alliance

With the demise of the Soviet Bloc, alliance theorists predicted that the US-led alliance would be dissolved because the primary rationale was no longer operative. The hub-and-spoke system between the US-Japan and the US-South Korea has been operative for almost seven decades. Such duration is a rare exception in the overall history of alliance politics because generally alliances are short-lived. According to a study by Jae Jeok Park, the average lifespan of 304 alliances formed between 1815 to 1989 (excluding ongoing alliances as of 2001) is 9.3 years.

The collapse of the Soviet Bloc, however, did not lead to the disintegration of NATO and the US-led alliance network in Asia-Pacific such as the South Korean-US alliance, and the Japan-US alliance remain intact. Then questions arise. Why do certain alliances survive the structural change following the reduction or elimination of the mutually perceived threat? Moreover, Article 9 gave rise to a range of other anti-militaristic prohibitions including: the 1967 Three Non-Nuclear principles (not to produce, possess, or introduce nuclear weapons); the 1967 and 1976 bans on the export of arms and military technology; the 1976 1 per cent of GNP limit on defence expenditure.

For the hierarchical system of Japan-US alliance to be enduring the legitimacy of the hub, namely the US, is needed to be internalized. In fact, under the original terms of the Japan-US alliance, Japan was expected to remain lightly armed and refrained from any overseas commitment. At the same time it secured the military cooperation of the US in return for the provision of US military bases on Japanese soil.

The Article 5 of the above mentioned Japan-US security alliance is the legal ground of the stationing of US forces and the US use of bases in Japan. Besides, the US military presence has been internalized by host-nation support (Japanese government funding of the costs of US bases in Japan), status of forces agreement (agreements that protect the

rights of US military operating in Japan). In fact, Japan earmarked ¥189.9 billion (\$1.7 billion) to host US military bases in Japan in fiscal 2015 through March 31 as part of the costs necessary to station nearly 50,000 US personnel here.

As mutually perceived threat that provided the clearest alliance rationale have disappeared, Japan-US alliance entered the stage of redefinition of the bilateral alliance and the re-legitimization of the US troops' stationing in Japan. As Jae Jeok Park discusses, where mutually perceived security threats deteriorated, all alliance persists if two conditions are met. First, the alliance serves as an essential arrangement for retaining or cultivating security arrangements to respond to an undesirable long-term security trend that may occur to converge in the process of order-maintenance and order-building. However, allies' disinterests regarding regional order are less likely to converge when there is no obvious mutually perceived threat. Thus, the second condition is necessary. The allies introduce, cultivate, or retain conditions arrangements to safeguard their alliance from challenges that arise as a result of intra-alliance mismanagement.

Some factors that are instrumental in redefining the Japan-US alliance are as follows: first the impact of trade friction in the 1980s; Gulf War that caused the reconsideration of the Japan's contribution to international peace and security which led to the introduction of the international peace cooperation law 1992; North Korea's developing nuclear weapons; Chinese challenge to the Japan-US alliance.

The Gulf War in 1990-91 was a watershed for the Japanese forcing them to reconsider of their relatively restrained position in international community. Even before the end of the Cold War, there was a pressure coming from the US to assume more of the financial burden for their defence (Nixon Doctrine). Particularly since the debacle of the Vietnam war, Japan was expected to pay a larger share of the US defence costs. Japan was criticized that she was enjoying the freeride in defence terms. The US began to believe that their own capacity to respond to potential military threat was severely stretched, and that Japan needed to assume greater responsibility for regional security around its immediate territorial waters and airspace.

Although Japan responded to the crisis in the Gulf crisis by contributing \$13 billion to the multinational forces (about 20% of the total outlay) making it the third largest contributor after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. However, the international community was underwhelmed by Japan's contribution criticizing that Japan simply sent money instead of personnel to support multilateral operation and scorned as "check book diplomacy." This is when Japan's policy makers began to think of 'international contribution' in the field of international security, paying the way for the International Peace Keeping Law.

#### 4.2 'Cork in the Bottle'

In the process of redefining the Japan-US alliance, one of the themes of the redefinition was the role of the US troops in Japan. There are approximately 90 US military facilities including major military bases throughout mainland Japan and Okinawa, 75% of which are in Okinawa. And Japanese government paid \$2billion in 2018 as an annual host-nation support called 'omoiyari yosan.'

The military role of the US involves not only deterrence of nuclear threats from Russia and China, but also reassures Japan's neighbours that it will remain "a benign power" and that there is no need for an arms race in the region. Ostensibly the Japan-US alliance has played a more specific and crucial role—namely, it has allowed Japan to be secure without the necessity of becoming a traditional military power. Japan could be defended while remaining a "civilian power" and this meant that Japan could rebuild and re-enter the region without triggering dangerous security dilemmas with neighbouring states.

However, it should be stressed that the US has strategically played on the fear of neighbouring countries' perceptions of Japan in order to maintain the bilateral alliance system. This US strategy is partly reflective of the so-called "cork in the bottle" thesis, a phrase invented by General Henry Stackpole, Commander of US Marines in Okinawa. The "cork in the bottle" theory was coined to prevent a resurgence of Japanese militarism and check Japan's power projection capabilities. This analogous argument asserts that if there were no "cork" (i.e. US forces in Japan) in the "bottle," the contents of the "bottle" (i.e. Japanese militarism) would come out of the bottle and spread into Asia again. In other words, the US forces in Japan represent the "cork in the bottle" which checks Japan's military power. The message coming out of this thesis is that the US forces are indispensable to the maintenance of the US global power, and without US bases in Japan, the US would have difficulty maintaining its superpower status in Asia.

#### 4.3 Japan's Concern

These rising regional tensions and the security pressure emanating from the US have led to growing nationalism in Japan, particularly among young generation. This increasing nationalism could jeopardize the US-Japan alliance because. If Japan feels too reliant on US forces and driven by US priorities, some may assert the need for Japan to develop its own independent capability. Ever since the first North Korean and Taiwan Strait crises of the mid 1990s, Japan has feared that if the US were to launch military actions, Japan could

face demands to provide military support for its ally. Besides, Japan has at times feared abandonment by the US not only in relation to North Korean crises in 1993 and 1994, but also in the face of rising Chinese threats. Another concern is the use of nuclear umbrella. China's military modernization has raised concerns that the US may no longer possess sufficient capability or the will to sustain the cost of intervention to protect Japanese territory and maritime freedom of navigation (Hughes 2014:378).

#### 4.4 Higuchi Report—New Direction

Faced with an impending identity crisis in the bilateral alliance right after the end of the Cold War, the Japanese government, expressing an interest in regional security arrangements set about the task of forging new policies for the post-Cold War era. Efforts to set about the redefinition of the alliance dates back to 1994 when Japanese government panel was holding discussions to compile the 'Higuchi Report' which was released in August 1994 with an eye to establish directions for the 1995 defence outline.

The Higuchi Report said, "Japan should extricate itself from its security policy of the past that was, if anything, passive, and henceforth play an active role in shaping a new order. Indeed, Japan has the responsibility of playing such a role. The Higuchi Report proposed four basic pillars for future Japanese defence policy : (1) development of Japan's defence capability for the purpose of multilateral security cooperation, including active participation in UN peace keeping operations; (2) stronger bilateral security cooperation with the US; (3) maintenance and qualitative improvement of Japan's self-defence capability; and (4) development of the domestic defence industry and technological infrastructure.

The organizational structure – beginning with a discussion of Japan's multilateral security cooperation – was logical to security policy at the time. Moreover, at the time right after the Gulf War experience when Japan was finally beginning to participate in the UN peacekeeping operations, it made sense to begin by setting forth the concept of multilateral security in these broad-based security discussions.

This organisational structure, however, alarmed some East Asia experts in the US and it was adamantly opposed by the US government. What matters was the composition of the report. In their appraisal, the decision to place multilateral security cooperation ahead of Japan-US cooperation signalled a shift toward multilateralism at the expense of the US.-Japan bilateral alliance. To these senior influential policymakers, Japan's security policy was regarded as diverging away from the Japan-US alliance. In September 1994, newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State, Joseph Nye, began making arrangements

for a bilateral security policy review, which became known as the 'Nye Initiative.'

The Nye Initiative, more officially known as the United States Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region, published in February 1995, is a report outlining the US security strategy for East Asia and the Pacific, emphasizing the importance of a US forward presence in Asia and the security alliance with Japan. It argued that the US military presence in the region had important consequences for the stability of the region, and for the success of political, economic, and security goals of the US. Specifically, Nye advocated that the US should maintain a total of 100,000 troops in East Asia, emphasizing the importance of the US Marine Corps and other military forces in Okinawa.

The Nye initiative was a turning point for Japan-US bilateralism. Through maintaining the Japan-US alliance, it also aimed to check Japanese initiatives to enter into multilateral security institutions. The Nye Initiative had defined US-Japan relations as the most important bilateral relationship in East Asia, and depicted Japanese security as the linchpin of US security policy in the region.

This redefining process of Japan-US alliance led both countries to the new direction of the alliance: the Japan-US partnership had a vital role to play in post-Cold War security. 1995 National Defence Program Guidelines listed three fields of contribution to the creation of a more stable security environment, first, participating in UN peacekeeping operations, second, promoting security dialogue and exchange, and cooperating in arms control and arms reduction.

Predictably therefore, Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton issued Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security in April 1996, and the major points of the declaration are as follows: official declaration by Japanese and US government leaders that the bilateral security partnership continues to be vital in the post-Cold War era; second, both governments set about security collaboration at the regional and global level, not just defence of Japan or bilateral cooperation with the US

It was an affirmation of this conclusion at the highest level to reaffirm this mutual understanding, both governments shortly thereafter published the Japan-US Joint declaration on Security Cooperation and the 1997 Guidelines for Japan-US Defence Cooperation. Through this, the patron-client relation between the two states was consolidated.

## 5 Conclusion—Japan's Security Policy in a Dilemma

Three decades have passed since the end of the Cold War. The regional security environment surrounding Japan is perceived to have undergone considerable deterioration.

Asia in general has inherited traditional localized tensions such as territorial disputes, ethnic antagonism, and transnational threats such as transnational terrorism and drug trafficking, and global threats such as climate change, global warming, flood disaster, nuclear proliferation, etc. Besides, there are many domestic factors which pose threats to the very lives of people including bad governance that are apt to cause severe human rights violation, even humanitarian crisis.

Japan's most immediate and direct concerns have been North Korea's nuclear development, and deteriorating bilateral relations with China and South Korea. China has become of great concern because China has expanded its maritime operations as demonstrated by the constant dispatch of what it terms "research ships" causing territorial problem that has been shelved for many decades.

The acknowledgement of the challenges ahead only emphasizes the importance of effective measures to address these threats all the more urgent and necessary today. It is against this background that the regional security order should be viewed. However, the prospect of international security building in the region is dim. Political leaders in Japan and China remain apathetic if not sceptical toward the building of a regional security institution. Besides, the US security policy based on a bilateral array of alliances has even hindered the building of a new security institution. Moreover, most Asian states choose paths of security self-reliance or bilateralism, and the ASEAN's embryonic move to security community building has been taking an adversarial turn in recent years. Then, is the bilateral security system in East Asia viable option for lasting peace? How these increasingly distinct hierarchies – security and economic – operate is also a key issue for the evolution of regional security order.

The rise of China will not lead to the exit of the US from Asia, but it will lead to a more complex and multi-layer order. Many states in the region—in the Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia—face a complicated strategic situation. They increasingly look to China for their economic future. But they are also wary of rising Chinese dominance and so they remain eager to see the US remain a provider of regional security.

Most Asian states including Japan are increasingly reliant on Chinese market, while the ideological threat of Chinese communism has disappeared any more. It is also true that no country in the region is really looking to contain China as the *raison d'être* of their security relationship with the US. On the contrary, most Asian powers, while becoming so dependent on Chinese market, seek explicitly to avoid any US-led containment of China.

It should be stressed that security debate in Japan has grown increasingly serious over the past decade, since the Trump administration came to power, asserting 'America

First'. Ever since at a time when Donald Trump appealed the US people, demanding Japan to drastically increase its financial contribution to maintain the US military facilities it hosts under a 1960 security treaty. "Of course they should pick up all the expense. Why are we paying for this?" Trump, the front-runner in the Republican Party nomination race, said in an interview with CNN, referring to Japan, South Korea and other countries where the United States plays a role in defense, suggesting he might consider withdrawing military forces from Japan, complaining that Tokyo shoulders too little of the burden to host US forces. He also indicated Japan and South Korea could go nuclear for self-defense as a result.

Will the US-Japan alliance continue to play a key role in maintaining stability and peace in Asian-Pacific region? Is the alliance capable of providing a valuable framework for managing the future US-Japan relationship? We must recall the international order in East Asia has been built around hub-and-spokes system with the US as a hegemon. It is an order based on a set of grand political bargains. As is discussed earlier, the US provides security, open markets, and working political relations with its partners, and in return these spokes agree to affiliate with the US, providing it with logistical, economic, and diplomatic support as the US leads the wider system.

Yet, this political bargain is not stable. If there is a trade restriction imposed on the spokes to the US markets, or the more the spokes come to be reliable on the Chinese market, then the underlying reason of the grand political bargains will be challenged. The more enhancing of China-centred economic hierarchy grows, the more Asian states come to rely on Chinese market, the less rationale for the US to stay in Asia. In response to an increasingly dynamic and uncertain East Asian security environment, Japan may be moving either unconsciously or consciously toward 'normal military power.'

As China has grown at an astonishing rate, she will seek its own manifest destiny in the region and try to push the US out. With the US hegemon gone, will Japan remain a benign power? When the US pulls out from Asia it will be inevitable that states in the region may strengthen arms build-up because the international system remains balance of power system as it is. As arms race accelerate, regional military balance of rival states will collapse someday. With 12,000 nuclear warheads stored in the hands of nuclear states, is there any guarantee that *Hiroshima* will not be repeated?

Japan's lack of natural resources means that the country is heavily dependent on imports of oil and raw materials. Therefore Japan has a huge stake in the maintenance of international order, yet lacks conventional mechanism for helping preserve or establish such order. International security is protected not only by agreement on fixed principles for

mutual relations, but also by institutions and trust that such principles will be observed. Principles and declarations of intention on their own are no guarantee of peace and stability. We need institutions that are capable of action to ensure that these principles are observed, to bring violations to light, and to actively pursue the organization of co-operation.

The security environment in East Asia is getting worse. This trend is caused by the lack of motivation on the part of political leaders of major powers including the US, China, Russia, and Japan for security community building. To stop the worsening plight of the security environment, security community building will be all the more urgent and necessary. However, a security institution does not just happen. Deliberate policy choices by state leaders are keys to increasing the flow of political activities and the policy choice of building security. The long term future of the Asia-Pacific region will depend heavily on the degree and nature of leadership shown by China and Japan, as well as a significant role to play of the US government.