Chapter 2

The National Defense Program Guidelines

The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) set forth the basic policies for Japan's security, as well as a basic guidelines for Japan's defense force in the future, including the significance and role of Japan's defense force, the specific organization of the SDF, and the target levels of major defense equipment to be developed.

The NDPG were first established as "the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY1977 and beyond" (1976 NDPG), and the guidelines have been revised three times in the following sequences: "the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY1996 and beyond" (1995 NDPG), "the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2005 and beyond" (2004 NDPG), and "the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2011 and beyond" (2010 NDPG).

This chapter explains the history and the contents of the 2010 NDPG.

See Reference 7

Section 1

Background of Establishing the 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines

The matters considered during the formulation of the 2010 National Defense program Guidelines are the following.

1 Overall State of International Situation—the Increasing Complexity of Issues and Further Diversification of the Role of Military Capabilities

With the increasing interdependency among countries and the decreasing possibility of large-scale wars between major countries, the increasing risk that conflict and security issues in one country may impact the rest of the world directly is becoming more apparent. Amidst such circumstances, in addition to regional conflicts, there is also an increasing trend of "gray zone" conflicts, which are not to escalate to armed conflicts over territory and sovereignty, as well as economic interests. Furthermore, with the increasing strength of powers such as China, India, and Russia alongside the relative change of the influence of the United States, the global balance of power is also shifting.

Response to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, international terrorist organizations, and acts of piracy remains a pressing issue, and regional conflicts as well as the presence of countries with a weakened or collapsed governing system may also impact the global security environment. In addition, risks to the stable use of the seas, space,

and cyberspace pose new problems, and, in the long run, there is also a need to pay attention to the impact of climate change on the security environment.

Such global security issues involve a complex web of complicated issues (international terrorism, weakening governing systems, etc.) and there is a trend for such issues to develop into cross-border security problems. It is exceedingly difficult for any country to tackle these issues alone, and it is important for countries that share common interests to work together even under normal conditions.

Amidst such circumstances, the role of the military in the international community is becoming even more diversified. There are increasing chances for the military, in cooperation with civilian sectors, to play an important role in the non-traditional security field, such as conflict prevention, reconstruction assistance and other peace-building efforts, humanitarian aid and disaster relief, and anti-piracy measures, in addition to deterring and dealing with military conflicts, and nurturing relationships

of trust and friendship between countries.

2 Situation in the Asia-Pacific Region—Deepening Cooperative Relationships, and Unpredictable and Uncertain Elements

With expanding and deepening relationships of interdependency, efforts are being made to enrich and strengthen cooperative relationships between countries in order to resolve security issues. In particular, concrete steps are being taken to work together toward resolution of the issues particularly in non-traditional security areas.

On the other hand, changes to the global balance of power brought about by the growing power of China, India, and Russia are becoming apparent in this region. Large-scale military capabilities, including nuclear force, are still concentrated in the region surrounding Japan, and many countries are modernizing their military capabilities and intensifying activities by military and related organizations. In addition, the presence of maritime and territorial issues, as well as problems relating to the Korean Peninsula and the Strait of Taiwan, leave behind a trail of unpredictable and uncertain elements.

North Korea has kept up the development, deployment, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles while maintaining a large-scale special operations force. It is also carrying out repeated military provocations on the Korean Peninsula. Such military actions are perceived as an urgent and serious destabilizing factor in the security of this region, including Japan, and pose a serious challenge to international non-proliferation efforts. China, which continues to grow as a major power, is playing an increasingly important role in the region and in the world. On the other hand, China has continued to increase its military expenditure, and is comprehensively modernizing its military capabilities—centered on nuclear and missile capabilities and its navy and air force—at a rapid rate. Besides putting in efforts to strengthen its power projection capability, it is also expanding and intensifying activities in the surrounding waters. Such trends, alongside a lack of transparency with regard to China's military and security affairs, are becoming a cause for concern in the region and within the international community. With regard to Russia, although the scale of military force in the Far East region has shrunk significantly after the end of the Cold War, military activities continue to intensify.

Amidst such circumstances, the United States is placing a heavier emphasis on cooperating with its allies and partner countries, such as Japan, Korea, and Australia, and is making efforts to strengthen security relationships through bilateral and multilateral frameworks, with the aim of strengthening its ties with this region. Such efforts play an important role in ensuring peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and serve as a platform for U.S. efforts in tackling global security issues.

3 Characteristics of Japan

Japan's territory consists of vast areas of ocean. It is a trading nation that depends heavily on overseas markets and on foreign countries for food and resources. The security of the seas and the stability of international order are vital to Japan's prosperity. Japan's topography is marked by the seas that surround it, long coastlines, and numerous islands. Not only is it susceptible to disasters, the concentration of industries, population, and information infrastructure in the cities, as well as the large number of important facilities located at its coastal areas, make it vulnerable to security threats.

4 Issues to be Tackled

In consideration of the issues raised in points 1 to 3, despite the unlikelihood of a full-scale invasion against Japan that may threaten its very existence, such as a large-scale landing invasion, the security issues and destabilizing factors faced by Japan are diverse, complex, and intertwined. While Japan must respond in an appropriate manner to contingencies arising from them, it is important, at the same time, to cooperate with allies, friendly nations, and other countries involved, to proactively tackle both regional and global security issues.