

Section 3 Global Security Issues

A range of regional conflicts still exists across the globe, which have complex and diverse backgrounds and forms. Especially in the Middle East and Africa, against the backdrop of the turmoil, civil war, and regional conflict that followed the “Arab Spring,” there is an increase in areas which lack national governance. In many cases, international terrorist organizations made inroads in these areas, expanded their organizations, and intensified their activities. These cases have made regional conflicts more complex, making it increasingly challenging for nations and regional organizations with conflicts in their regions to address and resolve them, as well as for the international community. On the other hand, climate change and competition between sovereign nations to secure resources and energy could become more tangible, and cause regional disputes. They have become new factors that affect the global security environment. Furthermore, even as the various functions of military forces are utilized more to conduct prompt rescue activities in response to large-scale natural disasters and outbreaks of infectious diseases, the presence of countries with weak governance has made it more difficult to deal with risks such as the explosive outbreak and spread of infectious diseases.

The proliferation of WMDs, such as nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, and of ballistic missiles that serve as the means of delivery of WMDs is still viewed as a significant threat to the international community. In particular, there are continuing concerns about the acquisition and use of WMDs by non-state actors, such as international terrorist organizations. In this regard, the international community continues to pursue efforts to counter terrorism activities that utilize nuclear materials and other radioactive substances. Meanwhile, with regard to Iran’s nuclear program, the United States, the European Union (EU), among other countries have imposed sanctions against Iran, while engaging in discussions with the country. In 2015, a final agreement was reached on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, containing provisions on Iran’s implementation of measures to restrict uranium enrichment activities and ban the production of weapons-grade plutonium. Also, in response to North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile issues, in March 2016, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2270, and following North Korea’s second nuclear test in 2016, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2321 in November

that year that imposes more rigorous limitations on the movement of people, goods, and funds to North Korea, including placing a cap on coal exports, a major source of income for North Korea. Furthermore, in June 2017, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2356 that extends the scope of sanctions in response to the repeated ballistic missile launches and other acts conducted by North Korea. In addition, initiatives which focus on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are under way, such as the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) entering into force between the United States and Russia in 2011.

Furthermore, there has been a growing tendency for the threat of international terrorism to spread rapidly. The diversification of actors that carry out acts of terrorism, coupled with the increasing complexity of regional conflicts, have made the prevention of terrorism even more challenging. **ISIL**, through ingenious public relations strategies using the Internet and other tools, is communicating its extremist ideology and gaining multiple followers and new members around the world. In addition, the United States, European nations, and elsewhere face concerns over the threat of so-called “home-grown” and “lone-wolf” terrorism – namely, acts of terrorism perpetrated in the home country singlehandedly or by a small number of people, including those who



Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

ISIL is a Sunni-affiliated extremist organization that sprang from Al Qaeda in Iraq. ISIL has expanded its reach in Iraq since January 2014 when public security deteriorated due to religious opposition and other factors. Unlike conventional terrorist organizations, ISIL maintains strong funding, a powerful and refined military force, and a well-developed organizational structure. Another unique aspect is that ISIL holds de facto control over a large swath of land. It has been noted that ISIL effectively utilizes online propaganda based on a strong public relations strategy, while using it for recruiting, which has led to a large influx of fighters to its ranks. Recently it has been pointed out that ISIL controls less land, especially since the Mosul offensive launched in October 2016 that recaptured about half of ISIL’s lands to the East, causing the organization to weaken. Terrorist attacks led by ISIL have extended beyond the Middle East to include targets around the world in Europe and Asia. As of late, it has been suggested that attacks have shifted from those directly led by ISIL to those carried out by certain supporters upon being encouraged (remote operations). This has raised concerns about the further spread of terrorism and radicalization.

experienced combat in a conflict area and returned to their home country, or those who have become influenced by extremism. As shown by the terror attacks in Paris in 2015 and in Brussels in 2016, the threat of international terrorism is not confined to the Middle East and North Africa, and is spreading globally. In view of incidents including the terrorist attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh in July 2016 that claimed the lives of Japanese nationals, it can be said that Japan is in a situation where it needs to squarely address the threat of international terrorism as its own challenge.

Securing the stable use of not only conventional areas of activity – sea and airspace – but also new areas of activity such as outer space and cyberspace is becoming a significant security challenge for the international community. Further developments in military and science technology and the recent dramatic advances in ICT are increasing the dependence of social infrastructure and military activities on outer space and cyberspace. On the other hand, the development of anti-satellite weapons by nations and the increasing number of cyber attacks, in some of which the involvement of government agencies is suspected, are heightening the risks to the stable use of outer space and cyberspace. In recent years, concrete initiatives have been under way in various countries aimed at strengthening an entire country's capabilities to respond to cyber attacks including private companies, as well as acquiring capabilities to monitor threats to satellites and other space assets. There is also an effort in the international community to promote the rule of law, including establishing a code of conduct in outer space and 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 countries unilaterally assert their rights and take actions based on their own assertion that is inconsistent with the existing international order, thereby unduly infringing the freedom of navigation on the high seas and of overflight. Recently, China has made further efforts to create a fait accompli through unilateral acts that alter the status quo

and heighten tension, such as large-scale and rapid land reclamation in the South China Sea, establishment of outposts there, and their use for military purposes. In response to these situations, the international community has been taking various measures such as continuing to conduct antipiracy operations in relevant waters including off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, collaborating to protect the existing international order based on law including a free and open maritime order, and implementing initiatives designed to avoid and prevent unintended consequences in the maritime domain and airspace.

As seen above, the international community today faces complex, diverse, and broad security challenges and destabilizing factors. Along with 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 conflict prevention to reconstruction assistance. Moreover, as opportunities for military forces to play such important roles increase, comprehensive responses are required that combine military capacity with other capacities such as diplomacy, law enforcement and justice, intelligence, and the economy.

Developments in science and technology, as represented by the great leaps forward in ICT in recent years, have also had spillover effects on the military. The United States and other developed countries put emphasis on research and development of new technologies including those for precision guidance, unmanned vehicles, and stealth capability, while actively seeking international joint development and production to address rising development and production costs and the deterioration of the national fiscal situation. On the other hand, states and non-state actors without cutting-edge technology are anticipated to develop and acquire WMDs and asymmetrical means of attack such as cyber attacks, while acquiring the technologies of developed countries in an illicit manner. How these trends in military science and technology will unfold is expected to have significant effects on military strategies and military balance in the future.