

# Lessons for Peace Learned from Canadian Experiences

by TAJIMA Takashi

At the annual conference of the Japan Association for Canadian Studies which was held in October, 2007, a counsellor from the Canadian embassy delivered a presentation on peacekeeping operations (PKO). PKOs were originally established as an initiative of the Canadian government in the midst of the Suez Crisis. According to the counsellor, after the end of the Cold War, and with the rise of internal conflicts, the mission of PKOs was transformed to protecting the lives and human rights of civilians. Currently more than 25 multinational peacekeeping and peace operations are being conducted worldwide, in cooperation with not only the United Nations but also regional organisations such as NATO in Afghanistan, EU in Congo, and AU in Darfur. In those operations, she went on to point out, the coordination of the military, police forces, diplomatic missions, aid agencies, and human rights experts has become increasingly crucial. The Peacebuilding Commission was thus created at the United Nations with Canadian support in order to address such new challenges. The Canadian government has sent more than 20,000 soldiers to Afghanistan and more than 2,100 police officers for the peace operations all over the world. She also suggested that the dispatch of the Japanese police force, which is well known in the world for its well-trained ability, if realised, could contribute immensely to international peace support operations. She concluded her talk by mentioning that Canadians support Canada's active participation in peace operations as natural responsibility of a G8 nation and one of the richest countries.

Following the Canadian counsellor, AOI Chiyuki, Associate Professor at Aoyama Gakuin University, delivered a talk on humanitarian intervention. Her presentation started with an explanation of the process by which the notion of the "responsibility to protect," originally proposed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) which was established by the proposal of Canada, came to be adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005. According to this concept, national sovereignty is respected insofar as the state carries out its responsibility to protect its own citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and violations of human rights. If the state fails to live up to this responsibility, it is argued the UN Security Council will then be endowed with the authority to act to protect citizens as its own responsibility. Introducing the concept of "responsibility" might help the UN regain its authority, though it remains to be seen exactly to what extent the inherent tension between national sovereignty and human rights can be reduced and the UN can regain its authority. Dr. AOI

pointed out that the Canadian government puts a stronger focus on “freedom from repression” than poverty and that the ICISS presented the notion of “responsibility to protect” by regarding the sovereignty not as a ruling power but as a responsibility. She also argued that this is a theoretical attempt to justify UN intervention by making the notion of national sovereignty less absolute. She concluded her talk by saying that more constructive discussions are required on such issues as the institutionalisation of intervention and the unilateral interventions without UN authorisation.

Given such a rapid change in the concept of international peace and security, the current situation in Japan where even such a question as Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law which does not mean to involve military operations, while having direct meaning for Japan’s national interest to defend the sea lane, is faced with some strong opposition seems to be really deplorable as a serious lack of international insight.

**(This is the English translation of an article by Mr. TAJIMA Takashi, Visiting Professor of Toyo Eiwa University, which originally appeared on the BBS "Giron-Hyakushutsu" of GFJ on November 16, 2007.)**