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## **Maintaining Maritime Security and Building a Multilateral Cooperation Regime**

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Session 1: Globalization and Maritime Security

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### 1. Globalization and the Importance of the Sea

Since 1990, globalization has advanced considerably. This is the result of many factors: the globalization of finance through the Plaza Accord in 1985, China's reform and open-door policy, India's shift to a market economy policy, and the economic reforms in the Russian Federation after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. China, India, and Russia's participation in the world economy has spurred a remarkable increase in the international movement of people, goods, and money.

Globalization has dramatically increased the number of air routes and has also stimulated maritime activity. This is most visible in Asia. The regular container shipping routes between Asia and North America are the busiest in the world. In 2004, for example the number of containers shipped from Asia to North America grew by a startling 15.9%. From 1990 to 2003, cargo unloading in North America rose from 16% to 19% of the world total, while that in Asia rose from 24% to 50%. Though freight volumes in North America dropped by 14% to -1 %, those in Asia rose from 8% to 32%. (*Maritime White Paper 2006*, pp. 78-81; 2006; Ocean Policy Research Foundation)

However, as the economic power of Asian countries grows, so does their naval power. From 1990 to 2006, India, Indonesia, Korea, and China dramatically increased the size of the surface fleet. South Korea built the largest landing vessel of any Asian country, and increased the number of submarines by a factor of 5. (IISS, *Military Balance*, 1991-92 and 2007) They have also begun construction of a new naval base within easy reach of Cheju Island. The remarkable buildup of China's naval strength in recent years has shifted the balance of power from Taiwan to the mainland. The Chinese navy is building a strong submarine fleet and will acquire its first aircraft carrier in the early 2010s. Anticipating deployment in East Asia, the Indian Ocean, and the Middle East, the United States will station a nuclear powered aircraft carrier at the Yokosuka naval base in 2008, and they are working on plans to increase US military capacity in Guam, such as deploying attack submarines and building ports with sufficient depth for aircraft carriers.

In addition, the maritime trade in drugs, weapons, nuclear material, missiles, counterfeit bills, and other goods that threaten international stability is increasing. One example of this is the clandestine nuclear distribution network built by the head of Pakistan's nuclear program, A. Q. Khan. Even recently, North Korea is suspected of smuggling in nuclear materials to Syria, and a North Korean ship delivering weapons and ammunition to rebel forces in Sri Lanka was discovered and attacked.

The growing importance of maritime trade routes in the East Asian and Western Pacific region, the growing rivalry in naval strength in the region, and the surging trade in goods that threaten regional security—these once again underscore the importance of the sea.

## 2. The Instability of Marine Security in Asia

Despite the growing importance of marine security in the Western Pacific—namely the East China Sea, the South China Sea, the Strait of Malacca, and the Indian Ocean—security is still lacking in the area. Marine security is made up of many elements, but the core element is the security of the sea lanes. Security includes reasonable solutions to disputes over territorial waters, and sea lane security. Elements that influence the latter range from rules governing the use of shipping lanes and the maintenance of channel markers in narrow channels, to cracking down on smuggling (weapons, ammunition, drugs, nuclear technology, etc.), piracy, and terrorism on the high seas, as well as naval arms control. At the present, there are several concerns regarding the sea lanes in East Asia and the Western Pacific. Recent problems include disputes over territorial waters between Japan and China, Chinese claims of sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands, China's refusal to acknowledge Japan's sovereignty over Okinotori Island, South Korea's occupation of Takeshima Island, Chinese oceanographic research vessels and others illegally entering Japanese territory and Japan's exclusive economic zone. In 2004, a Chinese nuclear submarine entered Japanese waters while fully submerged, and an American aircraft carrier was tracked by another Chinese submarine. These incidents are just some of the examples of the provocative behavior of the Chinese navy. The potential for collisions at sea between ships—and even between submarines—is growing. In addition, there is concern about the military buildup on both sides of the Strait of Taiwan. Territorial rights to the islands in the South China Sea are also undecided. Smuggling and piracy are also common occurrences.

### 3. Creating Stable Marine Security

The creation of stable marine security will require the engagement of the countries involved in each area, plus the cooperation of many others.

#### (1) Bilateral Discussions and the Japan-US Alliance

Bilateral talks are needed between Japan and South Korea to work out a diplomatic solution to the Takeshima Island problem and the use of the fishing resources in the surrounding area. The key actions to improve relations between Japan and China include (1) China policing its own ships and oceanographic research vessels, (2) progress in discussions regarding the Japan-China border, and (3) progress on the relationship based on the Japan-China Strategic Reciprocity agreed to at the Japan-China summit meeting in October 2006.

For US-China relations, both sides need to show self-restraint regarding military action in the Strait of Taiwan. Japan and the US also require mutual restraint to avoid raising military tensions over the strait, such as was generated by the declaration of "common strategic concerns" in the Strait of Taiwan at the two-plus-two Japan-US ministerial conference attended by foreign relations and national defense officials in October 2005. Through the Japan-US alliance, the United States has military bases in Japan and is strengthening its position on Guam, which it uses to maintain security on the sea lanes through the East Asian and Western Pacific waters, and this a role most reliably filled by the United States.

The US-Korea and US-Australia alliances also contribute to the stability of marine security. Nascent Japan-India strategic discussions also show promise.

#### (2) The Potential for a Multilateral Cooperation Regime

Stable marine security will require a regime that fosters multilateral cooperation. All countries pursuing economic prosperity through international trade depend on the security of the sea lanes. Policing criminal activities on the high seas is also most effectively implemented through multilateral cooperation.

The naval forces of 10 or so countries are participating in Operation Enduring Freedom in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, and this most closely approximates a multilateral cooperation regime for creating stable maritime security. These naval forces target suspicious vessels carrying suspected terrorists, drugs, and weapons and ammunition. In this regime, the commander in charge of naval strategy changes every four months. The Maritime Self-Defense Force has the mission of supplying oil and water, and though they are in practice a participating member of the regime, they never will take a leadership role because their mission is different from that of other navies. However, India, Russia, and China are not participating.

A similar regime should be created for the East China Sea and South China Sea. This topic should be discussed at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and though such a regime is considered a desirable objective, it has yet to come to fruition. The ARF comprises 25 member countries with varying interests, making it extremely difficult to create a cooperative framework. In fact, some countries do not possess a naval force capable of participating in such a regime, which means that participation would be limited. Multinational training exercises were conducted in Tokyo Bay in 2004 as part of Asia's first proliferation security initiative (PSI), and of the five participants, Japan and Australia were Asia's sole representatives.

To address the territorial issues over islands in the South China Sea and to avoid friction with China, ASEAN established a code of conduct in 2002 and has demanded that China comply with the code. ASEAN also has the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), concluded in 1976, whose members include many countries from outside the region. This is also a low-level regime to ensure stability of maritime security. The security of the Strait of Malacca is managed by Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, with Japan providing technical support.

#### 4. Japan's Role as a Maritime Nation

Japan also is dependent upon the stability of maritime security, and based on the Basic Law on Oceans adopted in July of this year, it should make solid progress in developing a diplomatic policy that ensures security in its own territorial waters and protects its rights in its exclusive economic zone. Japan should also implement sufficient fiscal measures to this end. It should also conduct a review of its sea and air defense forces to determine if their level of readiness is sufficient to the task at hand. The Maritime Self-Defense Force is not able to protect Japan's rights in its exclusive economic zone. This is another reason why Japan needs a minister in charge of maritime security.

Concomitantly, maintenance of sea lane security stretching from the Pacific region to the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean should be a fundamental concern of Japan as a maritime nation. Thus, the alliance with the United States should be maintained, and while maintaining the power balance in the Western Pacific, Japan should create a framework for multilateral cooperation that includes China. If China is hesitant to participate, Japan should build a cooperative framework that includes the United States, South Korea, Australia, Singapore, and others. Rather than creating a multilateral framework such as the ARF, gathering a group of like-minded countries would be more effective. Japan should also increase its level of participation in the PSI system.