

Japan's Security Policy at a Turning Point: Prospects for the "Three Security Documents" and Non-Armed and Non-Aligned Theory

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Japan's defense policy is currently facing its greatest turning point since World War II. This paper highlights the salient points in the *Anpo Sanbunsho* [Three Security Documents], which comprise Japan's *National Security Strategy*, *National Defense Strategy*, and *Defense Buildup Program*; collectively, these documents declare a change in Japan's defense policy. The *Anpo Sanbunsho* identifies China as a de facto virtual enemy and verifies the reinforcement of the Japan–United States alliance while announcing a significant increase in defense spending and the maintenance of counterstrike capabilities. Also investigated in this paper is whether the theory of deterrence capability, which the Japanese government repeatedly advocates, is, indeed, a rational choice. While the United States is actively pushing for Japan to become a military superpower, this paper points out the dangers of the United States' China "siege" strategy. In response, Japan has effectively abandoned its exclusively defense-oriented policy. On this basis, I propose that Japan's future security policy should be based on a non-aligned diplomacy policy of demilitarization that is consistent with the Japanese Constitution, and I question whether Asia's current security environment has really changed. Thus, I conclude that Japan should adopt a security policy that strives for peacebuilding and does not rely on military force while implementing a non-armed, non-aligned policy.

Introduction

Japan's security policy is approaching a major turning point, triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This paper presents a discussion on the so-called "Three Security Documents," which indicate a change in Japan's defense policy: the defense theory unites defense and diplomacy as one category as indicated by the name "defense diplomacy." Moreover, the "demilitarization and non-alignment" theory was reconsidered as the antithesis of such a defense policy to discuss security theory and its policy in the broad sense.

In addition, a very important and significant issue is the fact that the industry has long been banned or strictly regulated since the end of World War II.

The possibility that the transfer of weapons, which are referred to as defense equipment,

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and the leveraging of the defense industry, which has been the main source of foreign investment in Japan, may become occur active in the future should be closely watched, but I limited the coverage in this essay to a brief discussion.

1 .How to read the “Three Security Documents”

(1) Following U.S. military strategy

On December 16, 2022, the *National Security Strategy*, the *National Defense Strategy*, and the *Medium-Term Defense Force Development Plan* were approved by the Cabinet of the Japanese government. Hereafter, these are collectively referred to as the “Three Security Documents.” This section begins with the key points of Japan’s *National Security Strategy*, which lays out the basic policy of the “Three Security Documents.”

The *National Security Strategy* is literally the core of the *National Security Strategy*. Of particular note is section IV (Security Environment Surrounding Our Country and Our Security Challenges), subsection 2 (Security Environment and Challenges in the Indo-Pacific Region), item 2 (China Security Trends). It clearly states that “China’s current external posture, military trends, etc. are of serious and unprecedented concern to our country and the international community... and [represent] the greatest strategic challenge ever faced in strengthening the international order based on the rule of law.”¹ China is described as a “strategic challenger,” which is the same as positioning it as a virtual enemy. In effect, the document identifies China as Japan’s biggest virtual enemy.

As discussed later in the paper, during the prewar-World WarII period, Japan had clearly designated separate virtual enemy nations for its army and navy, adopted measures to deal with war from peacetime, and enhanced training and equipment. The postwar constitutional system did not envision a state of war in the first place, so preparation for dealing with a virtual enemy state was never specified for clearly stated in official documents, at least not at the level of official national documents. Therefore, the immediate interpretation of “strategically challenging countries” as war partners may seem hasty. However, considering the recent escalation in United States–China tensions, a confrontation that has become acute on various fronts, and the souring of Japan–China relations due to the increased unity of the Japan–US alliance, this expression is equivalent to and reflects the same quality as a fellow country. This issue is important also because the *National Security Strategy* is Japan’s independent and self-reliant defense diplomacy policy. The content of *Japanese New Strategy* is largely defined by *American National Security Strategy* (hereinafter referred to as the *New American Strategy*), rather than being derived from the *National Security Strategy* of the United States. The *New U.S. Strategy*, 48 pages long, was published in English on October 12, 2022.² The document is not limited to the military domain but refers to the multiple domains that make up the nation, covering a wide range of areas, such as the economy, education, technology, nature, and food.

The totality of national power is reflected in the *New American Strategy*, which is considered to be Japan’s Security Policy the issue. Notably, the United States has secured overwhelming superiority in the world in terms of military power and will not hesitate to

¹ December 16, 2022, National Security Council Decision, Cabinet Decision, *National Security Strategy*, p. 9.

² For the *New Strategy*, see U.S. White House, “*National Security Strategy*,” Oct. 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>.

use its power to protect its national interests.³

Amidst a variety of options, The strategy indicates that the United States prepared to resort to launching war when the fear exists that China and/or. Russia may violate U.S. national interests. Although the document contains very few statements regarding Japan as a whole, in order to fulfill the Indo-Pacific alliance, “The strategy reaffirms the ironclad relationship with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand,” noting “we will continue the alliance,” followed by a strong message.

To focus on the military domain, it is the further continuation of the U.S. military superiority through a thoroughgoing multilateral military alliance. The strategy document also positions the Japan–United States relationship as constituting “iron-clad commitments.” The goal was not only to strengthen the Japan–United States alliance but also to prevent any gaps from arising in multiple areas, including in military, economic, and political affairs. Japan’s security strategy is faithfully based on the *New American Strategy* as described. The content can be regarded as a Japanese version.

(2) Hostility toward China and Entry into the Military Bloc

While Japan has a mountain of universal issues, such as human rights and extreme weather problems, the confrontation and competition with China in the political and military spheres, which are based on maritime expansion, military expansion, and differences in values, raises the question as to whether Japan’s diplomatic stance is rational. Is it correct to judge that China’s response has created an unbridgeable gap between the so-called Western Bloc? Is it correct to assume that coexistence is impossible and that we must move from rivalry to confrontation? In recent years, while reconciliation has been difficult, the effort to create a path of coexistence without reconciliation has been on the chopping block.

How persuasive is the rationale for calculating China’s very existence and strategic policy as a threat? Is it possible to explain? Few would argue that the United States must be in direct confrontation with China, rather than China looking over the shoulder of the United States. In other words, “negotiations through proximity” become a permanent reality.

The United States, which helded the largest share of the world market FY2024 (October 2023/September 2024), saw total defense spending of 8,864 million yen.

³ Ibid., “*National Security Strategy*,” p. 20.

*Number of U.S. Troops Stationed Overseas (Unit: Personnel)

Order	September 2011		March 2021	
	Country/Region	Number of people	Country/Region	Number of people
1	Afghanistan	82,177	Japan	55,297
2	Japan	48,235	Germany	35,124
3	Germany	43,393	Korea	24,870
4	Iraq	28,675	Italy	12,455
5	Korea	28,271	United Kingdom	9,402
6	Kuwait	16,811	Guam	6,125
7	Qatar	11,812	Bahrain	3,898
8	Italy	10,451	Spain	2,868
9	Kyrgyzstan	10,194	Kuwait	2,191
10	United Kingdom	8,673	Türkiye	1,683
	Overseas Total	336,645	Overseas Total	172,003

*From Department of Defense DMDC [Defense Manpower Data Center]data (Asahi Shimbun, July 27, 2021).

The total expenditure was estimated to be \$6,883 billion. This is about 13% of total expenditures. The amount of the defense budget in China in 2024 was equivalent to about 30 trillion yen. On the other hand, China announced at the last All People's Congress that it would spend about 32 trillion yen on defense. Although the absolute amount is large, it is less than 30% of the U.S. budget, at 27% of the United States–China ratio. The disparity is stark.

The United States has more than 700 military bases and facilities around the world, as well as powerful allies under the US–Japan Security Treaty and the US–Korea Security Treaty, and in addition to bilateral military blocs, it has concluded multilateral military alliances, such as the NATO(North Atlantic Treaty Organization), and today QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) and AUKUS(Australia, United Kingdom, United States). The United States also has U.S. military personnel deployed around the world, numbering approximately 170,000 as of March 2021; this number has been significantly reduced since September 2011 (see table *).

The United States is increasingly relying on its military power in bilateral and even multilateral military alliances to maintain and secure its position as a hegemonic power, replacing its relatively declining economic power by its literal military power. On the other hand, China is now the world's second most populous country, although it has been overtaken by India in terms of population, and above all, in terms of economic power and gross national product indicators, it is far ahead of the United States and is working hard to maintain its status.

China is now a super economic power that has surpassed the United States by a head.⁴

⁴ World Economic and Financial Surveys ("IMF - World Economic Outlook Databases" Oct. 2022) is that the economic gap between the United States and China is becoming apparent. In other words, if we show the ranking of the GNP (gross national product) on the basis of purchasing power parity, which is considered to be a measure of a nation's real economic power, China ranks first at \$27.296 trillion, the United States second at \$22.996

Therefore, China is oriented toward the formation of an international order through economic power, such as “One Belt, One Road,”⁵ and although it adopts a pseudo-military response to individual events, it has become a state that gives top priority to economic stability. In other words, China does not adopt a strategy of leading the international order by pushing military power to the forefront. Therefore, numerous preconditions are required for China to be considered a threat.

The A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) strategy, which is regarded as the basis of China's military strategy, should be understood as a defensive strategy for China. In contrast, the U.S. strategy to encircle China is an offensive strategy. A nation that adopts a defensive strategy can only be wary of constant provocations and threats, but it is unlikely that it will itself engage in acts of aggression. The possibility that the United States, which adopts an offensive strategy, might enter a local war of encirclement against China is far greater. In this sense, it is reasonable to conclude that China cannot be assumed to be an aggressor, at least for Japan, even if it is considered a threat.

(3) Is the theory of deterrence against China rational?

Another point of contention is that the goals of the “Three Security Documents” are inconsistent with Japan's Constitution. In particular, the deterrence theory against China, expressed in the *National Security Strategy* as “together with our allies, the United States and other like-minded countries, we will deter the occurrence of contingencies and unilateral attempts to change the status quo in Japan and its surrounding areas,”⁶ can be considered one interpretation of the theory of hostility toward China. The specifics of the change in the status quo in the seas surrounding Japan as the reason for such are vague.

Certainly, China's response to universal issues common to all humankind, such as human rights and extreme weather problems, as well as to differences in values, has created a gap between the so-called West that is difficult to fill. However, do we really have a relationship with China in which it is impossible to coexist? In other words, is China a military threat, as the government and the media are so fond of claiming?

The United States, the world's superpower, revealed that its defense budget for FY2024, which begins later this year, exceeds 120 trillion yen. The United States forms military power through multilateral military alliances by concluding nearly 800 military bases and facilities around the world and military alliances with Japan, South Korea, and other countries, as well as multilateral paramilitary alliances such as QUAD and AUKUS. With this as a backdrop, the United States is trying to carry out its hegemony and, by doing so, is trying to form an American-led international order. The United States, in other words, believes that international events can be resolved by military power. On the other hand, the country is beginning to show signs of permanent sustainability due to the stagnation and decline of its economic power.

Japan is oriented toward the formation of an international order through economic power.

trillion, India third at \$10,193.5 trillion, and Japan fourth at \$5.0 trillion. \$6,760.5 billion, Japan \$5,606.5 billion, Germany \$4,888.3 billion, and Russia \$4,494.2 billion. Furthermore, Indonesia is in seventh place, Brazil is in eighth place, the United Kingdom is in ninth place, is France in tenth place. In other words, the economic gap between China and the United States is already 5 trillion dollars (about 550 trillion Japanese yen,) or almost the same amount as the GNP of Japan. In addition, the *World Factbook* (official name: *The World Factbook. Travel the Globe with CIA's World Factbook*) site already noted two years ago that the U.S. GNP was \$19,846 trillion and China's was \$23.19 trillion.

⁵ A generic term for the conception, planning, and promotion of a broad economic zone between China and Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Africa.

⁶ “Three Security Documents” (*Anpo Sanbunsho*), p. 10.

For example, although it may adopt a pseudo military response to individual events, Japan is a nation that places the highest priority on economic stability, and it has not adopted a strategy of leading the international order by pushing military power to the forefront. Therefore, numerous doubts exist about China posing a threat.

Of course, from a phenomenal viewpoint, China's military expansion and maritime advancement seem anything but benign. On the Fiery Cross Reef in the Nansha Islands, which China effectively controls, sits a de facto military base called Yongheat Island in Chinese, where a 3,160 m runway and port facilities capable of berthing up to 4,000 tons have been constructed. Of course, China is not alone in this maritime expansion. Taiwan has secured Taiping Island in the Nansha Islands under the name of Taiwan and is constructing an airstrip there as well. Japan also has reclaimed reefs and taken effective control of Minamitori Island. The Maritime Self-Defense Force, the Japan Meteorological Agency, and the Kanto Regional Development Bureau personnel are stationed there, and the island has been turned into a military base, off limits to the general public. China, Taiwan, and Japan each has its own intentions. The reality of their maritime expansion, so to speak, must be examined.

In November 2022, Chancellor Schulz of Germany and President Marcos of the Philippines visited Beijing, and they held a summit with President Xi Jinping in January 2023. While the Philippines has been very supportive of China's maritime expansion, the country was seeking flexible measures to deal with this expansion. These examples reflect policy decisions that demonstrate an awareness of the danger of responding immediately with military force, even if a threat exists. Compared to this, Japan's response to these situations is very rigid compared to the Philippines and other countries. Furthermore, Japan's *National Security Strategy* states, "Together with our allies, the United States and other like-minded countries, we will deter the occurrence of contingencies and unilateral attempts to change the status quo in our country and its surrounding areas."⁷ By declaring China's action to be an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo, this statement lumps Japan–China relations into the category of confrontation. The text goes on to explain that China should be dealt with jointly with allies such as the United States and that, for that purpose, the Self-Defense Forces' (SDFs') equipment should be expanded and improved.

Even if it is necessary to prove objectively that China's action constitutes a unilateral attempt to change the status quo, trying to deal with China in a manner that would force it to protrude its military with a military bloc behind it would be premature. Before clarifying such a course of action, Japan must do its utmost to practice and implement the philosophy of the Peace Constitution without abandoning its proactive and independent position by concluding an alliance, whether with the United States or China. Calculating China and Korea as threat countries and setting them up as de facto virtual enemy countries dares to create a threat theory and encourages anti-Chinese sentiment. Calculating China and Korea as threat countries and setting them as de facto virtual enemy countries set up a security system in the United States would, on the contrary, put oneself in an environment that is dangerous from a security perspective.

(4) Orientation toward a national mobilization system

The message that seems to run through Japan's entire *National Security Strategy* is that it is based on the construction of a national mobilization system. While the document presents a discussion on ensuring security through various methods, it ultimately adopts a military

⁷ Ibid., p. 100.

theory of security, as indicated by its call for “the drastic reinforcement of defense capability which is the ultimate guarantee of national security.”⁸ In addition, section VI, subsection 4 notes that “efforts to seamlessly protect our nation in all directions strengthened” is a military.

In view of the current blurring of the boundaries between military and nonmilitary affairs, and between emergency and peacetime, the current situation is such that “peacetime militarization, military peacetime” is the target of this project. This is clearly in line with the national mobilization system as a system and the national total war as a political system.

In other words, it is a problem of mixing peacetime and wartime, a quasi-wartime regime becoming routine. The way to strengthen defense capabilities in peacetime is not limited to the military aspect but also includes the political, economic, educational, technological, and other aspects of the nation and its people.

They say that they will strengthen the defense force with all their might. This is the prewar equivalent of adopting the national mobilization law system. In preparation for war, it is intended to construct a political system through which not only the military but also the consciousness and thoughts of the people who support the military are centrally controlled in the name of strengthening deterrence. The result is a military state. The structure and nature of such a state follows the same path as the prewar Japanese state, which was strengthened with each war experience.

Another characteristic of the “Three Security Documents” in terms of the prewar national constitution, national strategy, and it is the similarity between the “Three Security Documents” and the prewar Japanese *Imperial National Defense Policy*.

The *Imperial National Defense Policy* describes national goals and strategies, guiding objectives and policies for national defense, hypothetical adversaries, and military requirements; it corresponds to the *National Security Strategy*. The “Military Strength for National Defense” section defines the required military strength, i.e., the number of divisions, warships, and numerical targets as specific goals of military policy. It currently corresponds to “National Defense Strategy.” The *Imperial Army Military Strategy* describes the Japanese military doctrine and presents individual operational plans against hypothetical enemies. It currently corresponds to the Maintenance Plan After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan became aware of the possibility of another war with Russia and aimed at further military expansion and the militarization of the nation itself with the goal of building a war system during peacetime. In order to construct a strategy suitable for a warlike nation, Japan entered an era of furious military expansion. In the course of this process, in 1907, the *Imperial National Defense Policy*, *Military Forces for National Defense*, and *Imperial Military, Military Guidelines* were formulated as classified military documents that laid out the basic strategy for national defense (hereinafter referred to as the “Three Documents for National Defense”). Exactly the same as the present. The documents remain as they were originally written.

The three documents correspond to the “Three Documents of the Security Treaty.”

In other words, Japan's *National Security Strategy* corresponds to the *Imperial Defense Policy*, the *National Defense Strategy* to the *National Defense-Related Forces*, and the *Defense Force Development Plan* to the *Imperial Military Service Guidelines*. Of these, the *Imperial National Defense Policy* was revised many times, but the last version from the prewar period (revised on June 8, 1936) contains the following text at the beginning:

⁸ Ibid., p. 17.

1. the true purpose of the Imperial Defense is, based on the Emperor's rule since the foundation of the country, to always and more and more promote national prestige on the basis of a great cause, and to ensure the promotion of national interests and the welfare of the people.

2. The policy of the Imperial Defense is, in accordance with the principle of Imperial Defence, to build up national strength, especially armaments, to become a stable power in East Asia both in name and in reality, and at the same time to adapt diplomacy to this, thereby ensuring national development, and in the event of a morning emergency, to take the initiative and quickly achieve the objective of war.⁹

In particular, preparing the armed forces and conducting diplomacy in a manner that will ensure the development of the nation and provide opportunities in the event of a crisis is crucial. First, quickly determine the objective of the war. Characteristically, which clearly calls for the adoption of the theory of preemptive attack in the event of a contingency prompt.

The war aims to achieve its objectives quickly by seizing the first opportunity. The policy of seizing the opportunity to win the war by preemptively attacking without waiting for war to break out was clearly stated. This policy was proven effective in later preemptive attacks during the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (July 7, 1937), the landing on the Malay Peninsula (December 8, 1941), and the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor (December 8, 1941). Japan was strongly oriented toward a short-term battle, as a long-term war would be disadvantageous given Japan's national and military strength. In order to implement this short-term decisive war, it was imperative to develop military power and secure a large number of soldiers even in peacetime, and it was also necessary for the political system to constantly develop laws and mobilize ideology and spirit to facilitate the transition to a wartime system. In particular, the shift to total warfare in the modern warfare system, where the capital power of a nation such as Japan or Germany was weak compared to that of the United States, Britain, or France, required a short-term decisive military and a domestic system.¹⁰

(5) Concept of Establishing a Joint Command Post

The establishment of the Joint Commanders and Joint Headquarters, which is scheduled to be completed after the next fiscal year, is also essential for the SDFs to carry out operational planning overseas. The postwar version of the General Staff, or *Daihonei* (Imperial Headquarters), will be established within the SDF organization under the name "Joint Operations Command."

In addition, National Defense Strategy, section V (The Future of the Self-Defense Forces), subsection 2 (Approach to the development of the Self-Defense Forces' system.) clearly states that, in order to strengthen the execution of the joint operations, a permanent Joint Command Center that can command the entire Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces will be created through a review of existing organizations. The strategy also notes that Japan "will also proceed with a study of an equipment system that

⁹ Akira Yamada (ed.), *Diplomatic Materials: Modern Japan Expansion and Aggression*, Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1997, p. 249.

¹⁰ For more information on the total war system, see KOKETSU, *Sōryokusentaisei kenkyū Nihon rikugunno kokkasōdōin kouso* [Study on the Total War System: Japanese Army's National Mobilization Concept] (Sanichi Shobō, 1981). The same book was reprinted twice by Shakai Hyūronsha in 2010 and 2017.

contributes to integrated operations.”¹¹ This is a surprising plan for reorganization of the SDF.

The Joint Command (Joint Commander) position to oversee and operate the three SDFs in a unified manner will be established. This is, I dare say, equivalent to the revival of the General Staff. In terms of the prewar Japanese military organization, the General Staff Headquarters and the Chief of Staff can be said to have been restored. The General Staff was tasked with providing operational guidance and planning for the army organization. During the Asia-Pacific War, the Imperial General Headquarters organization straddled the army and navy, and in effect, the Joint Headquarters became an organization similar to the Imperial General Headquarters when wartime was assumed.

The SDF currently has a Joint Chief of Staff that spans the three SDFs, but perhaps that role will be specialized as a liaison between the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense. The Joint Command function will be secured to ensure thorough coordination with the U.S. military, and the Joint Commander will be tasked with providing operational guidance in unison with the U.S. field commanders. This would be a clear division of roles. If we follow the prewar example in the sense that the Joint Commander would concentrate on military affairs and the Joint Chief of staff would coordinate with politics, the Joint Commander would be the Chief of the Army General Staff and the Chief of the Navy General Staff, and the Joint Chief of Staff would be the Minister of the Army and the Minister of the Navy combined.

In the prewar period, the military and politics were thus separated, with the General Staff and military commanders eliminating political involvement and, conversely, intervening in politics with the backdrop of military force. The military rationale that attacking an opponent is the best defense was strongly emphasized, and propaganda was repeated directly and indirectly influence to public opinion and the media.

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a strange disaster, public opinion and most of the media have been moving in the direction of accepting the militaristic assertion of “military for military’s sake”. At the same time, the threats posed by China and Korea are being voiced in an extremely inflammatory manner, and while taking this as a tailwind, the whole country is in danger of turning into a military mode, so to speak.

2. The Realities of United States–Japan Defense Cooperation and the Emergence of Defense Diplomacy

(1) U.S. Strategy Defines the “Three Security Documents”

When analyzing the “Three Security Documents,” the *New U.S. Strategy* must be examined because it served as the basis for the three documents.

First, the *New U.S. Strategy*, released on December 18, 2017, is a strategy to ensure America’s the military superiority that has been maintained to date. While acknowledging degradation, he wrote that the priority in the future is not the prolonged Middle East war but the competition with China and Russia. In other words, we are moving from the conventional war on terror to the era of competition among major powers.

It clearly indicated its judgment. It sounds like he was predicting the war between Russia and Ukraine. The first and most important issue that Japan should consider before responding to the war, was how the United States would be involved in the war between

¹¹ Ibid., “Three Security Documents” (*Anpo Sanbunsho*), p. 23.

Russia and Ukraine.

At the same time, bearing in mind the growing importance of the strategy of encirclement against China, the New U.S. Strategy further clarified the United States policy of strengthening its alliance with Japan and South Korea in order to complement the deterioration of its military superiority. This is the so-called multilateral security regime framework. These are QUAD and AUKUS. The participating countries in these two frameworks are the five countries of Japan, the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and India. As a counterpart, the Shanghai Organization (SCO), led by China, has been established, and its member countries total nine: China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, and Iran.

As a military and economic bloc centered on these Asian countries is being formed, it remains unclear which camp Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and other countries will fall into to whether they will remain neutral. Therefore, both China and the United States are working hard to bring them onto their side. At the G20 forum held in Indonesia the month and year, these non-member countries were actively pursued by the United States, Japan, and China.

The three documents, especially Japan's *National Security Strategy*, are based on the scenario that Japan's policy is to ensure the nation's security by not resigning itself to military confrontation with states, regions, and organizations that obstruct the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy," as it is called in the United States-led multilateral military alliance. Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy is the key concept of the three documents. The three documents state that any obstacle to free and open Indo-Pacific must be contained and eliminated by military force. It is inevitable, then, that Japan's *National Security Strategy* will set up a scenario in which Japan's national security is ensured through containment and exclusion, even if not in direct terms.

In order for the document to be elaborated in such a direction, the statements of the SDF uniformed personnel should be emphasized. The National Security Council and the Cabinet make the final decision on the document, but in accordance with Article 8 of the Law for Establishment of the Council, the opinions of the uniformed personnel of the SDF are sought, as necessary. In fact, the SDF uniformed personnel practically seized the initiative in the preparation of the document, without even bringing up the procedure. In other words, the fact that the SDF uniformed personnel are in the process of deciding Japan's national security strategy in accordance with the *New American Strategy* document, without going through the deliberation process should be considered the most important issue of all.

The fact that almost no one in the media has pointed out the lack of civilian control over the creation of the three documents, and the fact that the opinions of the Japanese voters are completely left out of the equation, should also be a problem.

The overall characteristics of the three documents can be summarized in one phrase to a considerable extent, the U.S. strategy of encirclement against China.¹²

The number of such attacks is very high. In addition, the enemy base attack theory includes a discussion on destroying the other side's command center function. This argument is clearly based on the premise of launching a war, and although it is not explicitly stated to that extent in the three documents, the fact is that such a war mode is floating around on the government side, which is extremely dangerous.

¹² Asahi Shimbun, "Expert Proposal: Time, Time, Time," November 23, 2022.

(2) The issue of possessing an enemy base attack capability and increasing defense expenditure

In the three documents, which was reworded as a counterattack capability, and news of the purchase of 400 Tomahawks around the same time had a major impact on public opinion. During the Iraq War, on March 20, 2003, Tomahawks were launched around the city of Baghdad, Iraq. The type of Tomahawk that the SDF plans to purchase has not been disclosed, but the B-type (RGM/UGM-109C, DTLAM-C/D) is equipped with a 454 kg conventional warhead and has a range of 1650 km. The U.S. military used a large number of these missiles during the invasion of Iraq to destroy the Iraqi forces and achieved war results as a representative presence.

The three documents stipulate increasing defense expenditures in order to expand the equipment of the SDFs. The increase in defense spending, which is also supported by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, is expected to result in the world's third largest military spending power, exceeding 10 trillion yen at one stroke. The rationale for this is explained in the three documents. The focus is on the size of the absolute amount and what it will be used for and how equipment will be maintained. The amount of more than 10 trillion yen means that the defense budget (i.e., military budget) has been increasing steadily every year since the second Abe administration, followed by the Kishida administration after the Democratic Party of Japan's administration of Naoto Kan. Moreover, Three Security Documents includes more than 100 items for which the total budget amount is not specified. The reason certain items are not specified is that the process for the selection of equipment and materials has taken a backseat to the overall concept of the equipment and materials. This is a result of the budget being secured first, but even if the above conditions are met, there is still a great deal of uncertainty.

As if to pre-empt the move to increase defense, the *East Asian Strategic Review 2022*, published by the Japanese Institute for Defense Studies of the Ministry of Defense in March 2022, states, "Considering the current ratio and the future growth of China's defense spending, there is a possibility that the level of defense spending to maintain the trillion yen level will be in the 10 trillion yen range."¹³ It is problematic that a public research institute, which should be in a neutral position, makes statements that encourage the bloating of the defense budget in the midst of various debates.

(3) Possibility of defense diplomacy theory emerging

I have, for many years, been paying attention to the policy of demilitarized neutrality and non-alignment, which should be the goal of Japan's defense policy and defense strategy, and I have noticed that the term "defense diplomacy" has been mentioned recently in connection with this.¹⁴ This term does not appear in the *White Paper on Defense*, nor in the previous "Three Documents on Security and Diplomacy." It is, so to speak, a term that is only used by some researchers related to the Ministry of Defense. It can be said to mean something close to "defense exchange," a term that frequently appears in the *Boei Hakusho* (Defense White Paper). A more familiar term is "defense cooperation."

The reason I have tried to touch upon the meaning of the term "defense diplomacy" here

¹³ The National Institute for Defense Studies ed. *Higashi Azia Senryaku Gaikan 2022 (East Asian Strategic Review 2022)*, Interbooks, 2022, p. 241.

¹⁴ The book on defense diplomacy, written before the invasion of Russia and Ukraine, is *Defense Diplomacy: What is Defense Diplomacy?* By discussing the effective use of defense and military power in wartime and peacetime, where wartime = combat and peacetime = defense diplomacy, the publication discusses the issue of actively grasping the role of military power with reference to not only the United States but also Britain and France.

is that, beginning with this term, the terms “defense engagement” and “military diplomacy” are likely to be actively used in the near future. These terms have also been explained in detail by defense diplomacy theorists. The terms presuppose that the military plays an important role among state institutions, not limited to that of a mere military professional group but, instead, getting deeply involved in the political sphere. They are terms that derive from a process in which minimal tension exists between politics and the military, but in the end, they coexist as an integrated organization as the relationship between the two is optimized.

The military organization positions of the military superpowers, such as the United States, China, and Russia, are each established following its own organizational principles. What they all have in common is that, regardless of their internal reality, their organizations are secured by being subject to extremely powerful presidential authority or, in China’s case, control by the Communist Party of China. In other words, they share the same point of being subordinated to politics. At the same time, as the physical foundation of a political organization, they possess very important powers.

Even though the roles of politics, diplomacy, and the military are clear, so the claim that the military power supports political power, including diplomacy, can be denied, the fact is that military organizations are actively utilized in the political field based on the state of the military and military forces. Therefore, the most utilized theory is the idea of military power as a complement to diplomatic power.¹⁵ Even today, the number one reason for supporting the SDF is disaster relief.¹⁵

This reality has no doubt contributed to the latent desire among Ministry of Defense officials, as well as among politicians and their supporters who are busy expanding defense capabilities, to substantiate the terms “defense diplomacy” and “military diplomacy.”

Although defense diplomacy and military diplomacy may theoretically be the subjects of study and discussion, is it really permissible to address these matters in the realm of Japanese politics? I put the issue of the pacifism of the Japanese Constitution aside for a moment here. In this case, the security that the so-called defense force is intended to ensure needs to be addressed.

(4) From Political and Military Relations

There are two major problems with defense diplomacy. In the first, as understood in the case of the United Kingdom, a country advanced in defense diplomacy, in order to secure a fixed amount or an increase in the military budget in peacetime, the bloated military should be assigned to missions other than combat missions. The role expectations arise from facing the challenge of funding. As a measure to achieve this, the orientation to develop business in the diplomatic sphere was born. In other words, as a means of maintaining and expanding the organization in peacetime, we try to secure entry into the diplomatic sphere. This is a passive entry. However, the problem is the possibility that this advance may objectively result in intervention by a group of military experts’ involvement in diplomacy. This is what is properly called “defense involvement.” In the second, if intervention becomes a permanent phenomenon from the problem described, it will lead to “defense inter-

¹⁵ According to the “Public Opinion Survey on the Self-Defense Forces and Defense Issues” released by the Government Public Relations Office of the Cabinet Office at a press conference on March 6, 2023, the most common reason for being interested in the SDF was “response to various situations such as large-scale disasters” (53.1%), followed by “Japan.” The result was significantly higher for “Because it is an organization that protects peace and independence” (28.9%). Adding “Because it works for peace and security of the international community” (10.3%) to the previous percentage (28.9%), and the total percentage of respondents was 39.2%.

vention,” a term coined by the author himself.¹⁶

For example, the year prior to the September 19, 2015, vote on the so-called new security legislation in December 2014, on the 17th, Katsutoshi Kouno, then chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited the U.S. Department of Defense and met individually with then Chief of Staff of the Army Odierno, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force Spencer, Deputy Secretary of Defense Work, Chief of Naval Operations Grinert, Chief of Staff of Naval Operations Swift, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Dempsey, Marine Corps. He has met separately with the commandant and others and has returned home with a promise that the new Japan's security legislation will be enacted into law as soon as possible.¹⁷

As the examples provided illustrate, specific involvement or intervention in defense policy by the SDF uniformed forces has not only already begun to a considerable extent but also has played an extremely important role in the realization of the policy. The problem is that we are now faced with the reality of having to decide whether such defense intervention is or not. Of course, the SDFs are constitutionally unacceptable, but their existence has been legally permitted. Therefore, the question of whether to intervene is directly related to the question of how to judge the unconstitutional legality of the SDF.

(5) On the Pros and Cons of Defense Diplomacy

The concept of defense diplomacy and its actualization should be distinguished sharply, but here I examine the latter in particular. In other words, it is an issue that must be pointed out from a policy perspective.

First, the Constitution maintains a constitutional position and with respect to the example cited, Article 9 of the Constitution implies that Japan does not allow defense diplomacy or defense intervention and, moreover, does not allow any kind of military, nor does it envision any kind of military-related organization or law. These are judgments that cannot be compromised by a constitutional posture.

Second, if Japan accepts the historical process that produced the Peace Constitution, the country must be prepared to defend it by communicating to the world that Japan will never again be either a perpetrator or a victim, and to regain the trust that was lost in the process. Japan must have the resolve to protect the Peace Constitution, and it is this resolve that it abandons through defense diplomacy and the defense intervention that is derived from that process.

Third, that the defense and military power is indispensable as a guarantee of diplomatic power is clearly a wrong way of thinking. This way of thinking is related to the belief that deterrence is militarily irrational and, moreover, only an illusion. The question is whether

¹⁶ My main work is *Kindai Nihon seigun kankei kenkyu*, published by Iwanami Shoten (2005), in which I discuss the American-based theory of political-military relations. I address whether politics and military coexistence is possible by considering examples from Japan, the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the former Soviet Union, China, and other countries. In addition, I have written two books on civilian control, *Civilian Control: Where Is the Self-Defense Forces Going* (Iwanami Shoten, 2005) and *Crumbling Civilian Control: Self-Defense Forces Current Stage* (Rokufyu Shuppan, 2019). For many years, I have been studying the *Runaway Self-Defense Forces* (Chikuma Shobo, Chikuma Shinsho, 2016), chapter 5 (Uniformed Group Deviant Acts: History of Self-Defense Forces Incidents). I wrote that the SDF coup attempt plan “Mitsuya Incident” (1963), then Chairman of the Joint Staff Council Hirooomi Kurisu, who was dismissed for his “extrajudicial remarks” (WING, January 1978), “Self-defense and deterrence are difficult concepts to coexist”. The issue of the operation of the constitutional revision plan by the Ground Self Defense Forces (GSDF) cadres (December 2004) and the issue of the GSDF Information Security Force, which is responsible for monitoring the people of the Self-Defense Forces, were discussed in detail in the January 1978 issue of WING.

¹⁷ So the record of the meeting, “The Summary of the Results of the Revised Draft During the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Staff to the U.S.,” is introduced in detail in my book *Runaway Self-Defense Forces* in chapter 1 (After the Security Law Self-Defense Forces Japan Defense Policy New Stage).

reliance on the theory of deterrence, which only spurs the chain of military expansion and increases the possibility of war, can really lead to security. Everyone knows that nations that have become military powers through deterrence, including Japan in the prewar period and the United States in the postwar period, have been engaged in wars of aggression.

The Soviet Union has been replaced by Soviet Russia as a military power, which is pursuing an invasion of Ukraine because of its military power; domestic military organization expansion and policy interventions have become apparent in defense forces.

Diplomatic power secured by force (armaments), be it military power or otherwise, is not really diplomatic power.¹⁸ The position that stronger diplomatic power is exerted by military power is itself evidence that the thinking has degenerated into a lack of trust in diplomatic power. It is nothing more than a justification for military power. These issues are also deeply related to the security theories that are appearing more and more frequently. The Kishida administration's security theory is guaranteed by military power, as if the word "military" were used as a pillow. It has been taken for granted, and in the overwhelming public opinion and in the debates and policies of various political parties, this military security theory seems to have taken on a life of its own without sufficient discussion.

My view of defense diplomacy may come from the fact that the concept of defense diplomacy is only narrowly defined. However, the idea of defense and diplomacy being integrated or equalized implied in this concept is a very dangerous concept from the viewpoint of civilian control and considering the relationships between politics and military defense (military) and diplomacy are never equal. The military is subordinate to diplomacy, not driven by defense, nor is diplomacy driven by defense. They are neither parallel, and their cues should be different. At the same time, the basic principle of political-military relations is ignored or disregarded.

3. Examining New Security Policy Theories

(1) What is security?

Then we must again ask what exactly is meant by security. The concept of security is very broad, and within it lies the idea of "national defense military security." Because it is a broad concept, national security is a subordinate concept of security. Thus, when thinking about security, the subject, value, and means are grasped in a unified manner in the trinity relationship, and policy is proposed as an extension of that relationship.

In the Cold War era, this trinity relationship was briefly described in a certain sense. For example, the United States (the subject) tried to secure and maintain its position (= hegemony) as the leading country in the world by means of free thought (value) and military power (method), while the former Soviet Union also tried to maintain and spread the value of socialism by military power. We have called this conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union the "Cold War Structure" or the "Cold War System."

Entering the post-Cold War era, a situation of pluralization or proliferation of security concepts will emerge. There, we are confronted with the realities of subject multiplicity, value diversification, and means absolutization and sophistication due to nuclear

¹⁸ In this connection, Hitoshi Tanaka, former vice minister of foreign affairs of Japan, stated "that powerful military power is indispensable for powerful diplomatic power is a violent argument and totally wrong" (a@tanaka.Diplomat, December 26, 2022.) Mr. Tanaka, who has a wealth of experience and many achievements, makes a serious point.

proliferation. The diversification of subjects, values, and methods in the post-Cold War era has become a reality in contemporary international politics.

The fundamental reason for this is the uncertainty and opaqueness of the security concept in the post-Cold War era. Therefore, it is necessary to reconstruct the concept of security that can respond immediately to a situation in the post-Cold War era.

Security is said to have two meanings. The first is “the condition of being secure,” and the second is the “means of being secure”. In Japanese, however, “safety” and “security” are often understood separately. The question of what kind of state is called “security” is also a major issue, but conventionally the focus has been on the means of “security.” When we speak of security, the emphasis has been on “assurance.” The theory of collective security was discussed at the League of Nations,, but the collective security system with the entire United Nations as a single entity was not realized.

(2) Can the Theory of Non-Armed Non-Alignment Be Established?

Several issues are presented next that should be the subject of security theory discussions from this point forward. Currently, a stream of research and proposals exists from academic societies—including the Japan Peace Association—and established political parties and civic organizations that proposes alternatives to the military security that is being promoted by the government. Several are discussed next in the hope that the discussion will deepen the security theory in the future.

First, we must promote a change in the status quo and thorough pursuit of demilitarization with constitutional pacifism: unilateral demilitarization.

The concept of unilateral disarmament is part of this discussion. To overcome a unilateral initiative, the initiative must be extended to a multilateral structure. The 50s British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) demanded unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain. There is much to learn from that example. Solidarity and joint action with our Asian neighbors are two ways to realize the demilitarization of East Asia and the creation of an Asian nuclear-free zone.

Second, we must advocate for the demilitarization of global society, disabling nuclear forces that physically support the U.S. hegemonic principle and further restraining advanced forces (through base removal, withdrawal of U.S. forces, disarmament, and so on), more specifically, the *Anti-Ballistic Missile System Restriction Treaty* (ABM Treaty: Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, 1972–2001), the United States–Soviet treaty on limiting ballistic interceptor missiles. The ABM Treaty and the conclusion of a new *Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty* are aimed at eliminating all intermediate-range ballistic and cruise missiles defined as intermediate-range nuclear forces.

Third, we must thoroughly communicate that the theory of deterrence is an illusion. The U.S. side today claims that Japan should “deter” its enemies by equipping itself with an “enemy base attack capability” and that the Southwest Islands should be the front line for this purpose. To overcome the critical situation. Which is to denounce the reality that before the war, Okinawa and the Nansei Islands were “thrown away” for the defense of the mainland, and after the war they were about to be “thrown away” for the defense of the U.S. mainland.

The Japanese government's deterrence is a punitive deterrence that guarantees the ability to counterattack, as clarified in the “Three Documents,” and it is counted as a countermeasure offensive force that assumes actual operation and is actually in operation.

It is also called “denial deterrence.”¹⁹ However, deterrence eventually leads to a chain of arms proliferation, which literally leads to a security dilemma.

Fourth, whether the construction of a demilitarized and non-aligned Japan was the ultimate objective of the postwar constitutional movement must be confirmed. The principle of American hegemony has been internalized in the Japanese nation. In order to follow the U.S. hegemony that has led the postwar international order and to break away from the imperial Japan inheritance principle, it is essential to thoroughly implement constitutional pacifism. In other words, we must put our feet down on the global ground and start a new effort in a way that considers the positive aspects of anti-war and non-war ideas and movements, such as the Vietnam anti-war movement and the security treaty struggle, and transcends the limitation that these were unilateralist ideas and movements.

Demilitarization and non-alignment here do not merely reflect the absence of armies; the principles of demilitarization and non-violence are also inclusive of gender relations, urban and rural relations, and capital and labor relations to achieve demilitarization in social, ideological, and cultural processes. This leads to a process of change in the direction of reducing and eliminating oppressive power relations. After all, a demilitarization policy transcends national frameworks. Awareness that the people are the agents of change and that they should position themselves as such is essential.

Fifth, we must go beyond the existing nation-state. The first step is to lower the threshold of the nation-state through joint action by the people of Asia and to build an Asian peace community beyond the nation-state. This concept itself is being boldly discussed by the Japan Peace Association and other academic societies, political parties, and civil movements, but it remains unfocused.

What is generally implied here as a goal is to dismantle the physical basis of state violence military forces, to overcome the theory of national security that defines its existence, and to liberate the state from its monopoly on violence. What should be introduced from there is a policy of unarmed neutrality. The foreign policy of non-aligned neutrality is the ideal security theory.

Sixth, we should consider whether it is possible to construct a “security without enemies” policy.

Is it possible to construct a standing theory of military power that does not pose a threat to its neighbors? Egon Karlheinz Bahr (1922–2015)²⁰ discussed how to accept the “structural impossibility of attack” as a pressing security issue and how to turn it into policy. Bahr was a well-known politician in the inner circle of Willy Brandt, the German Chancellor. In order to go beyond the theory of deterrence, a “de-deterrence theory” is expected. This “structural impossibility of attack” is the basic principle of Japan’s defense strategy, which is based on the premise of maintaining a certain defense capability at the “minimum necessary” level. It is not clear to what extent the meaning of “structural impossibility of attack” is based on the assumption that capability is guaranteed as a coping power.

Therefore, it would be reasonable to interpret this more positive interpretation as not

¹⁹ For more information on the diversity of the security and deterrence concept, see Keitaro Ushirogata, “Transition of the concept of deterrence: Multilayered and redefined” (Kaikankousenryakukenkyuu) (Maritime Self-Defense Force Executive Staff College), Volume 5, No. 2 [Volume 10], December 2015).

²⁰ On Egon Baar, see Forktmeyer, Andreas, translated by Kohei Okada, West German Diplomacy and Egon Baar (Sangensha, 2014). The following is also in Mike Hendrik’s discussion of Egon Bahr and the issue of Japan possessing nuclear weapons: Sprötte, Maik Hendrik (2014). “Egon Bahr und sein Japan-Besuch 1969: Japanische Atomwaffen als ‘Frage des Willens, nicht des Könnens’?” *Bochumer Jahrbuch zur Ostasienforschung (BJOAF)*. 6/2012.

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possessing any military power in the sense that the premise of demilitarization is a condition for the structural impossibility of attack. This kind of argument may be harsh at a time when bold steps toward militarism, such as deterrence and the ability to counterattack, are being boldly discussed considering the changing international situation. However, it is precisely in such an international situation that it is essential to discuss security from the standpoint of demilitarization and non-alignment.

Conclusion

The process of the transformation of Japan's security policy can only be discussed in a separate article, but a topic that will be very important to consider in the future is the issue of Japan's arms exports. *The Three Principles on Arms Exports* have already been effectively abandoned and replaced by the *Three Principles on Defense Equipment Transfer*, which effectively permits arms exports, albeit with conditions. On April 5, 2023, Japan announced the "Official Security Assistance" (OSA), which is described in the *National Security Strategy* as a system to provide defense equipment to so-called "like-minded countries" free of charge.

The four countries to which Japan will initially provide defense equipment for the time being are the Philippines, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Fiji, but Japan likely will increase the number of countries it provides defense equipment to depending on future developments. In other words, Japan has literally changed its course from a nonmilitary diplomatic strategy to a full-fledged arms export approach.

The publication of the "Three Documents" summarized in this essay, the theory of defense diplomacy advocated by some academic societies and researchers, and the lifting of the ban on arms exports under the OSA system clearly constitute the exact opposite of the demilitarization and non-alignment policy that the Japanese Constitution aims for. In this turning point of Japan's security policy, more active research needs to be conducted not only on the pros and cons of such a security policy but also on the framework of the concept of a world without war.

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* This paper is an English translation of a previously published article in Japanese (Atsushi Koketsu, “Japan’s Security Policy at a Turning Point : Prospects for the ‘Three Security Documents’ and Non-Armed and Non-Aligned Theory,” *The Journal of Research Institute for the History of Global Arms Transfer*, No. 16, 2023).