

JAPAN - INDO-PACIFIC DIALOGUE

Outline of Discussion



The Global Forum of Japan (GFJ) organized "**The Japan - Indo-Pacific Dialogue : Free and Open Indo-Pacific Initiative and Maritime Order**" in Tokyo on January 21, 2019, under the co-sponsorship of The Japan Forum on International Relations (JFIR), Meiji Institute of Global Affairs (MIGA), Meiji Organization for International Collaboration, Pathfinder Foundation, and "Routledge Studies on Think Asia."

The "Dialogue" featured such eminent panelists both from overseas and Japan as follows:

[Overseas side]

- Jayanath COLOMBAGE Director, Pathfinder Foundation Centres for Indo-lanka Initiatives and Law of the Sea (Sri Lanka)
- Kerry GERSHANECK Visiting Scholar, National Chengchi University, Taiwan / former Senior U.S. Department of the Navy Strategic Communications Director (the U.S)
- Jagannath PANDA Research Fellow, Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses / Editor for "Routledge Studies on Think Asia" (India)

[Japanese side]

- ITO Go Academic Governor GFJ / Director, MIGA / Professor, Meiji University
- WATANABE Mayu President, GFJ / Vice President, JFIR
- SUZUKI Taketo Professor, Meiji University
- SATO Koichi Professor, J.F. Oberlin University
- WATANABE Shino Professor, Sophia University
- BANSHO Koichiro Lieutenant General (Ret.), the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF)
- YAMADA Yoshihiko Professor, Tokai University
- HATAKEYAMA Kyoko Associate Professor, Kansai Gaidai University

(In order of appearance in the program)

The “Dialogue” was open to public, attended by 87 participants in total, among whom lively discussions were held in two sessions, “Toward Establishing the Maritime Order in Asia” and “For the Progress of ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific Initiative’.”

The highlights of the comments by the panelists from overseas are as follows:

JAYANATH COLOMBAGE



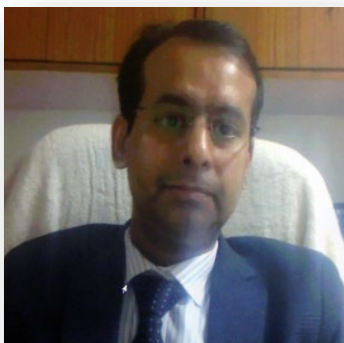
The international community used to be a unipolar structure centering on the United States. However, China has risen, and a strategic competition between the United States has occurred, which has spread to the Indian Ocean. In the Indian Ocean, there are various competitions, conflicts and problems from actors including not only large countries but also small countries and non-state actors. Meanwhile, the Indian Ocean is at the center of world trade, with 70% of the world's oil and 50% of its containers passing. Therefore, it is important that rules-based maritime order, respect for international treaties, freedom of navigation be secured.

KERRY GERSHANECK

The Indo-Asia-Pacific strategy of the United States is an enhancement of the former "rebalance" and "pivot" strategies. In terms of strategy, it is natural that there is a security area at the core, but it also includes other areas such as economy and environmental protection. Under the circumstances, the Japan-US alliance should work together to mitigate any destabilizing factors in the region. However, the Japan-US alliance has a flaw that it has no useful command and control system. In order to make up for this, it is important to establish and operate an Integrated Ocean Task Force in the future.



JAGANNATH PANDA



For countries in the Indo-Pacific region, there is an important question whether China can be a partner in this region or not. China is an important part of Asia and the Asia-Pacific region and can not be completely excluded. However, just because it can not be excluded, there are currently many challenges to becoming a partner. For China to exist as a partner in the Indo-Pacific region, there will be several requirements. For example, China should consider the interests of small countries suffering from so-called “debt traps” under the “one-zone-one-way” concept. In addition, foreign policy that divides the current ASEAN should be refrained.

[END]

(The GFJ secretariat is responsible for this summary)