

The Redefinition of the Security Treaty

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Abstract

In the 1990s, the United States and Japan redefined the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States of America and Japan (hereafter referred to as the Security Treaty) to reinforce the alliance and further promote defense cooperation between the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) of Japan and United States forces. This paper examines the importance of the redefinition and its impact on Japan's defense policy. It concludes that Japan is now about to become "a normal state" that uses its SDF as a means of foreign policy.

Introduction

Japan and the United States were looking for an excuse to maintain the Security Treaty after the end of the Cold War. They justified the maintenance of the Security Treaty through reinforcement of the alliance making use of North Korean missile and nuclear development.

Instead of reducing the SDF and United States forces and bases in Japan, Japan and the United States further promoted defense cooperation through the 1997 Guidelines and created tension with North Korea. Under both Koizumi and Abe administrations, Japan is seeking an opportunity to exercise the right to collective self-defense which arguably infringes on Article 9 of Japan's Constitution.

Therefore, it is important to examine the redefinition of the Security Treaty in the 1990s since this is the beginning of Japan's closer defense cooperation with the United States. The paper first examines the reasons of redefinition of the Security Treaty. Then, it explains the Joint Declaration of the Security Treaty and the 1995 NDPO. The paper also points out closer cooperation among policy makers of the two countries. The conclusion states that Japan is about to become "a normal state."

Reasons to redefine the Security Treaty

In 1991 when the Soviet Union dissolved, the Cold War was over. Now that the Soviet threat was gone, the Defense Agency had to find an excuse to continue to increase the defense budget and defense capability of the SDF as well as a reason to keep the Security Treaty. Hiroshi Yamada points out that the Japanese security officials were concerned about the Clinton Administration's commitment to Asia, especially the planned gradual reduction of United States forces

stationed in Japan. According to him, they were afraid that the United States would shift the emphasis of its Asian policy from Japan to China and gradually withdraw United States forces in Japan. Therefore, he concludes that Japan was willing to get involved in the redefinition of the Security Treaty.¹

Akitoshi Miyashita has a similar view to Yamada, arguing that “ the fear of abandonment led Japan to increase its commitment to the alliance, including expansion of the roles and missions of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces, participation in the US-Japan joint military exercises in the Pacific, and greater financial contribution to the US bases in Japan. ”²

Hisao Maeda also states that Japan was willing to redefine the Security Treaty, arguing that the Foreign Ministry was looking for an opportunity to expand its international military contributions, such as full participation in the UNPKO and the reinforcement of the United States-Japan alliance relations, in order to create an environment in which Japan could become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. He further mentions that the Defense Agency was also at a loss as to what to do since the argument of the Soviet threat was no longer justified.³

The argument mentioned above can be explained in the context of bureaucratic politics. Defense Agency officials were looking for an opportunity to justify their *raison d’etre*. Particularly, SDF officials felt that the end of the Cold War would inevitably lead to the reduction of the SDF and the defense budget. Therefore, they had to find new missions and roles of the SDF in the post-Cold War era. Foreign Ministry officials also wished to increase their influence through a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council as well as the promotion of a smooth and effective use of the Security Treaty. These efforts would reinforce their bureaucratic interests.

Japanese Initiative ?

Regarding the decision to embark on the redefinition of the Security Treaty, Japan is arguably more concerned about her trade relations with the United States than abrogation of the Security Treaty by the United States or withdrawal of United States forces from Japan. After the end of the Cold War, it is obvious that there was little imminent threat to Japan. From the viewpoint of the security, the importance of the Security Treaty for Japan greatly decreased. However, without Japanese help or United States bases in Japan, the United States will have difficulty maintaining its military supremacy. In other words, the United States needs Japan in the area of the security as much as Japan needs the United States in the area of trade.

However, Japanese leaders do not emphasize these points when they negotiate with the United States for fear that the United States might retaliate economically through trade. After all, it is obvious that Japan will get hurt more than the United States if a trade war occurs now, although Japan has also a potential power to damage United States economy. As a result, Japanese leaders have taken a less antagonistic attitude toward the United States, at least, until now.

After all, it was necessary for the United States and the Japanese Governments to clearly explain to their people why the Security Treaty was necessary after the end of the Cold War.

Under such circumstances, the redefinition of the Security Treaty began with the East Asia Strategy Report (EASR) of February 1995 (the so called " Nye Initiative ") and proceeded to the review of the 1976 National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) , the Joint Declaration of the Security Treaty of 1996 , and the review of the 1978 Guidelines.⁴

Yoshihisa Hara contends that the formulation of the 1995 NDPO was achieved in accordance with the EASR, whose main theme was how to justify United States military presence in Asia in the post-Cold War era. The main feature of the 1995 NDPO was, he continues, to clarify the reinforcement and expansion of the Security Treaty; therefore, the 1995 NDPO was a policy that embodied the EASR. Hara asserts that the Joint Declaration of the Security Treaty of 1996 officially endorsed that the United States and the Japanese Governments accepted the EASR and the 1995 NDPO, and confirmed the redefinition of the Security Treaty.⁵

United States officials tend to emphasize Japanese initiative in the Security Treaty redefinition process. According to a United States official, before Nye became assistant secretary of defense in September 1994 , Japan, through many channels including Japanese Ambassador Shoichi Kuriyama, had asked the United States to clarify the definitive role of the Security Treaty. A Pentagon official stated that in the autumn of 1994 , it was Japan that proposed to begin the job of redefining the Security Treaty among the bureaucrats without politicians. A Foreign Ministry official explained that the United States would present the idea of maintaining the status quo with regard to the armed forces, and Japan would make use of this proposal in order to maintain the current armed forces.⁶

The aforementioned strategy clearly indicates that the Japanese government made use of United States demand or pressure to achieve what it wanted to do to avoid domestic opposition.

The Joint Declaration of the Security Treaty and the 1995 NDPO

It was argued that the major difference between the Old NDPO of 1976 and the New NDPO of 1995 was that the main role of the Security Treaty shifted from that of preventing aggression against Japan or coping with such aggression with the United States to that of maintaining peace and stability in the areas surrounding Japan. As a result, the defense cooperation between the United States and Japan will further accelerate, creating a problem of the exercise of the right to collective self-defense which the Japanese Constitution prohibits.⁷ In fact, under the 1995 NDPO and the 1997 Guidelines, the SDF greatly expanded its roles and missions and is now operating in the areas beyond the Japanese territory such as the Indian Ocean and Iraq.

Addressing the new aspect of the Security Treaty, Yoshimasa Muroyama argues that there was a new phrase inserted in the 1995 NDPO that " smooth and effective operation of the Security Treaty would be carried out when an emergency took place that would greatly affect Japan's peace and security in the areas surrounding Japan. " He points out that the sentence mentioned above clearly indicated the significant feature of the New NDPO of 1995.⁸

Toshiyuki Shikata also states that it was no exaggeration to say that the Joint Declaration of the United States-Japan Security Treaty included contents that could be called the " New Security Treaty. " ⁹ Muroyama's and Shikata's remarks indicate that the SDF was able to expand its roles and missions, and to defend its *raison d'être* without changing the Security Treaty.

Regarding the issue of whether the Joint Declaration of the United States-Japan Security Treaty was a “ reconfirmation ” or a “ redefinition ” of the alliance, Yoichi Funabashi argues that the Joint Declaration and the 1995 NDPO had no intention or idea to revise the Security Treaty. They were simply the continuation and reinforcement of the cooperation within the alliance.¹⁰ However, it is in fact the revision of the Security Treaty since the SDF is now expected to help United States forces within logistical areas in times of emergency “ that would greatly affect Japan’s peace and security in the areas surrounding Japan. ”

According to Takehiko Kamo, the redefinition of the Security Treaty had two distinct features: a change that accelerated “ Asianization of the alliance, ” which expanded the areas that the alliance would cover from “ the Far East ” to “ the Asia-Pacific region ” ; and a change that accelerated the “ militarization of the alliance. ” He continues to argue that the work of redefining the Security Treaty was carried out without incorporating the public opinion of the two countries involved in the policymaking process. Kamo also observes an important point that Japan did not actively take the initiative in presenting its own policy against the “ Nye Initiative ” since the United States took the leadership in formulating the “ militarization of the alliance ” and the “ Asianization of the alliance. ” As a result, Japan accepted the “ Nye Initiative ” as a matter of course, Kamo concludes.¹¹

Kamo emphasized United States initiatives in the redefinition of the Security Treaty. It seems that while Japanese officials were able to express their perspectives in formulating the 1995 NDPO, they had to take into account United States views. The whole process, from the review of the 1976 NDPO to the Joint Declaration of 1996 to the review of the 1978 Guidelines, was carried out under the influence of United States officials.

United States and Japanese Cooperation in the Decision-Making Process

During the review of the 1976 NDPO, United States and Japanese officials exchanged views and information from the draft formulation stage. On the one hand, Japanese officials were preparing the draft of the New NDPO of 1995 while reading the draft of the EASR. United States officials, on the other hand, had an opportunity to see an outline of the New NDPO of 1995 during the process of writing the EASR. As a result, the United States Pentagon was satisfied with the 1995 NDPO, stating that Japan clearly stated that the United States-Japan alliance occupied the major role in its defense policy and that Japan appreciated United States forces stationed in Japan as they contributed to overall stability in the Asia-Pacific region.¹²

Unlike the decision-making process of the Old NDPO of 1976 , the New NDPO of 1995 was a result of an interaction of officials in both countries. In particular, military officials of both countries played an important role. The Pentagon’s appraisal mentioned above indicates that both civilian and military officials in the United States and Japan exercised their influence during the process. As a result, the alliance relationships were emphasized in the NDPO of 1995.

According to Mike Mochizuki, the end of the Cold War and the decline of the Social Democratic Party in Japan created an opportunity whereby the Defense Agency could revise the 1976 NDPO. Therefore, the Defense Agency decided to develop a wide consensus on a new policy aimed at minimizing political risk. Mochizuki points out that one of the important issues in the

revision of the 1976 NDPO would be regional security and the role of the Security Treaty, and that the SDF would further promote defense cooperation with United States forces to deal with contingencies in Korea and China.¹³ While the Security Treaty intended to cope with the Soviet threat during the Cold War, it was also designed to meet an emergency on the Korean Peninsula and to prepare for a conflict involving China. Now that the Soviet threat no longer exists, China and North Korea become major concern among the policy makers in both the United States and Japan.

Conclusion

Japan redefined the Security Treaty through the Joint Declaration of 1996 , the 1995 NDPO, and the 1997 Guidelines so that the SDF would be able to help United States forces in the areas beyond the Japanese territory. This redefinition will bring about an argument of the exercise of the right to collective self-defense. In fact, Japan is about to become a “ normal state ” that uses the SDF as a means of conducting its foreign policy. The dispatch of the Maritime SDF to the Indian Ocean of 2001 and the Ground SDF to Iraq of 2004 clearly show such a direction. Such a Japan would create a problem with China and both Koreas.

Notes

¹ Hiroshi Yamada. “ Ima naze Nichibei Anpo no ‘ Saiteigi ’ nanoka- ‘ Saiteigi ’ Mondai wo meguru Kousatsu-I. ” [Why now do we have redefinition of the United States-Japan Security Treaty ? -An analysis on a problem of the United States-Japan Security Treaty] . *Shudo Hougaku* 20 , no . 1 (January 1998): 204-205 .

² Miyashita, Akitoshi. “ Gaiatsu and Japan’s Foreign Aid: Rethinking the Reactive-Proactive Debate, ” *International Studies Quarterly* 43 , no . 4 (December 1999): 706.

³ Hisao Maeda. “ Gaidorain to wa. ” [What are guidelines ?] *Sekai* (Bessatsu) , October 1997 , 81.

⁴ *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo) , 14 August 1997.

⁵ Yoshihisa Hara. “ Josetsu: Nichibei Anpo Taisei-Jizoku to Henyou. ” [An introduction: The United States-Japan Security Treaty continuity and transformation] . *Kokusai Seiji* 115 (May 1997): 4-5 .

In fact, in the Joint Declaration of the United States-Japan Security Treaty in April 1996 , the United States and the Japanese Governments expanded to the Asia-Pacific region the areas that the Security Treaty would cover. It stated that “ our alliance relationship has major importance for peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. ” Boeicho, ed., *Defense of Japan 1999* (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsukyoku , 1999) , 400-402.

⁶ *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo) , 28 October 1995 .

⁷ *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo) , 30 November 1995 .

⁸ Yoshimasa Muroyama “ Reisen go no Nichibei Anpo-‘ Reisen Anpo kara’ Saiteigi Anpo ‘e. ” [The United States-Japan Security Treaty after the Cold War- “ From the United States-Japan Security Treaty under the Cold War to the redefinition of the United States-Japan Security

Treaty] . *Kokusai Seiji* 115 (May 1997) : 134 . The Defense Agency stated, however, that the expression that the 1995 NDPO would secure peace and stability in the areas surrounding Japan was consistent with the past unified statement of the Japanese Government on the interpretation of the areas of the " Far East. " Boeicho, ed., *Shin Boei Taikou*. [The New National Defense Program Outline] . n.p . 1996 , 13.

⁹ Toshiyuki Shikata ; Nichibei Boei Kyoryoku no tame no Shishin (Gaidorain) Kaitei no Keii . " [Process in the revision of the Guidelines for the United States-Japan Defense Cooperation] In Gaiko Seisaku Kettei Yoin Kenkyukai, ed., *Nihon no Gaiko Seisaku Kettei Yoin* [Factors in Japan's foreign policy decision-making] (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyujo , 1999) , 188.

¹⁰ Yoichi Funabashi, *Domei Hyoryu* [The alliance that is straying] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten , 1997) , 304.

¹¹ Takehiko Kamo , " Pawa Poritikkusu kara no Dakkyaku wo " [A breakaway from the power politics] , *Sekai*, July 1996 , 24-27 . Nye took the initiative in accelerating the review of the 1978 Guidelines to expand the roles and missions of the SDF and communicating to the Japanese officials the United States desire that a bilateral alliance rather than multilateralism would be the basis of Japan's New NDPO of 1995 . David L. Asher , " A US-Japan Alliance for the Next Century, " *Orbis* 41 (Summer 1997) : 358.

¹² Funabashi, *Domei Hyoryu* , 295-300 .

¹³ Mike M. Mochizuki, *Japan: Domestic Change and Foreign Policy* (California: Rand Corporation , 1995) , 71 . Nye states that the decision to keep 47,000 United States troops in Japan was made on the grounds that a clear North Korean threat existed. *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo) , 24 November 1995 . A high official of the Defense Agency mentioned that the Security Treaty originally assumed an emergency on the Korean Peninsula or China-Taiwan relations, whose idea was behind an argument on the Soviet threat during the Cold War. *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo) , 29 October 1995 .

Christopher Hughes argues that the New NDPO of 1995 singled out the Korean Peninsula as a potential trouble spot without referring to a Chinese threat due to a political reason. However, he contends that two main objectives of the United States-Japan Security Treaty were to cope with emergencies on the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. Christopher Hughes, *Japan's Economic Power and Security: Japan and North Korea*. (London: Routledge ,1999) ,191-93 , 199.