

The 2nd Japan-US Dialogue "US-JAPAN Relations under the New Obama Administration" Outline of Discussions

The 2nd Japan-US Dialogue "US-JAPAN Relations under the New Obama Administration" was convened in two sessions with lunch break in between. In the Morning Session on the theme "Overall Assessment of the Foreign Policies of the Obama Administration in Face of the Global Challenges," and in the Afternoon Session on the theme "The Role of the Alliance in the Making of a Regional Order," heated discussion was held among panelists and participants, the outline of which is as follows.

Before the two sessions, Amb. OKAWARA Yoshio, Chairman of GFJ, made opening remarks representing GFJ, in which he stated, "We welcome the fact that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton chose Japan for the first country to visit on her official trip abroad, which signifies the Obama administration's emphasis on its closer relations with Japan. According to the recent public survey, Japanese feel, as before, intimacy to US. Japan-US-China relations, important as they are, could not be a regular triangle but must be a triangle, with two legs of Japan-US alliance as its cornerstone. Next year marks the 50th Anniversary of the conclusion of Japan-US Security Treaty, and this offers a good opportunity for us to redefine the significance thereof."

Morning Session: Overall Assessment of the Foreign Policies of the Obama Administration in Face of the Global Challenges

In the Morning Session, which was chaired by Dr. George D. SCHWAB, President of NCAFP, two Lead Discussants from each of Japan and US made following opening statements.

(i) Amb. Winston LORD, Chairman Emeritus, The International Rescue Committee :

Although I am a registered Republican, I consider myself a centrist. I have also worked for Democratic presidents. As a centrist, I would say Obama has a chance to be a "great" president not just a "good" president, who is a good listener to his opponents, and aims to become a president that would go down in history. Based on reflection on his predecessor, Obama emphasizes multilateral approach in coordination with other countries in the world and deals with a variety of issues in a pragmatic way. I think he is off to a good start.

(ii) Prof. TAKUBO Tadae, Guest Professor, Kyorin University:

The biggest challenge that Japan faces is the question of how to respond to the rising China. China has different faces, and a hegemonic China which is rapidly expanding its military is nothing less than a threat. Japan has three options for the future; a) to further strengthen the Japan-US alliance, b) to seek closer relationships with China, and c) to pursue an independent defense policy. US, in pre-war era, chose pro-China and anti-Japan policy advocated by Stanley Hornbeck and rejected pro-Japan policy advocated by John Antwerp MacMurray. Even today, in US there is a tension between 'strong Japan' faction and 'weak Japan' faction."

(iii) Prof. Donald S. ZAGORIA, Senior Vice President & Project Director of the Northeast Asia Projects, NCAFP: I think Japan needs better public relations with the rest of Asia. While being confronted with such serious

problems as demographic one, i.e., increase in average life expectancy and low birthrate, Japan has some enormous inherent strength and therefore needs to have more confidence in itself. US and Japan have some common interests in such areas as a) recovery from the current economic crisis, b) Af-Pak problem, c) clean energy, d) better relationship with the Muslim world, e) regional security challenges like North Korea, etc. US and Japan should work out some common action program to address such challenges facing both of us.

(iv) Prof. MORIMOTO Satoshi, Professor, Takushoku University:

I have some concern about President Obama's idea of nuclear disarmament or a "nuclear-free world." Should US and Russia sign to extend START I and set out to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals down to no more than 1000, China's nuclear capability rises accordingly. This move could risk destroying the current military balance in East Asia. Should it be the case, we must question the efficacy of US nuclear deterrence which is supposed to provide Japan with the nuclear umbrella.

(v) In the following Free-Discussions, both US and Japanese panelists and participants exchanged frank views, such as;

"Although the Obama administration, in principle, is likely to inherit its North Korean foreign policy from its predecessor, North Korea must, first of all, be determined to be denuclearized and to walk back to the Six-Party talks before US - North Korea relations are normalized. Obama administration, unlike its predecessors, will, for sure, emphasize closer cooperative ties with Japan based on bilateral talks in dealing with North Korean issue."(US side)

"While Japan endorses the nuclear disarmament policy launched by Obama administration, it is imperative that China in addition to US and Russia be involved in the reduction process of nuclear arsenals. Japan is aiming for two seemingly contradictory objectives of nuclear disarmament and protection under the nuclear umbrella. With respect to the latter, we should reconsider the validity of one of Japan's three non-nuclear principles (not to produce, not to possess and not to allow the entry of nuclear weapons into the country), namely, not to allow the entry of nuclear weapons into the country."(Japan side)

Afternoon Session: The Role of the Alliance in the Making of a Regional Order

In the Afternoon Session, which was chaired by Prof. ITO Kenichi, President of GFJ, two Lead Discussants from each of Japan and US made following opening statements.

(i) Mr. Evans REVERE, President & CEO, The Korea Society:

Although there have been some hard feelings and misunderstandings between Washington and Tokyo over the policy towards North Korea, President Obama will listen more carefully to Japanese voices and will put the relation in a much better track. Japan and US have to work closely to engage China in the international community as a "responsible stakeholder." While Obama needs to understand Japan's vision of a regional order in East Asia, Japan needs to be vocal enough to express and elaborate that vision.

(ii) Prof. TAKAHARA Akio, Professor, The University of Tokyo:

When it comes to Japan's relations with China, taking into account its outstanding features in terms of population and area, we should seek a democratic regional regime in East Asia, which is conducive to the sustainable peace and development of the region. While Hu Jintao attributes China's military modernization to national defense purposes, he claims Senkaku Islands, which belongs to Japan, as part of Chinese territory. Although we need to build good relations with China, the Japan-US alliance needs to play a role as public good in the region.

(iii) Mr. Robert DUJARRIC, Director, Institute of Contemporary Japanese Studies at Temple University Japan Campus:

Japan-US alliance is not an alliance based on shared values, as is often claimed. It is easy to prove this by looking at the conflict of views between US and Japan over the question of "comfort women." Another threat to the alliance is Japan's demographic death spiral or dwindling birthrate and an aging population. The gap between Japan and US in the underemployment rate of women in the professional labor force is expanding. If these demographic trends, which are real threats to Japan's national security, are to be left unsolved, Japan's stand in the international community would increasingly be marginalized and the significance of Japan-US Alliance would be downplayed.

(iv) Amb. HIRABAYASHI Hiroshi, Councilor, JFIR:

In order for the Japan-US Alliance to be strengthened, three things have to be considered respectively by Japan and US; for the Japan side, a) to transfer smoothly the Hutenma Airbase, b) to enact a permanent law which allows the dispatch of Self Defense Forces overseas, c) to reinterpret our constitution so that we can exercise the right to collective self-defense, and for the US side, a) to cooperate with Japan to transfer Hutenma Airbase, b) to take appropriate policy towards China and North Korea, c) to regain the credibility of the extended nuclear deterrence of the US vis-à-vis Japan.

(v) In the following Free-Discussions, frank opinions were raised, such as;

"Even though Japan and US in 2005 jointly formulated "Common Strategic Objectives" and thereby agreed upon further developing defense cooperation between the two countries, Hutenma Airbase issue has not been resolved yet. This is the breach and neglect of duty on the part of Japan, which I am afraid would hinder the prospects of future-oriented Japan-US alliance."(US side)

"In order to formulate a regional order in East Asia, reinforcement of Japan-US alliance based upon our 'common values' is indispensable. But on the other hand, with the rise of China, we have to take into account Chinese point of view in dealing with a variety of issues in the region. How to cope with this situation is the challenge that the alliance will face in the future."(Japan side)