Section 2 Ensuring Maritime Security

For Japan, a major maritime state, strengthening order on the seas based on such fundamental principles as the rule of law and the freedom of navigation, as well as ensuring safe maritime transport, is the foundation for its peace and prosperity, which is extremely important. In cooperation with the relevant countries, the MOD/SDF engages in anti-piracy operations, as well as promoting various initiatives including assistance for capacity building in this field for those coastal states alongside the sea lanes, and making the most of various opportunities to enhance joint training and exercises in waters other than those in the immediate vicinity of Japan.

1 Counter-Piracy Operations

Piracy is a grave threat to public safety and order on the seas. In particular, for Japan, which depends on maritime transportation to import most of the resources and food necessary for its survival and prosperity as a maritime nation, it is an important issue that cannot be ignored.

- **Basic Approach**

  The Japan Coast Guard (JCG), one of the law enforcement agencies in Japan, is primarily responsible for coping with piracy. However, in cases where it is deemed extremely difficult or impossible for the JCG to cope with piracy by itself, the SDF is to take action as well.

- **Circumstances Surrounding Incidents of Piracy and Initiatives by the International Community**

  For Japan and the international community, the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden are extremely important, connecting Europe and the Middle East with East Asia. Regarding the waters in this area, successive United Nations Security Council resolutions were adopted, such as United Nations Security Council Resolution 1816, which was adopted in June 2008 in response to the frequent occurrence of and rapid increase in the piracy incidents with the purpose of acquiring ransoms by detaining hostages caused by pirates, who are armed with machine guns and rocket launchers. These resolutions have requested that various countries take actions, particularly the dispatch of warships and military aircraft, to deter piracy in the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. To date, approximately 30 countries, including the United States, have dispatched their warships to the waters off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden. As part of counter-piracy initiatives, the European Union (EU) has also commenced Operation Atalanta since December 2008, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been conducting “Operation Ocean Shield” since August 2009, in addition to the counter-piracy operations conducted by the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF) that was established in January 2009.

  Although the number of acts of piracy occurring in the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has hovered at an extremely low level in recent years, the assumed root causes of piracy such as poverty in Somalia have still remained unsolved. In addition, considering the fact that Somalia’s capability to crackdown on piracy is also still not sufficient, if the international community

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2 The Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the headquarters of which is located in Bahrain, announced the establishment of the CTF in January 2009 as a multinational combined task force for counter-piracy operations.
reduces its counter-piracy efforts, the situation could be easily reversed. Moreover, the Japanese Shipowners’ Association and other entities are continuously requesting that the SDF continue making every effort in relation to their counter-piracy operations. Therefore, there is no great change in the situation in which Japan must carry out its counter-piracy operations.

See>> Fig. III-2-2-1 (Piracy Incidents Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden (Comparison with the number of incidents in Southeast Asia))

Japanese Initiatives

(1) Legislation Concerning Counter-piracy Operations
In March 2009, following the order for Maritime Security Operations for the purpose of protecting Japan-affiliated vessels from acts of piracy in the waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, two Japanese destroyers began escorting Japan-affiliated vessels, while P-3C patrol aircraft also commenced warning and surveillance operations in June the same year.

In view of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Japan subsequently enacted the Anti-Piracy Measures Act in July the same year in order to deal appropriately and effectively with acts of piracy. This act made it possible to protect the vessels of all nations from acts of piracy, regardless of their flag states. Moreover, it also enabled the use of weapons to a reasonable extent, if no other means were available, in order to halt vessels engaging in acts of piracy, such as approaching civilian vessels.

Furthermore, the Act on Special Measures concerning the Security of Japanese Flagged Vessels in Areas that Are Highly Susceptible to Acts of Piracy came into force on November 2013, which made it possible to have security guards on board a Japanese ship provided certain requirements are met, enabling them to carry small arms for the purpose of security operations.

See>> Reference 24 (Main Operations of the Self-Defense Forces); Reference 25 (Statutory Provisions about Use of Force and Use of Weapons by SDF Personnel); Reference 64 (Outline of a Bill Concerning Punishment of and Response to Acts of Piracy)

(2) Activities by the Self-Defense Forces
a. Participation in CTF 151
Due to the fact that the scope of the area susceptible to acts of piracy is spreading to areas off the coast of Oman and the Arabian Sea in recent years, there is a tendency that the area of activity of the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151), which conducts warning and surveillance activities (zone defense), has been increasingly spreading. Furthermore, the number of vessels that are directly escorted by the SDF surface force per escort operation (a method in which the destroyers provide direct escort by accompanying the convoy) was gradually reduced. In light of such a situation, in July 2013, Japan decided to participate in CTF 151 to commence zone defense in addition to direct escort missions as before, while coordinating closely with the units of other countries that are engaged in counter piracy operations in order to conduct more flexible and effective operations. Following this, the surface force started zone defense in December 2013. In addition, air forces have been participating in CTF 151 since February 2014. This participation enabled the force to acquire information that was previously not accessible. Moreover, it became possible to conduct more flexible warning and surveillance activities. For example, aircraft can be deployed as needed even to areas that are highly susceptible to acts of piracy, and as a result, coordination between other countries’ units was further enhanced.

Moreover, that SDF personnel serving as the CTF 151 commander and command center staff enables Japan to strengthen coordination with the units of other countries engaged in counter-piracy operations and enhance the effectiveness of the SDF’s counter-piracy operations. For this reason, the SDF has dispatched command center staff to the CTF151 Headquarters where an officer from other
countries serves as a commander since August 2014, and during the period from May to August 2015 the SDF also dispatched a CTF 151 commander as well as command center staff. No member of the SDF has ever served as a commander of a multinational force since the foundation of the SDF, and it is believed that active participation in the CTF 151 activities continuously going forward will enable Japan to further contribute to peace and stability in the international community.

b. Achievements

Two destroyers currently being dispatched operate based on two different manners - one destroyer directly escorts private vessels back and forth across the Gulf of Aden, while the other destroyer is conducting zone defense in the allocated marine area within the Gulf of Aden, which has been allocated in response to specific situations. In addition, there are JCG officers aboard the destroyers. The direct escort method firstly places the destroyer and private vessels to be escorted at the assembly point, one each designated at the eastern and western ends of the Gulf of Aden. When the destroyer guards the convoy, the helicopter carried on the destroyer also watches the surrounding area from the sky as necessary. In this way, the ships take around two days to sail approximately 900 km, all the while making absolutely certain that the convoy is safe and secure, day and night. Moreover, as for zone defense, the destroyers conduct warning and surveillance activities as they are deployed within waters designated based on coordination with the CTF 151 headquarters, and strive to ensure the safety of the vessels.

As of May 31, 2016, 3,697 vessels have been escorted under the protection of the destroyers. Not a single vessel has come to any harm from pirates and they have all passed safely across the Gulf of Aden.

![Fig. III-2-2-2 SDF’s Counter-Piracy Operations](image-url)

Meanwhile, the maritime patrol aircraft (P-3C) conduct warning and surveillance operations in the flight zone that is determined based on coordination with the CTF 151 headquarters. The P-3Cs confirm any suspicious boats, and at the same time, they provide information to the destroyers, the naval vessels of other countries and civilian vessels, responding by such means as confirming

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4 Eight JCG officers are onboard and conduct judicial law enforcement activities, including arresting and interrogating pirates, as required.
5 During the non-monsoon seasons (March-May, September-November), when the area within which acts of piracy occur grows due to the calmer seas, the escort route is extended by approximately 200 km to the east.
At the Completion of the Mission of the 23rd Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement

Captain (MSDF) Takeshi Yoshioka, Commander of the 23rd Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement (Commander of the Escort Division 3)

With the Commander of the Escort Division 3 as the commander of the task force, the 23rd Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement was formed based on two destroyers, which have Ominato as their homeport, and the Escort Division 3, and engaged in its duty for the counter-piracy operations from October 2015 to May 2016. Since many of the task force members were originally from the northern part of Japan, the heat off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden was hard on us. Nonetheless, all of us managed to complete our mission without becoming ill or having any issues, partly due to the fact that the activity period of our task force happened to fall in a period with relatively cool weather.

As a result of our efforts in conducting warning and surveillance as well as direct escort day and night throughout the operation period, we were able to deter acts of piracy and therefore no attacking cases by pirates occurred. In addition, we also responded to an emergency case that occurred with a merchant ship and carried out a rescue task of a failed ship. Through all these activities, I believe that we successfully contributed to maritime security.

At the opinion exchange with personnel of naval ships from other countries, Japan’s initiatives were always highly regarded. I am very proud that our task group had a chance to play a part in it.

The author (right front) exchanging opinions with the CTF465 (European Union task force for counter-piracy operations) commander and personnel

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Fig. III-2-3 Structure of the Deployed Forces

- **Commander, Self Defense Fleet**
  - Commander, Deployed Maritime Force for Counter Piracy Operations
    - 1 destroyer
    - Total approx. 400 personnel
    - Coast Guard Officers: 8 officials aboard
    - Special Boarding Unit personnel aboard
    - 1 or 2 patrol helicopters, as well as 1 or 2 special boats, on each vessel
    - Coast Guard Officers: 8 officials aboard
  - Commander, Deployed Air Force for Counter Piracy Operations
    - 1 destroyer
    - Total approx. 60 personnel
    - Squadron (2 P-3Cs)
  - Support and logistics units

- **Combination Task Force 151 (CTF 151) Deployed unit at the Headquarters**
  - Deployed unit at the Headquarters
  - Total approx. 110 personnel
  - (about 30 maritime, about 80 ground)
  - Headquarters
  - Operation units
  - Guard units
  - Military Police units

- **Deployment Support Unit for Counter Piracy Enforcement**
  - Facilitate communication and coordination with relevant authorities of Djibouti and conduct duties related to necessary support for the Deployed Air Force for Counter Piracy Operations to conduct counter-piracy operations
  - SDF personnel serving as CTF 151 commander and command center officers facilitate coordination among units of countries participating in CTF 151

- **Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) Deployed unit at the Headquarters**
  - Total of less than 20 personnel

In addition, transport units comprised of C-130H transport aircraft under the Air Support Commander will provide airborne transportation of supplies etc. when necessary.

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the safety of the surrounding area immediately, if requested. The information gathered by SDF P-3Cs is constantly shared with other related organizations, and contributes significantly to deterring acts of piracy and disarming vessels suspected of being pirate ships.

Since commencing duties in June 2009, the aircraft have flown 1,568 missions as of May 31, 2016, and their flying hours total 12,070 hours. Approximately 130,300 ships conducted identification tasks, and information was provided to vessels navigating the area and other countries engaging in counter-piracy operations on around 11,960 occasions. In particular, the activities conducted by the two MSDF P-3C patrol aircraft account for approximately 60% of the warning and surveillance operations in the Gulf of Aden.

Moreover, in order to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Deployment Air Force for Counter Piracy Enforcement, the MOD/SDF has
set up a base in the northwest district of the Djibouti International Airport. In addition, and the Deployment Support Unit for Counter Piracy, which is formed by GSDF and MSDF personnel carries out activities for providing guards and maintenance of facilities, etc., at this operational base. Furthermore, the ASDF has formed an airlift squadron to support these activities and is engaged in transport missions.

Praise for Japan’s Endeavors

The counter-piracy operations by the SDF have been highly praised by the international community. For example, national leaders and others have expressed their gratitude and the SDF has also been repeatedly well-received by the United Nations Security Council Resolution. Moreover, the destroyers, which are engaging in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, has received many messages from the captains and ship owners of the vessels that its units have escorted, expressing their gratitude that the ships were able to cross the Gulf of Aden with peace of mind and asking them to continue escorting ships there.

Contribution to the Maintenance of Public Safety and Order on the Seas through Maritime Training

Training Conducted by the SDF and Counter-Piracy Teams from Various Countries in the Gulf of Aden

In accordance with the agreement made between Prime Minister Abe and NATO Secretary General Rasmussen in May 2014, the SDF deployed forces and NATO’s counter-piracy unit, with the objective of enhancing their cooperation and tactical skills required for counter-piracy activities, implemented joint exercises in the Gulf of Aden in September and November of the same year. In addition, since October 2014, the SDF has conducted joint exercises also with counter-piracy units of armed forces of foreign countries and other forces.

These training exercises conducted in the Gulf of Aden have an essential significance in that they strengthened the cooperation between the SDF and counter-piracy teams from various countries, and contributed to the maintenance of public safety and order on the seas.

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6 So far, the SDF conducted its first joint exercise with the EU surface forces in October 2014, the second and the third exercises in November of the same year, the fourth exercise in March 2015, and the fifth exercise in January 2016. Furthermore, the SDF also conducted joint exercises with the Turkish Naval Forces in November 2014 and December 2015, with the Pakistan Navy in March 2015 and February 2016, and with the ROK Navy in December 2015.
**U.S. Hosted International Mine Countermeasures Exercise**

The MSDF has constantly participated in multilateral mine countermeasures exercise in the waters around the Arabian Peninsula hosted by the U.S. Navy since its first exercise in 2012, and this includes its participation in the Fourth International Mine Countermeasures Exercise in 2016. Participating in this exercise assists in the enhancement of the tactical skills of the MSDF and the strengthening of trust among the participating countries. At the same time, the exercise also contributes to the maintenance of maritime security, while also contributing to the improvement of the global security environment.

See>> Reference 54 (Participation in Multilateral Training (Last Three Years))

**Strengthening of Cooperation in Maritime Security through Joint Training, etc.**

In October, 2015, the MSDF conducted a joint naval exercise (Exercise Malabar 2015) organized by the United States and India in the waters east of India with the aim of improving tactical skills and strengthening cooperation in the area of maritime security. Furthermore, with the Philippine Navy and the Malaysian Navy in May and August 2015, respectively, joint exercises including the communication training using CUES (Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea) and tactical maneuvering were conducted. Strengthening cooperation with other participating countries through these joint exercises contributes to the maintenance of maritime security, which has extremely high significance.

**Initiatives in the Asia-Pacific Region**

The National Security Strategy and the National Defense Program Guidelines state that Japan will play a leading role in maintaining and developing “Open and Stable Seas,” including maritime security cooperation with other countries.

As previously described, the MOD/SDF implements capacity building assistance on maritime security for Indonesia, Vietnam and Myanmar, thereby assisting coastal states along sea lanes and others in enhancing their capabilities, and strengthening cooperation with partners that share the same strategic interests as Japan.

In addition, the Basic Plan on Ocean Policy states that in order to contribute to the creation and development of order on the ocean, it will ensure international collaboration and promote international cooperation by making use of fora such as multilateral and bilateral ocean conferences to contribute to establishment of international rules and consensus. In response to this, the MOD has been working on cooperation for maritime security within the regional security dialogue such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) Plus and the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM-MS). At the 14th Shangri-La Dialogue meeting held in May 2015, Minister of Defense Nakatani delivered a speech and proposed “Shangri-La Dialogue Initiative,” which consists of “dissemination of common rules and the laws and regulations pertaining to the seas and skies in the region” and the “security of the seas and skies,” etc.

See>> Part III, Chapter 2, Section 1-3 (Promoting Capacity Building Assistance and Other Practical Multilateral Security Cooperation)

See>> Part III, Chapter 2, Section 1-2 (Initiatives under the Multilateral Security Framework and through Dialogue)

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7 The exercise took place in April 2016, and minesweeper tender Uraga and minesweeper Takashima carried out minesweeping training, submarine training, and other training.

8 The MSDF escort vessel “Fuyuzuki,” the U.S. Navy aircraft carrier “USS Theodore Roosevelt,” and the Indian Navy “Shivalik Class Frigate” participated in the exercise, and they will continue to participate in the exercise.

9 With regard to CUES, see Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2-5, Footnote 22.