

Part I Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Overview

Section 1 Trends in the International Community

The security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe, being encompassed by various challenges and destabilizing factors, which are becoming more tangible and acute.

Above all, as conflicts between countries, etc., remain, major changes in the security environment in the vicinity of Japan have yet to emerge even after the end of the Cold War, unlike in Europe. Opaque and uncertain factors such as issues of territorial rights and reunification remain. There is also an increase in the number of so-called “gray-zone” situations, that is, neither purely peacetime nor contingencies over territory, sovereignty and maritime economic interests, etc.¹ In addition, there are clearer trends for neighboring states to modernize and reinforce their military capabilities and to intensify their military activities. As such, security issues and destabilizing factors in the Asia-Pacific region including the area surrounding Japan are becoming more serious.

In the meantime, the United States (U.S.), while faced with a tight fiscal situation, has launched a policy emphasizing a rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region in its strategy, including its security strategy, as well as strengthening ties with its allies and expanding its networks of cooperation with emerging partners in the region. These developments will need to be paid attention to.

The global security environment sees more extensive and deeper mutual interdependence among nations as a result of rapid globalization and technological innovation. However, at the same time, there is a growing risk that unrest or a security problem in a single country or region

¹ So-called “gray-zone” situations concisely describe a broad range of situations, that is, neither purely peacetime nor contingencies. For example, they could involve the following circumstances:

- 1) Conflicting positions between states, etc., over territory, sovereignty, economic interests including maritime interests and other forms of rights and interests
- 2) Not relying only on diplomatic negotiation among parties concerned in insisting on a certain position or demand
- 3) Showing physical presence frequently, or attempting or making changes to the status quo in an area related to the issue with unilateral use of physical means short of armed attack in order to appeal its position or to force acceptance of it

could immediately develop into a security challenge or destabilizing factor for the entire international community. In addition, it is believed that national security decision making is more complex than ever before, as some nations have important economic relationships despite differences in fundamental values and strategic interests, as seen in the case of Europe and Russia with regard to the Ukraine issue in 2014.

The U.S. is still expected to continue to play a role in maintaining the world peace and stability with its military and economic power as well as its “soft power” originating from values and culture, which, when combined, make the U.S. the most powerful nation in the world, though its relative influence in the international community is changing. The multi-polarization of the world continues as a result of shifts in the balance of power due to the economic development and extension of political influence of countries such as China, India and Russia, etc. and the relative change of influence of the U.S. The international competition for energy and natural resources, and food, etc., is expected to become increasingly severe, as demand for energy, etc., by emerging countries with growing economies and a larger middle class rises. Against this background, there is a possibility for more “gray-zone” situations and regional conflicts in future, some of which are caused by more obvious and intrusive policies and activities to change or deny the existing regional and international order and to secure economic interests.

Furthermore, one important aspect of globalization is the rapid spread of the use of the Internet, social media and other information and communication networks, which at the same time as allowing individuals to acquire more information also increases the power of non-state actors including individuals to disseminate messages and mobilize people, and thus to influence state actors. This increased power of non-state actors has altered relations between governments and people in various ways. For example, criticism and dissatisfaction against a state regime can exponentially proliferate via information and communication networks. Such movements are difficult to control even in an authoritarian state, which used to have strong control over its people. In some cases, they have led to a change of government. Therefore, state authorities need to give more consideration to public opinion in policy decisions and activities regarding governance, diplomacy, security, military and other matters.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles which can be used as means to deliver WMD, international terrorism, and failed states, among other things, continue to pose imminent security challenges. Securing the stable use of global commons²

² “Global commons”, in this context, is usually defined as a globally connected and shared domain that is beyond any country’s exclusive jurisdiction but is necessary for the security and prosperity of the whole

such as sea, air, outer space and cyberspace is becoming a significant challenge for the international community.

As the security challenges and destabilizing factors are diverse and wide-ranging, it is difficult for a single country to deal with them on its own. It is increasingly important for countries that share common interests for stability and peace to actively respond together in close coordination. Civil-military cooperation is also important to overcome these challenges.

Section 2 Asia Pacific Security Environment

In the Asia-Pacific region, alongside the various changes that have taken place with the increase in power of China, India, and Russia, countries in the region have made efforts to enhance and strengthen specific and practical intra-regional coordination and collaboration with a particular focus on non-traditional security sectors such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and counter-piracy measures. On the other hand, this region abounds in political, economic, ethnic and religious diversity, and confrontational relations between countries/regions remain even after the end of the Cold War. In addition, their views on security and threats are different, and therefore the kinds of major changes in the security environment seen in Europe after the end of the Cold War have yet to emerge, and long-standing issues of territorial rights and reunification continue to plague the region.

On the Korean Peninsula, the Korean People have been divided for more than half a century, and the faceoff continues between the military forces of the Republic of Korea and North Korea. There are issues concerning Taiwan and the South China Sea. Furthermore, Japan also confronts unresolved territorial issues over the Northern Territories and Takeshima, both of which are inherent parts of Japanese territory.

On top of this, recent years have seen a tendency toward prolonged “gray-zone” situations, which may develop into more grave situations.

In North Korea, many personnel reshuffles, including those of senior party officials and military officers, have taken place since the change of regime in which Kim Jong-un assumed power as First Chairman of the National Defense Commission. In December 2013, Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission Jan Sung-taek, who had been regarded as guardian of Kim Jong-un, was executed. The North Korean regime places emphasis on the military, and deploys

world, according to the U.S. National Security Strategy released in May 2010 and other sources.

large-scale armed forces. It advances the development/deployment and transfer/proliferation of weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, and maintains a special operation force of significant size, thereby maintaining and strengthening asymmetric military capabilities³. In particular, North Korea's ballistic missile development is considered to have entered into a new phase as a result of technological improvements through repeated missile launches. As for nuclear weapon development, while the Six-Party Talks, which aim at achieving the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner, have been suspended since December 2008, North Korea has carried out nuclear tests regardless of the international demands to exercise restraint. It is difficult to eliminate the possibility that North Korea has achieved the miniaturization of nuclear weapons and acquired nuclear warheads. Moreover, there is a possibility that North Korea is developing nuclear weapons using highly-enriched uranium. North Korea has repeated provocative words and actions against related countries including Japan, emphasizing in March and April 2013 that Japan is within the range of its missiles, referring to specific Japanese cities. Such North Korean military trends constitute a serious destabilizing factor to the security not only of Japan but of the entire region and the international community. Therefore, Japan needs to pay utmost attention to such activities. North Korea's abduction of Japanese nationals, which poses a major threat to the lives and security of the Japanese public, is yet to be resolved. A solution will require concrete actions by North Korea.

China has now become influential both politically and economically, and its military developments also draw attention from other countries. Accordingly, China is strongly expected to recognize its responsibility in the international community, accept and stick to international norms, and play a more active and cooperative role in regional and global issues. In the meantime, China has been continuously increasing its defense budget at a high level, reinforcing its military forces broadly and rapidly. As a part of such efforts, China is believed to be making efforts to strengthen its asymmetrical military capabilities to prevent military activity by other countries in the region by denying access and deployment of foreign militaries to its surrounding areas (so-called anti-access and anti-denial capacity (A2/AD)⁴). China has not clearly stated the purposes and goals of the military buildup, and transparency concerning its

³ Asymmetric military capability, in this context, means attack measures different from those of an opponent with superior conventional military capabilities. Such measures are exploited to compensate for disadvantages in conventional weapons and troops. Examples include weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles, terrorism and cyber-attacks.

⁴ Anti-Access (A2) is a concept introduced by the United States and refers to capabilities, usually long-range, designed to prevent an opposing force from entering an operational area. Area-Denial (AD) refers to capabilities, usually of shorter range, designed to limit an opposing force's freedom of action within the operational area. Weapons used for A2/AD include ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, anti-satellite weapons, air-defense systems, submarines and mines.

decision making process on military and security matters is not also fully achieved. In addition, China is rapidly expanding and intensifying its activities in the maritime and aerial domains in the region including in the East China Sea and the South China Sea. In particular, China has taken assertive actions with regard to issues of conflicts of interest in the maritime domain, as exemplified by its attempts to change the status quo by coercion. As for the seas and airspace around Japan, China has intruded into Japanese territorial waters frequently and violated Japan's airspace by its government ships and aircraft belonging to maritime law-enforcement agencies, and has engaged in dangerous activities that could cause unintended consequences, such as its vessel's direction of a fire control radar at a JMSDF destroyer, the flight of fighters abnormally close to JSDF aircraft, and its announcement of establishing the "East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone" based on its own assertion thereby infringing the freedom of overflight over the high seas. As Japan has great concern about these Chinese activities, it will need to pay utmost attention to them, as these activities also raise concerns over regional and global security. This is why China is asked to further improve transparency regarding its military and why further strengthening of mutual understanding and trust by promoting dialogue and exchanges with China is an important issue.

Perceiving the building of an affluent nation as its task for the present, Russia attaches importance to becoming an influential power based on the deployment of its new economic, cultural, and military might. It is endeavoring to develop a military posture commensurate with its national power, against the backdrop of its economic development to date, while continuing to attach importance to its nuclear capability. In recent years, it has been moving forward with downsizing its troops, reforming its organizational aspects, reinforcing its readiness postures, and modernizing its military, including the development and introduction of new equipment, and it is observed that Russian military forces are showing signs of growing activity and expansion of their area of operations. In the Far East, too, Russia continues active operations of its naval vessels and aircraft, conducting large-scale exercises in the region. Faced with the Ukraine crisis, Russia made an intervention with armed insurgents believed to be part of the Russian armed forces, which were deployed in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and then "incorporated" Crimea into Russia, changing the status quo by force or coercion. Russia is still heightening tensions by deploying many troops around Ukraine.

As seen above, in the Asia-Pacific region, where the security environment has increasingly grown severe, the presence of the United States (U.S.) military remains extremely important in order to achieve regional stability. Accordingly, Japan and other countries, such as Australia and South Korea, have established bilateral alliances and friendly relations with the U.S., and allow

the stationing and deployment of U.S. forces in their territories. In addition, the U.S. military has recently taken measures to further strengthen its presence.

See ► Fig. I-0-0-1 (Major Military Forces in the Asia-Pacific Region (Approximate Strength))

Moreover, opportunities for bilateral defense exchanges between countries in the region have increased in recent years. Multilateral security dialogues, including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), conferences hosted by non-governmental institutions with the participation of relevant defense ministers, and bilateral and multilateral joint exercises are held. Promoting and developing such multi-layered approaches among countries is also important to ensure security in the region.

Section 3 Global Security Issues

There are still a diverse range of regional conflicts across the globe, with complex backgrounds and in complicated forms. The international community is undertaking intensive efforts to deal with these conflicts and resolve them with its focus especially on the Middle East and the African region that are plagued with many conflicts due to confusion after the “Arab Spring”, nations with weak governance, expanding terrorist organizations and other factors. As the problems of climate change and competition between sovereign states to secure resources and energy are becoming increasingly tangible and causing regional disputes, there are signs that there is a new possibility that they could become a new factor that has an impact on the global security environment. Furthermore, military forces have also been tasked to take on various missions such as prompt response to large-scale disasters and epidemics.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), such as nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons, and ballistic missiles that serve as the means of delivery of WMD remains a significant threat to the international community. In particular, there are continuing concerns about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles by North Korea and the acquisition and use of WMD by non-state actors such as international terrorist organizations. With regard to issues over Iran's nuclear program, the United States (U.S.) and the European Union (EU) have strengthened sanctions, while also engaging in discussions with Iran. They agreed the Joint Plan of Action in November 2013, toward a comprehensive resolution of the nuclear issue. In addition, some initiatives which focus on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament are progressing, such as the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) entering into force between the U.S. and Russia in February 2011.

There is an ongoing tendency for the offshoots of international terrorist organizations dispersing across the globe, as well as regional terrorist organizations and individuals sympathetic to their ideologies, to carry out their activities. They remain a security threat to the international community, even after the death of Osama bin Laden. There are also indications that countries in North Africa and the Middle East that are vulnerable in terms of their governance capacity are being used as bases for the activities and training of international terrorist organizations and other groups. They are engaging in cross-border terrorism, as seen in the case of the January 2013 terrorist attack in Algeria, in which Japanese nationals were killed. In addition, the Western countries are concerned with their own people that have engaged in conflict overseas and been instilled with radical thoughts to conduct acts of terrorism upon returning home.

Securing the stable use of global commons such as sea, air, outer space and cyberspace is becoming a significant challenge for the international community. The growing attention paid in the field of international security to outer space and cyberspace, which cannot be perceived from a conventional geographical perspective, stems from our increasing dependence on these domains for various purposes including military command and control, communications, and intelligence collection. Such dependence is taking place as necessary infrastructure in the society develops further by utilizing rapidly advancing information and communications technology (ICT) and military technology. From this perspective, in recent years, various countries have been implementing concrete initiatives, including the reorganization of governments and related institutions, in order to deal with cyber attacks on a range of information and communication networks, which could have a serious impact on the function of a state and people's daily lives. And some of them allegedly have the involvement of foreign governmental agencies. There is also an effort in the international community to establish an agreed code of conduct in cyberspace. With regard to the maritime domain, which has been regarded as a fundamental means for supporting international trade, piracy acts have taken place in various parts of the world, and there have been cases where coastal states unilaterally asserted their rights and took action based on their own assertion concerning international maritime law, thereby unduly infringing the freedom of the high seas. The international community has been making efforts to resolve the situation, and specific measures include dispatching naval vessels and other assets to conduct anti-piracy operations in relevant waters, such as off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and affirming the importance of the freedom of navigation at international conferences.

As seen above, the international community today faces diverse, complex and multilayered security issues and destabilizing factors. These challenges could even occur simultaneously or compound one another. In addition to deterrence and handling of armed conflicts, the roles of military forces in responding to these challenges are becoming so diverse that they include a broad spectrum of activities from the conflict prevention to reconstruction assistance. Moreover, as the opportunities for military forces to play such an important role are increasing, comprehensive responses are required that combine military capacity with other capacities such as diplomacy, law enforcement and justice, intelligence and the economy.

The developments in science and technology in recent years, and the great leaps forward in ICT in particular, have also affected the military. The U.S. and other advanced countries are putting emphasis on research and development of new technologies including those for precision guidance technology, unmanned technology and stealth capacity, while actively seeking international joint development and production in light of increasing costs of new equipment and the tight fiscal situation. On the other hand, states and non-state actors without cutting-edge technology are trying to develop and acquire asymmetrical means of attack such as weapons of mass destruction and cyber attack tools, while stealing the technologies of advanced nations in an illicit manner. How these trends in military science and technology will unfold is expected to have significant effects on future military strategy and power balance.