

IFRAE/EJARN Colloquium 2019 – June 7-8th, 2019
“THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN UNION-JAPAN RELATIONS:
COMMON CHALLENGES, COMMON RESPONSES”

Inalco, Paris
REPORT

Opening remarks – June 7th

Mr. Yoshihiro Higuchi – Minister, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in France

Mr. Higuchi started by reminding the audience that Japan and the EU have strong relationship lying on common values such as democracy and human rights for example. He then presented the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) as vehicles of the Japan-EU cooperation. Both parties spent more than seven years creating the EPA which represents today 30% of the world’s GDP. Japan recognizes that it is of crucial importance to promote trade through multilateralism, that is why it also made efforts to build the TPP although the US decided to reject it. The TPP entered into force in December 2018, the same year as the EU-Japan EPA, and accounts for 12% of the global trade.

Moreover, in the context of rising tensions between the US and China, which have been coined by many as a “trade war”, Japan-EU cooperation is essential. But this is not the only challenge Japan faces in order to maintain peace in the Asia-Pacific region. Russia is also a tough point even though Prime Minister Abe has made efforts to engage in discussions with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Higuchi also mentioned the threat posed by North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic program, the possible escalation of conflict in the South China sea and natural disasters as examples of the many challenges Japan has to address and admitted during the questions session that Brexit was also a leap into the unknown regarding Japan-EU relations.

He concluded by saying that Japan was very pleased to welcome both the G20 Summit in Osaka and the presidential visit of French President Emmanuel Macron at the end of the month of June 2019.

Mr. Frédéric Grare – Advisor, Indian Ocean, Policy Planning staff (Centre d’analyse et de prévision), French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs

Mr. Grare’s remarks aimed at questioning the French concept of the “Indo-Pacific region”. According to his analysis, the “Indo-Pacific region” is not a geographical reality but rather a construction based on a Western trope. It is now used by governments to frame their politics and can serve security and expansion concerns. He stressed the relevance of the concept to France, which possesses military forces on the many islands that make up the French maritime territory, most notably in the Indian and Pacific oceans. Therefore, this situation makes multilateralism inevitable for France: it must engage in trade with the many powers present in the Indo-Pacific region.

Emphasising the numerous security issues which call for a multilateral approach, he mentioned climate change, which indeed has become a genuine security concern. It threatens the

countries' very survival in this region and serves to remind us that cooperation is required not only with respect to trade, but also over strategic areas, relevant to security. That is why he welcomes investment in partnerships with powers like Japan through agreements like the EPA and SPA.

Panel 1 - Politics and policies

Prof. T.J. Pempel - "Japan, Domestic Politics, and the Quad: A Regional Trade Order and Indo-Pacific Security"

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue - also known as "the Quad" - started as an idea that grew out of a successful military response to the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami in Indian Ocean. Consequently, Japan, the United States, Australia and India who constitute democratic maritime powers, decided to build this informal security dialogue. Prof. Pempel presented the benefits of the Quad for Japan: it strengthens its ties with the US, enables the expansion of its security and diplomatic options, and hedges against China's increasing ambitions in the region. Lastly, it also serves a domestic purpose politically for Prime Minister Abe.

After the Cold War, Japan looked for means to acquire more credibility as a military power. It contributed financially to the 1991 Iraq war but had no "boots on the ground". Therefore, Prime Minister Koizumi decided to make significant changes after 9/11 in order to give the Japanese military a more active role. For example, he raised the legal status of Defence Agency to ministerial level and worked for a closer integration of the US and Japanese forces. In this regard, the Quad is a means to achieve Japan's goal of being seen as a global military power. Moreover, as economic and security issues became increasingly decoupled after the end of the Cold War bipolarity and the ensuing rise of multilateralism, Japan embraced Asian regionalism and encouraged the creation of institutions like ASEAN and AFPEC that could help unify the region and buffer against unwanted global pressures.

However, Japan is facing many domestic challenges nowadays. The Abenomics' three arrows for structural change were not as successful as Abe had hoped and the government debt accounts for more than 200% of Japan's GDP. At a time when the US is still willing to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), it appeared as a solution to the economic difficulties of Japan: it implied stronger links with the US, would help push economic reforms at home and would also include security interests and cover even broader areas like technology for cleaner energy, for example. Despite the withdrawal of the US under the Trump administration, Japan worked to maintain the TPP-11 to help sustain a Global and Regional Liberal Order.

Prof. Pempel expressed his worries regarding the very protectionist policies implemented by President Trump who is taking a wrecking ball to US-Asia relations and consequently, challenging trade liberalism in the region. Abe's response has to create personal ties with Trump to avoid any further estrangement with the US while taking the lead in the signature of the TPP-11 in 2018 and continuing to enhance its regional influence through the Quad.

John Nillson-Wright - "Populisms in Asia"

How do we define populism? Mr. Nillson-Wright pointed out a phenomenon of polarisation of the political life and a shift to the extremes. He took the example of the two established parties in Britain – namely, Labour and the Conservative Party – who seem to slowly disappear whereas extreme parties gain in popularity. This could also be observed during recent elections in Hungary, Italy or even with the election of Donald Trump. Mr. Nillson-Wright highlighted the fact that emotions play a very important role in politics, that is what can explain the increasing power of extreme political parties at present, when people are unhappy with their lives and see their models threatened by globalisation.

However, he observed that in Asia, the old parties remain. He mentioned the case of South Korea where mainstream democratic parties are still very solid. Even during the political crisis of 2017 which led to the impeachment of former President Park Geun-hye, the Supreme Court helped a stable transition and the following presidential elections brought to power a candidate from a traditional mainstream party. This phenomenon could be explained by the fact that Asian countries like South Korea or Japan have more flexible politics that work before anything else to maintain economic stability or by their homogeneous society.

But if we take a closer look, we can see that populism is a pathology that questions values and norms in democratic life. The populists define the world using a moral framework based on intuition rather than rational self-interest, and are fueled by emotions – resent, anger, etc. After the 2008 financial crisis, Europe had to deal with lots of challenges: people were led to question progress itself and governments were not equipped to give an adequate response. As a consequence, we entered an era of “politics of nostalgia” in which the past is mythologised in order to mobilise people.

The British and Japanese political lives share similarities but fear doesn't fuel the parties in Japan and populism doesn't work in the same way. And although there are seeds of nostalgia politics in Japan, the foreign policy for example remains very pragmatic. But we can wonder what could happen in the case of a big disruption and ask ourselves if the existing framework would continue to guarantee stable political parties in Japan, given what we witness elsewhere.

Arnaud Grivaud - “Promoting women in the bureaucracy - A comparison between Japan, France and the UK”

Nowadays, the promotion of women at leadership positions is advocated by many international organisations. But the reality of the promotion of women in the Japanese, French and British public sector, especially in the national bureaucracy, differs from the ideal put forward. The UK and France have in fact implemented effective measures since 43% of the UK Senior Civil Service workers are women and 30% of the managers among the French A+ administration category are women but women in equivalent positions in Japanese bureaucracy represent only 4,8% of the workers. Mr. Grivaud revealed that there is not only a glass ceiling phenomenon but also a horizontal segregation towards women: they are more likely to be transferred to less prestigious departments than strategic ones. In each country, the Ministry of Education and Health are well-staffed with women but the Home Offices or Ministry of Defence or Foreign Affairs are not doing well.

Measures are taken thanks to policy transfers and the circulation of international norms: training, mentoring, creation of incentives (label, awards), etc. But Mr. Grivaud suggested that the

“Three I’s approach” based on ideas, interest and institutions, can be used to help assess what has been done. Ideas refer to the fact that gender equality is an international norm today, but hierarchy constrains measures taken for the promotion of women in bureaucracy. Consequently, interests represent the objectives sought through collective action. Lastly, looking at institutions which can be position-based or career-based, can help understand how to promote women in the bureaucracy.

Panel 2 – Economic challenges compared

Patrick Ström – “Japanese FDI in Sweden – implications of EU-Japan economic relationship and technology upgrading”

Taking a look at trade between EU and Japan, we see that imports and exports are steadily growing. But because of Brexit, the relation between Japan and the UK is now very uncertain. In fact, from mid-2016, investments continued to grow at the same rate in the EU but halved in the UK. Major companies like Honda, Nissan, Sony and Panasonic announced that they would stop investing in the UK.

In this respect, trade cooperation between Japan and Sweden is crucial as they are both free trade-oriented countries. Sweden can firstly be used as a hub for Japan in order to be included in the EU economy after Brexit. This can be illustrated by the growing Japanese mergers and acquisitions (M&A) in Sweden. Several companies seized those opportunities like UniCarriers which constitutes an important niche within forklifts market. Others work on increasing their integration into the EU such as Toyota Material Handling which is making efforts to comply with EU regulations regarding ecological footprint. Mr. Ström highlighted the fact that Japan and Sweden both show increased mutual economic interest which is a positive development in the context of uncertainty as to the long-term impact of Brexit.

Panel 3 – International cooperation

Prof. Kumiko Haba – “Will the EU-Japan EPA drive world trade after Brexit?”

The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement was approved by the Japanese Diet on December 8, 2018 and accounts in 2019 for about 30% of the global GDP and 40% of the world trade. These significant figures led Prof. Haba to wonder if the EU-Japan EPA would be able to influence the world’s politics on economy and analyse what kind outcome his partnership could produce, especially in the difficult context of Brexit in Europe.

The presentation concentrated on comparing the EPA to two other multilateral trade agreements namely, the TPP-11 and the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) – which is still in negotiation – in terms of their share in global GDP, their value of their trade market, the population covered by the free trade economic zone, etc. These initiatives are all the more essential than China is promoting its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Russia aims at developing the “Pacific Russia region”. Russia is also promoting free trade through the Eurasian Economic Union. Both countries pose a challenge to Japan in the region because of their growing economic power.

Nevertheless, free trade is not the only matter in which EU and Japan should cooperate: North Korea's nuclear and ballistic program for instance constitutes a serious threat which is why security cooperation should be encouraged to maintain peace and stability in the region. Prof. Haba added that there is also a need for trans-regional cooperation in particular regarding matters like high-technologies which are at the core of the 21st century's main issues as we can witness through the ongoing GAFHA-Huawei War between China and the US. More than EU-Japan cooperation, EU-Asia cooperation should be promoted to prepare the future New World Order.

Prof. Marie Söderberg - "Japan's Cooperation with the EU in the Nexus of Development and Security"

Prof. Söderberg talked about how legislative changes on the security side as well as a new Development Cooperation Charter in Japan not only opens up for broader cooperation with Japan's main ally the US. It also opens up for more cooperation with the EU and its member states on development and security issues. While EU during the last decades have not had a coherent policy, with the Lisbon Treaty, it now has a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) since 2009. The Union has a leading role in peace-keeping operations. Drawing on both civilian and military assets EU's policy is a comprehensive one that seems to match well with what Japan is trying to achieve with its new "whole of government approach". Both parties also put a strong emphasis on multilateral institutions, in particular on the UN, to promote peace and sustainable development on a global basis.

Prof. Söderberg explained that cooperation between EU and Japan in the nexus of security and development is already ongoing. On 1 of February 2019 the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between EU and Japan went into the implementation stage. At the same time, a large part of another agreement - the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the European Union and Japan - also applies on a provisional basis - awaiting full implementation later on in 2019. The SPA will provide the legal framework for further cooperation in the field of security and development. The question is if the institutional changes that has taken place recently will lead to broader and deeper cooperation. Prof. Söderberg in her talk traced policy development in both Japan and EU to see if recent changes open room for more cooperation. The answer to that question certainly seems to be yes.

Annette Skovsted-Hansen - "Japanese involvement in the capacity building of Tema Port in Ghana"

Ghana is an Anglophone country and is interesting in many respects because it can link up with the Ivory Coast, Mali, Burkina Faso...How do Japanese and EU aid differ? The EU has been moving from aid to trade. JICA invests in the public sector through infrastructure so as to attract Japanese FDI. And sometimes there is an institutional competition but often they act complementarily. EU countries (most notably France, the UK, Denmark) have benefited from Japanese investments.

Céline Pajon - "Japan's security policy in Africa and the Franco-Japanese partnership"

Why is Japan expanding cooperation with African countries?

- To appear as a responsible stakeholder
- Because it wishes a UNSC permanent seat (the Ambassador for TICAD is also Ambassador to UNSC Reform)
- To protect its economic interests in Africa
- To counterbalance Chinese presence
- Because Africa is integrated in Japan's security interests via the fight against piracy for instance.

There have been 2 types of Japanese interventions there - South Sudan and the Gulf of Aden. The former is unlikely to be pursued often due to the difficulties encountered, while the latter is beneficial to Japan.

Opening remarks - June 8th

Toshihiko Horiuchi - Minister, Head of the Economic service, Embassy of Japan in France

First of all, Mr. Horiuchi welcomed the signature of cooperation agreements between Japan and the European Union and their effective implementation, especially in the case of the SPA. He highlighted the importance of security cooperation in Asia in various initiatives such as the fight against piracy and the growing implication of Asian countries in peacekeeping operations in Africa. In this respect, it is crucial to strengthen the ties between Japan and the EU.

Mr. Horiuchi wished to remind the audience of the major role of France in the EU in the current context of Brexit. He underlined the necessity for Japan and France to deepen their relations via bilateral agreements like the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and the "2 + 2 dialogue" between both countries' Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministries. Furthermore, thanks to its visible presence in the Indo-Pacific region, France constitutes a strategic partner for Japan. This maritime power involves indeed many strategic activities as for example, the participation in the surveillance of ship to ship trade operated illegally by DPRK or naval military joint exercises. Mr. Horiuchi encouraged active collaboration in international forums and cross-cooperation between the two countries regarding various issues such as the rising tensions in Middle East, disarmament, non-proliferation and war against terrorism.

He looked forward to welcoming French President Emmanuel Macron in Japan at the end of June 2019 which will be an opportunity to renew the ties between Japan and France.

Roland Honekamp, Desk Officer Japan, European External Action Service

First and foremost, Mr. Honekamp wished to give a clear insight into the EPA and SPA signed by both the EU and Japan. He presented the three main areas covered by the EU-Japan SPA. Security and defence constitute, of course, the core of the agreement, followed by connectivity which also playing a significant part in the partnership and involves specific joint projects in Central Asia and Africa. Finally, global issues constitute the last area including climate change and digital policy. The latter is particularly important among G20 countries, but

divergences remain between the local legislations regarding the regulation of the “free flow of data”. The trade issues are covered by the EPA and, in the context of the potential reform of the WTO and the risk of having no agreement on the dispute settlement body, this partnership is essential.

In September 2018, the President of the European Commission Juncker and Japanese Prime Minister Abe met to discuss aid development projects and issues regarding the treatment of data and electronic communications networks. Both sides decided that the regime of Internet connection on commercial data would be implemented on both sides as a “free flow of data” which, Mr. Honekamp noted, is rather ambitious. The discussion also tackled the issue of the 5G network. The EU Commission adopted earlier a recommendation on risk assessment for 5G networks according to which the EU members should notify to the EU Commission their national risk assessment reports. Mr. Honekamp stated that Japan and the EU should deepen their cooperation in those areas but proceed carefully to face the challenges ahead.

Fabien Fieschi, French MoFA, General directorate on administration and modernization of the Ministry, formerly served as the French embassy’s First secretary and as Minister counsellor of the EU Delegation in Tokyo

The EPA and the SPA are the two major agreements established between the EU and Japan. While acknowledging that these agreements represents a crucial step for both, Mr. Fieschi underlined the fact that implementation of the agreements will be key. In fact, the EPA is very detailed, but it will still require companies to do some paperwork to benefit from its provisions. Monitoring and political engagement will also be needed on some topics like climate change for example. Then, regarding the SPA, he pointed out that many chapters are of an inspirational nature and they will have to be translated into real implementation and action.

He focused on the opportunities and the challenges posed by the SPA. Regarding opportunities, the SPA brings Japan and the EU closer by making them advocates for multilateralism in many different fields like sustainability or climate change. Furthermore, in a context of soaring military budgets, military cooperation is key to develop capacities to ensure strategic autonomy in order to contribute to peace and security. Nevertheless, Japan and the EU still have many challenges to address: the tension between Japan and China due to their competition for influence and the difficulties linked to human rights - this can be observed in their relations with third parties like Cambodia and the Philippines - and the delicate relation of both Japan and the EU with the US are sensitive issues that have yet to be solved.

Panel 1 - EU-Japan economic and strategic partnership agreement: how to proceed and what to expect from here?

Prof. Tsuyoshi Kawasaki - “Grand Strategy and Europe-Japan Cooperation”

First of all, Prof. Kawasaki put forward a key question regarding the cooperation between Western Europe and Japan: what kind of grand-strategic framework of cooperation should they implement in order to protect the liberal international order which is currently under Russian and Chinese challenges? He noted that two different camps were strategically competing against

each other in this respect: the revisionist camp led by China and *the status-quo* camp which includes Western Europe and Japan. According to Prof. Kawasaki, the heart of the competition lies in the material balance of power which constitutes the base of the international order. As a consequence, the revisionist camp aims at modifying the three basic elements of order, that is to say the territorial arrangements, the legitimacy (through ideology) and the institutions of the current international order. We can witness this strategy through the examples of the disputes in the South China sea, the promotion of institutions like the RCEP or the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Furthermore, the revisionist camp's strategy also includes "driving a wedge" in the Western alliance by inducing disagreements and calculated tactics aimed at psychological damage. Prof. Kawasaki noted that domestic politics in China and Russia are also under revisionist challenges. To respond to those challenges, the status-quo camp came up with three "containments" which are designed to prevent any attempt from the opposite camp to expand by being more inclusive to other countries in order to help them to be part of the Western camp; by solidifying the cohesion of the West to avoid any disagreements, especially with the US; and finally by containing the "seeds of self-destruction" within the domestic sphere such as populist movements. There are many possible outcomes to this competition, but Europe and Japan need to plan future cooperation initiatives on a bigger scale to protect the liberal international order.

Marylène Gervais - "The European Union and Japan as normative powers: from rule-takers to rule-shapers?"

The EU and Japan are both strong advocates of liberalism, and as normative powers, they also promote common liberal principles: fundamental values in foreign policies like human rights, development assistance and proactive contribution to peace. But they also face common internal and external challenges as for example, the crisis of liberalism and the weakening power of Western democracies - in a context of growing populist and xenophobic movements, Brexit in the EU and protectionist US policies - or the rise of authoritarian powers with the depreciation of liberal values.

Mrs. Gervais' presentation therefore tackled the issue of the means by which the EU and Japan could not only maintain, but also globally spread liberal values. Part of the answer may lie in their sustained commitment to liberal values in a changing strategic environment, especially regarding their relations with China and the US. Both countries indeed implement policies that challenge those liberal values - compromising freedom of navigation in the East and South China sea or undermining any attempt to solve issues through multilateralism. The SPA could therefore be an opportunity for the EU and Japan to exert their joint normative leadership.

Lastly, the EU and Japan could also promote liberal values by taking concrete action and implementing practical cooperation with emerging democratic powers like Myanmar or Brazil. They should promote a new approach to liberalism that would be more inclusive and progressive with a more social approach. The EU and Japan joint normative relationship is still in its early stage but their experience throughout History should help them shape new international laws and promote their relations with new pro-democratic partners.

Panel 2 – Japanese and European defence policies

Prof. Yoshihide Soeya – “Constitutional Revision Going Astray: Article Nine and Security Policy”

Prof. Soeya went back on the long evolution of the interpretation of Article 9 of the Constitution. He established a parallel with the Japan-United States Security Treaty, which had changed little since 1952, he claimed. He questioned the change announced in the context of the 2015 security legislation reform. Arguable Collective Self Defence can now be exercised. But the logic of admitting collective self-defence should have led the government to want a rephrasing of Article 5 of the Security Treaty, which excludes collective self-defence of the kind which the Vandenberg resolution would have required – symmetric. This seems to be a political threshold which the government is not prepared to tackle.

Prof. Christopher W. Hughes – “Hiding in Plain Sight? Japan’s Militarization of Space and Challenges to the Yoshida Doctrine”

Space capabilities is a good framework for analysis since apparent civilian technology can have a dual-use nature that could reveal significant military applications. During the last few years, Japan has been developing its military space policy and promoted new military-oriented space institutions and policies. It has recognized space as central to national security policy and is currently building a “space capabilities triad” composed by communication and intelligence satellites, counterspace capabilities both offensive and defensive, and the development of launch/re-entry vehicles like solid-fuel rockets. Pr. Hughes mentioned the fact that this could be an opportunity for Japan to reinforce its “recessed” nuclear deterrent.

Regarding the development of its military space policy, Japan set up new institutions and national strategies to develop its space capabilities (Basic Space Law, the Japan Ministry of Defense Basic Space Plans...). Furthermore, it is also building Alliance space cooperation mechanisms and policies with the US (in particular through the US-Japan Comprehensive Dialogue on Space) which offer significant leverage to the US-Japan deterrence capabilities. On the domestic front, although there were debates on the military use of space, they have been brushed aside by the LDP. Control over space policy is now centralised in the hands of powerful institutions such as the Cabinet Office. Moreover, defence industrial interests agree with a militarisation of space policy, which facilitates the promotion of the new policy.

Japan’s recent space activities have eroded the Yoshida doctrine. It has operated a fundamental shift from the traditional military strategy, in particular from the anti-militaristic principles such as the Peaceful Purposes Resolution for the use of space. Japan appears to be committed to enhance its deterrence capabilities by maintaining a proactive military space policy.

Marianne Péron-Doise – “EU and Japan maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean”

Both the EU and Japan maintain an active naval cooperation: they participate in the fight against piracy and Japan is willing to work with NATO on naval cooperation. Furthermore, the Article 29 of SPA on Maritime affairs states enhances the EU-Japan cooperation in maritime

domain with mention of sustainable management and freedom of navigation. These themes are structuring the existing cooperation in the maritime field.

The Indian ocean region is of paramount importance for the EU and Japan since they are both strategic maritime actors. They are in fact, increasing maritime domain awareness in the region which is a critical maritime road and they work for active maritime capacity building. Mrs. Péron-Doise added that in order to strengthen maritime multilateralism and ocean governance, they could find new partners like India and implement a code of conduct. Maritime multilateralism is indeed growing in the region as we can witness the creation multiple multilateral forums like the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

Recently, Japan has manifested its increased interest in the region and brought forth a new concept: the Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy [*s'ic*] (FOIP) that aims at combining “Two Continents” - Asia and Africa - and “Two Oceans” - the Pacific and Indian oceans. The FOIP strategy’s main goal is to improve maritime connectivity in order to promote peace and prosperity in the region. Therefore, the cornerstone of the FOIP is the promotion of freedom of navigation. However, some Indian Ocean countries expressed anxiety regarding the UNCLOS and its interpretation of freedom of navigation. In September 2017, Sri Lanka proposed the elaboration of a code of conduct so that the small states would not be overwhelmed by the big powers’ rivalry. The core of the issue lies on the “right of innocent passage” which could be abused by the maritime powers strategically present in the Indian Ocean region.

Paul O’Shea - “The United States-Japan Alliance and the Role of the US Marines in Okinawa in Extended Deterrence”

The relocation of the US Marine Base at Futenma to Henoko is framed by most Japanese analysts and officials as necessary to preserve “deterrence”. The official government line is in fact that “deterrence is fundamental to the security of all Japan”. This statement is repeated in conservative media such as *Yomiuri*, *Nikkei* and *Sankei*. Mr. O’Shea presented the conclusions of his research on the strategic narratives arguing that the Marine base on Okinawa is “indispensable”.

The analysis of the arguments in favour of extended deterrence lies on three elements: capabilities, communication and credibility. The first aspect tackles the issue of local balance of forces that would be shifted if the Marines were moved elsewhere, which could give an advantage to China. According to the media, the Marines are of great help in the protection of the Senkaku Islands. Yet, the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (ARDB) is not placed there, but in Kyushu. Communication, which is clear and explicit on the consequences that the Marines could inflict to any “aggressor” if they threaten Japan. Therefore, moving the Marines, who are part of the extended deterrence, could undermine the credibility of the US-Japan alliance. But strangely enough, the ongoing discursive construction on the Marines by analysts and officials creates in itself an inadvertent signalling problem, insofar as it communicates a credibility issue where none existed before.

Panel 3 - Security issues in East Asia

Jeffrey Hornung - “Japan’s leadership in the international system”

Japan is often described as a “reactive state”, only reacting when submitted to external pressure and therefore, not capable of exercising pro-active leadership in international relations. However, this judgement is not accurate and Mr. Hornung argued that there are different types of leadership. The Japanese state relies in fact on what can be coined as “intellectual leadership”. This can be illustrated in many cases such as the 1991 Cambodian peace process, the formation of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the diplomacy prior to the 2003 Iraq war and more recently, the promotion of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific concept.

The latter example is particularly interesting. Takeo Akiba, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Keiichi Ichikawa, Director of the Policy Coordination Division in the Foreign Policy Bureau were the original authors of the strategy back in 2015. They understood that the region’s lifeline was freedom of movement within the oceans and chose to promote Japan’s leadership in the region through it. The MOFA’s motivation was mainly to show that Japan could measure up to China’s increasing expansion in the region. Abe’s August 2016 keynote address at the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) in Nairobi, Kenya, is considered as the official FOIP rollout although it didn’t originally intend to be. The next challenge was to promote FOIP and MOFA was aware that they would need the support and resources of the US. The Japanese Deputy Minister for Foreign Policy was dispatched to the US to explain this strategy and met with Brian Hook, Director of the Policy Planning Staff at the US Department of State who liked the concept and spread it around the offices. Then, in October 2017, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson used the term “free and open Indo-Pacific” for the first time in a speech at CSIS. A few weeks later, President Trump referred to the “Indo-Pacific” during a visit in the region and reaffirmed the commitment of the US to promote the three pillars of FOIP when he met Abe in November.

We can therefore witness how Japan is not a “reactive state”: it exercises leadership, creates concepts and rely on diplomacy to promote it. Japan has no difficulty to share the leadership as exemplified though the promotion of the FOIP with the US. Nevertheless, in comparison to China’s strong leadership in the region, Japan may have to asserts its position as a more visible leader.

Prof. Kimie Hara - “Japan and the West: Back to the Future in East Asia?”

Relations between Japan and the West have a long history. Prof. Hara looked back to the beginning of Meiji era, when the colonial West was seen as a goal and teacher Japan could learn from. As a powerful state in the region, Japan struggled to achieve equality with the West. During the Paris Peace conference in 1919, Japan failed to make its voice heard when it tried to speak out as the only Asian country.

After the Cold War, Japan became the second economic power but the main focus of the presentation is the position of Japan today: are we witnessing a “New Meiji” diplomacy? Although Japan’s economy is declining and its population is aging, it has to face many challenges such as the issues regarding the Senkaku Islands, North Korea’s nuclear threat and the rising tensions between China and the US which are sometimes coined as “the New Cold War”. In order to guarantee stability in East Asia, Japan could rely on the lessons learned by Europe in the past concerning territorial disputes, and for instance the Helsinki Model.

Prof. Paul Midford – “Overcoming Security Isolationism: Japan’s Promotion of East Asian Security Multilateralism Since 1991”

Prof. Midford proposed to examine the reasons why during the Cold War Japan initially chose to pursue a strategy of isolationism and reject Regional Security Multilateralism (RSM) before suddenly pivoting in 1991. The first reason why Japan decided to pivot from security isolationism toward security engagement and leadership in promoting RSM can be found in the need for Japan to reassure neighbouring countries in the region of its willingness to cooperate after the Cold War. Furthermore, two different motivations can also be identified: on the one hand, RSM was a mean to moderate the US-Japan alliance security dilemma of entrapment and on the other hand, it provided the opportunity for Japan to cooperate with the US on a larger variety of issues linked to security such as counter-piracy, counter-terrorism, humanitarian and disaster relief operations, etc.

Historically, during the 1970s, the Fukuda Doctrine institutionalised security isolationism in order to promote Japan was as an economic power but not a military one. The goal was to maintain a low profile and oppose RSM because Japan was afraid of the US position on security multilateralism. However, when the US started drawing down its presence in the region in 1991 because of Gulf-War friction, Japan decided set up as a military power and joined UN Peacekeeping operations despite the US’ opposition. Ever since, Japan’s interest in RSM did not wane, it played a significant role in the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum and cooperated to the creation of the East Asia Summit in 2005. Japan’s leadership in East Asian security multilateralism seems very likely to expand in the context of a lack of visibility concerning the Trump administration’s vision for the region.

Prof. Axel Berkofsky – “Quality Infrastructure”

In October 2018, the EU and Japan institutionalized the discussion on quality infrastructure development in the context of Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategy. Two memorandums of understanding were signed between the Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the European Investment Bank. In fact, according to the Asian Development Bank, developing countries in Asia are in need of 26 trillion dollars in infrastructure investment from 2016 to 2030. Therefore, in May 2015, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced a “Partnership for Quality Infrastructure”, initially providing 110 billion dollars for financing the construction of roads, railways, and ports in Asia. The plan is to extend these infrastructure projects to Africa and the Middle East. On the ground, the Japanese government is promoting “quality infrastructure” by doing the opposite of Chinese infrastructures which are criticized for being non-sustainable and lack transparency. China also requests inclusive access and sometimes pushes for territorial concessions in exchange for reducing the Chinese funds recipient countries’ debts.

Japan also included the US, Australia and Japan in the initiative. It announced five principles which constitute the core of the “Quality Infrastructure” projects and that must be established in all countries: good governance, job creation, capacity building, environmental sustainability, development plans and effective resource mobilization through public-private

partnerships. There are currently on-going projects in several countries such as the construction of ports in Kenya and Madagascar and building a power station in Bangladesh. Prof. Berkofsky noted that these projects might be seen as competing with the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative which Japan initially refused to join, then agreed to join if projects met its conditions. It appears that China is not willing to take those conditions into account.



Y. Soeya, J. Hornung, C. Hughes, P. Midford, T. Kawasaki, M. Söderberg, A. Berkovsky, K. Hara in front of Inalco, June 8th 2019.



Opening session: Minister Y. Higuchi, Japan Embassy, and Mr F. Grare, Min. For. Affairs



Audience day 1 (similar day 2)



Close-up: J. Horning, K. Hara, Y. Soeya, J. Nillson-Wright, A. Grivaud, S. Tanke, T. J. Pempel...



F. Fieschi, C. Hughes, A. Berkovsky, I. Neary, M. Söderberg, P. Ström, K. Haba...