

Japan's Remilitarisation

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The International Institute for Strategic Studies

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GLOSSARY

ADF	Australian Defence Force
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Forum)
ASDF	Air Self Defense Force
ATD-X	Advanced Technology Demonstration-X
ATSMIL	Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BADGE	Base Air Defense Ground Environment
BJOCC	Bilateral Joint Operations Coordination Center
BMD	ballistic-missile defence
CENTCOM	Central Command
CRG	Central Readiness Group
CRIO	Cabinet Intelligence Research Office
CSICE	Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CTF	Combined Task Force
DDH	Destroyer-Helicopter
DFAA	Defense Facilities Administration Agency
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DPRI	Defense Policy Review Initiative
FHI	Fuji Heavy Industries
FMS	foreign military sales
GE	General Electric
GPR	Global Posture Review
GSDF	Ground Self Defense Force
GSMIA	General Security of Military Information Agreement
HNS	host-nation support
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency

ICBM	intercontinental ballistic missile
IED	improvised explosive device
IFSEC	US–Japan Industry Forum for Security Cooperation
IHI	Ishikawajima Harima Heavy Industries
IIPS	Institute for International Policy Studies
IPCL	International Peace Cooperation Law
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IGS	intelligence-gathering satellite
JADGE	Japan Air Defense Ground Environment
JADSC	Japan–Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation
JCG	Japan Coast Guard
JDA	Japan Defense Agency
JDAM	joint direct attack munitions
JNSC	Japan National Security Council
JSC	Joint Staff Council
JSDF	Japan Self Defense Forces
JSO	Joint Staff Office
KHI	Kawasaki Heavy Industries
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MBT	main battle tank
MELCO	Mitsubishi Electric Company
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MHI	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSA	Maritime Safety Agency
MSDF	Maritime Self Defense Force
MTDP	Mid-Term Defense Programme
NBC	nuclear, biological and chemical
NDPG	National Defense Programme Guidelines
NDPO	National Defense Programme Outline
NIDS	National Institute of Defense Studies
NPA	National Police Agency
NPR	National Police Reserve
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSF	National Safety Force

NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NSRG	Congressional National Security Research Group
ODA	official development assistance
OEF	<i>Operation Enduring Freedom</i>
PAC-3	<i>Patriot Advanced Capability-3</i>
PKO	peacekeeping operation
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
PLH	patrol large helicopter
PRC	Policy Research Council
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PT	Project Team
RSSML	Replenishment Support Special Measures Law
SACO	Special Action Committee on Okinawa
SAR	synthetic-aperture radar
SBU	Special Boarding Unit
SCC	Security Consultative Committee
SDPJ	Social Democratic Party of Japan
SHDOS	Strategic Headquarters for the Development of Outer Space
SLOC	sea lines of communication
SM-3 BLK IA	Standard Missile-3 Block IA
SM-3 BLK IIA	Standard Missile-3 Block IIA
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SOG	Special Operations Group
SST	Special Security Team
TRDI	Technical Research and Development Institute
TSD	Trilateral Security Dialogue
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
UNMIN	UN Political Mission in Nepal
UNMIS	UN Mission in Sudan
UNPKO	UN peacekeeping operations
USAF	US Air Force
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

INTRODUCTION

Japan embarked upon a rapid, even radical, development of its security policy under the administration of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi between April 2001 and September 2006. Japan also responded proactively to the 11 September attacks and the 'war on terror', passing an Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law (ATSMML) and dispatching the Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) from November 2001 onwards to provide logistical support in the Indian Ocean for US and international coalition forces engaged in *Operation Enduring Freedom*. In Iraq and Kuwait, the Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF) and Air Self Defense Force (ASDF) were deployed from 2004 under the Iraqi Reconstruction Law on non-combat reconstruction missions as part of the US-led 'coalition of the willing'. Koizumi's administration also set in train a series of initiatives to strengthen the Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF) and extend the scope and functions of the US-Japan alliance. Japan's revised National Defense Programme Guidelines (NDPG) and Mid-Term Defense Programme (MTDP) of 2004 began the process of converting the JSDF into a more mobile military geared towards regional and global deployments.

Japan committed itself to bilateral technological and strategic cooperation on ballistic-missile defence (BMD) with the US, possibly to a greater extent than any other ally. Japan and the US concluded the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) in 2006, facilitating the realignment of US bases in Japan, promoting the greater integration of US and Japanese military forces and enabling the US to utilise its bases in Japan for global security functions. Because of these changes, Japan was seen to be moving towards the increased militarisation of its security stance, and to be emerging as a more assertive, 'normal' military power and reliable US ally.¹

Following Koizumi's departure from the premiership in September 2006, his immediate successor, Shinzo Abe, appeared set to take Japanese security policy in yet more radical directions. Abe unveiled plans for a US-style Japan National Security Council (JNSC) to replace the existing more cumbersome Security Council of Japan, and proposed investigating ways to circumvent Japan's self-imposed ban on the exercise of the right of collective self-defence, revise Article 9 of the constitution and forge closer military links with the US, Australia, India and NATO, with the implicit intention of responding to China's rise. Under Abe's administration, Japanese policymakers even reacted to the North Korean nuclear test in October 2006 by attempting to start a debate on Japan's own nuclear options. Abe's plans for a more assertive Japan on a more equal footing with the US were, however, derailed when his governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was heavily defeated in elections in July 2007, turning over control of the House of Councillors (the upper chamber of the Japanese parliament, the National Diet) to the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The DPJ sought to block renewal of the ATSMML extending the MSDF's mission in the Indian Ocean, triggering Abe's political downfall in

September 2007. Two months later, in November 2007, the MSDF was forced to withdraw from the Indian Ocean and return to Japan.

Abe's successor, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, proved much more cautious on security policy. Although Fukuda did succeed in passing a new Replenishment Support Special Measures Law (RSSML) enabling the MSDF's redeployment to support *Operation Enduring Freedom* in January 2008, thereby keeping his pledge to then US President George W. Bush to maintain a Japanese presence in the Indian Ocean, he was forced to rely on the extraordinary measure of using the LDP's two-thirds 'super-majority' in the House of Representatives lower chamber to override DPJ opposition in the upper chamber. To placate the LDP's dovish coalition partner New Komeito, Fukuda also scaled back Japan's military activities in support of the international coalition, restricting them to refuelling and the supply of water. Fukuda's precarious domestic political situation meant that he was equally hesitant in other areas of security cooperation, shelving plans for a JNSC and backing away from an investigation into the ban on collective self-defence. Fukuda's premiership was also beset with a series of scandals connected with the Ministry of Defense and the JSDF, involving corrupt military procurement practices, potential leaks of military information and failures of civilian control. The impression of scandal was compounded in February 2007, when a Japanese *Aegis* destroyer failed to follow safety procedures and collided with a civilian fishing vessel off the Japanese coast, killing the two-man crew. These scandals inflicted severe damage on the reputation of the Japanese military establishment and complicated the political debate on Japan's future military stance.

Fukuda's main preoccupation thus became to control these scandals, and his eventual fall from power in September 2008, much as with Abe's, was the result of domestic political fail-

ures compounded by travails over security policy. In mid 2008, he toyed with introducing a new permanent dispatch law (*kokyu hoan*) for JSDF international security cooperation, so as to obviate the need for separate time-bound laws and for extensive National Diet debates over each overseas deployment, and to enable the GSDF and ASDF to fulfil non-combat logistical and reconstruction missions in Afghanistan. Fukuda was frustrated in this endeavour, however, in part by the DPJ, but also by opposition from within the LDP itself and from New Komeito, and by public opposition, all of which were aware of the risks of involvement on the ground in Afghanistan. By late 2008, Fukuda had realised that the DPJ would again block the renewal of the RSSML and demonstrate the inability of his administration to maintain its most public promises of international security cooperation.

Fukuda's replacement, Taro Aso, has so far proved bolder than his predecessor, forcing through the renewal of the RSSML in December 2008 and ordering the dispatch of the MSDF in March 2009 to participate in new international anti-piracy missions off Somalia. However, Aso's attempts to maintain a more proactive security stance face similar problems to his predecessors'; his position as prime minister looks uncertain amid domestic political and economic problems, and his freedom of action in security affairs remains constrained by New Komeito and the DPJ.

Radicalism or retrenchment in Japan's security policy?

Has Japan's security policy become moribund after Koizumi's audacious premiership, or is Japan still set on strengthening its military stance, despite changes in political leadership? To some observers, Japan appears to be reasserting its traditional preference for a low-profile defence posture and highly limited alliance arrangements with the US, seemingly confirming the

view that strong, even immovable, internal resistance makes deeper security commitments impossible.² Koizumi's tenure, and the significant remilitarisation of Japanese security that occurred during it, are seen as a short-term aberration. For others, Japan is continuing to slice away at its post-war military constraints. In this view, the caution of Koizumi's successors will prove untenable as Japan faces growing international pressures to adopt a more active security role.³

The objective of this book is to engage in the debate on Japan's post-Koizumi security stance. In particular, it seeks to gauge whether Japan has retrenched its military posture, or whether it has continued on the more radical path evident since 2001. It complements and builds on an earlier Adelphi Paper which covered the period up to mid 2004, updating and adjusting the analysis to take account of the last five years, and looking ahead to future changes in Japan's security policy.⁴ The book analyses the developments in security policy just outlined, including the Koizumi legacy, security planning under Abe, Fukuda and Aso, fluctuations in US–Japan alliance ties, and defence-related scandals. It also seeks to place these issues within wider, longer-term trends in Japan's defence capabilities, US–Japan alliance cooperation and domestic debates on Japan's security policy.

This is an opportune time to re-examine Japan's security trajectory in light of the preparation of a revised NDPG and MTDP for release in 2009; the implementation of a series of key Ministry of Defense and JSDF reforms from 2009 onwards; and the transition from the Bush era to the Barack Obama presidency in the US, bringing with it new expectations for the US–Japan alliance, and during which the two countries will mark the 50th anniversary of the revision in 1960 of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States and Japan. All of these developments will contribute to consol-

identifying existing trends, setting a new long-term agenda for Japan's security policy.

In order to provide context and a means to gauge short-term versus long-term changes in Japan's security policy and military stance, this book focuses on several key aspects of security policy. All of these areas – defence expenditure, the size and power-projection capabilities of the armed forces, civil-military relations, military-industrial complexes, external military and alliance commitments and domestic institutional and normative military constraints – are 'classic' indicators for calibrating the degree of long-term structural change in any state's security policy.⁵ However, they are especially pertinent to Japan because, in all cases, they constitute self-imposed and self-declaratory standards.⁶ Hence, if it can be shown – and this book argues that it can – that Japan has progressively eroded or breached its own constraints, a clear picture can be established of Japan's long-term remilitarisation.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the characteristics and evolution of Japan's security policy in the post-war period, in order to provide the essential baselines for judging the extent of its remilitarisation during and after the Koizumi administration. The chapter discusses the range of regional and global security challenges facing Japan, which have propelled it along its more proactive military path.

Chapter 2 investigates the first specific, long-term indicator of Japan's move to a remilitarised security stance by revealing changes in Japanese defence expenditure and JSDF capabilities. The chapter uses a range of information, including statistics relating to deferred payments and the 'paramilitary' Japan Coast Guard (JCG) unavailable in previous studies, to demonstrate that the defence budget does not represent an absolute or immutable constraint on Japanese procurement programmes. In contrast to recent short-term speculation about retrench-

ment in Japanese security planning, this chapter presents long-term evidence of proactive trends in JSDF procurement, for five or ten years hence, which indicate growing power-projection capabilities, and consequently evolving options to expand participation in US-led multinational and UN operations in East Asia and globally.

Chapter 3 turns to civilian control in Japan and its durability as a prime constraint on Japanese military ambitions. It demonstrates that traditional civilian control structures have been eroding over the last decade, a process accelerated under Koizumi, and continuing apace under his successors. It focuses on a set of defence-related scandals as manifestations of longer-term trends in the erosion of civilian control. The chapter considers how Ministry of Defense and JSDF reform efforts are creating the long-term foundation Japan needs to implement a potentially even more proactive security policy.

Chapter 4 gauges long-term structural change in Japan's security policy by considering the emergence of domestic and international 'military-industrial complexes'. The chapter examines Japan's changing defence production and the impetus it is creating for structural collusion between political, bureaucratic, military and industrial interests and the effects on procurement decisions. It also considers how Japan's changing defence production is creating transnational linkages with US industry that help tighten US–Japan alliance ties and contribute to breaches of the ban on arms exports – two new key manifestations of external militarisation.

Chapter 5 examines Japan's overseas military engagements in the form of the deployment of military forces through the developing mechanisms of the US–Japan alliance and participation in UN-centred military activities. Just as importantly, Japan's commitments are considered in terms of support for US power projection from Japanese bases for operations in

East Asia, the Middle East and beyond. This is because, all too often, Japan's remilitarisation is assessed in terms of a false dichotomy – moves to independently deploy the JSDF overseas versus the alleged constraints of the US–Japan alliance on Japanese military ambitions. Simultaneously, observers have tended to neglect Japan's significant security role in providing bases which help to underwrite, physically and financially, the global US military presence. It is vital to understand that Japan's support for the infrastructure of US global military power is an extension of its own remilitarisation.

The chapter looks at post-Koizumi developments in US–Japan security cooperation, and shows how far domestic political tensions have induced Japan to pull back from alliance commitments. It argues that, since Koizumi, there has been some scaling back of more ambitious US–Japan alliance cooperation beyond East Asia, and there have been problems in implementing elements of the DPRI, the realignment of bases in Okinawa and shocks to alliance confidence over responses to North Korea's nuclearisation. However, it is also argued that alliance ties remain strong, and that the most significant elements of the DPRI, including the co-location of US and Japanese command and control systems and the US use of its bases in Japan to project power beyond the Asia-Pacific, are proceeding regardless of current political debates. In addition, the chapter considers Japan's search for new means to expand external military commitments. It explores the ways in which Japanese policymakers have made special efforts, often in the face of domestic opposition, to forge new security ties with Australia and India, to consider deployment to Afghanistan and to dispatch the JSDF on new anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden.

Chapter 6 analyses long-term changes in the key domestic institutional and normative constraints on Japan's military

stance. The chapter investigates the strengthened legitimacy of the JSDF in the eyes of the public; a new propensity to debate transgressing Japan's non-nuclear principles; current and long-term trends in moves towards revision and reinterpretation of Article 9 of the so-called 'Peace Constitution'; and Japanese public attitudes towards military and patriotic education and the use of armed force for national security ends. It demonstrates that, in all of these areas, Japanese resistance to an enhanced societal status for the JSDF and the efficacy of military power is being eroded, creating in turn a new long-term basis of support for Japan's wider international security ambitions.

Japan's regional and global significance

Taken together, this book presents a set of comprehensive and objective indicators which point towards Japan's continuing remilitarisation. It provides evidence that Japan's security policy is undergoing long-term structural change, predisposing it towards a more assertive military stance, and that domestic political machinations have not halted this process. In fact, the formulation of much of Japan's security policy remains insulated from political fluctuations, and many security-related issues believed to have impeded a more assertive security stance – such as defence procurement and defence-related scandals – are actually manifestations of ongoing structural change, creating the basis for further reform and potentially greater dynamism.

Japan's continuing remilitarisation has important ramifications for international security. The use here of the term 'remilitarisation' should not be read as an alarmist warning that Japan is necessarily intent on reverting to the kind of state it became between 1931 and 1945. Japan remains a constrained military actor, reluctant to pursue the full potential panoply of national military capabilities, limited by its junior

alliance relationship with the US and its strong residual anti-militaristic sentiment. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that Japan, judged by the objective international yardstick of the key indicators of remilitarisation, which in turn are Japan's own benchmarks, is set upon a long-term trajectory that will see it assuming a more assertive regional and global security role. Japan can certainly in no way be said to be demilitarising or to have reached stasis in its security policy. All the long-term indications point to activism and expansion in its military capabilities and international commitments.

Such expansion clearly affects the East Asian power balance; indeed, in some respects Japan is engaged in a low-key arms race with China, and is hedging its nuclear stance vis-à-vis North Korea. Japan's attempts to enhance security ties with Australia, South Korea and India also impact upon the regional security landscape. Just as crucial, though, is Japan's approach to its alliance with the US. Japan's increasing support for, and participation in, US regional power projection holds the key to Washington's attempts to deter a nuclearising North Korea and a rising China. Similarly, the expanding functional and geographical scope of US-Japan alliance cooperation increasingly holds the key to efforts by US administrations to maintain their state's global military hegemony. This logic is likely to induce Obama's administration and its Japanese counterparts to keep pushing ever outwards the envelope of bilateral military cooperation.