

Based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, together with Japan's own efforts, constitute the cornerstone for Japan's security. The Japan-U.S. Alliance centered on bilateral security arrangements functions as public goods that contribute to the stability and prosperity, not only of Japan but also of the Asia-Pacific region and the world at large.

As the security environment surrounding Japan becomes increasingly severe, and the United States, at the same time, maintains and strengthens its engagement and presence in the Asia-Pacific region, it has become more important than ever to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance for the security of Japan.

The military presence of U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) not only contributes to the defense of Japan, but also functions as deterrence and response capabilities to address contingencies in the Asia-Pacific region, and serves as a core element of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements.

In this manner, the stationing of USFJ based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty not only contributes to the interests of Japan but also to the interests of the United



Prime Minister Abe and U.S. President Trump at the Japan-U.S. joint press conference concerning the situation regarding North Korea (February 2017)
[photo courtesy of the Cabinet Public Relations Office]

States, which has an interest in this region.

On the other hand, since the stationing of USFJ impacts the living environment of local residents, efforts that correspond to the actual situation of each region must be made to mitigate the impact on regions such as Okinawa.

Section 1

Significance of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

1

Maintenance of Japan's Peace and Security

In the current international community, a robust defense system capable of responding to every contingency, ranging from all types of armed attacks including the use of nuclear weapons to coercion or intimidation by military power, is necessary to secure the peace, security, and sovereignty of the nation.

However, it is difficult even for the United States to guarantee its security on its own. Much more than that, it would be difficult for Japan to ensure its national security solely through its unilateral efforts given its population, land, and economy. Moreover, such a strategy would not necessarily contribute to regional stability.

Consequently, Japan has maintained its peace and

security, centered on the Security Arrangements with the world's dominant military power, the United States, with which it shares basic values such as democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a capitalist economy as well as an interest in maintaining the peace and security of the world, and has strong economic ties.

Specifically, Japan and the United States will take bilateral action in the event of an armed attack against Japan, based on Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, and Japan will provide facilities and areas for the U.S. Forces, based on Article 6 of the treaty. If a nation plans to attack Japan, the attacker must be prepared to confront not only the defense capability of the Self-

Defense Forces (SDF), but also the overwhelming military strength of the United States, due to the U.S. obligation to defend Japan in the event of an armed attack. As a result, the opposing nation clearly recognizes that it will suffer grievously if it carries out an invasion, and such desires will be abandoned at the planning stage. In other words,

this serves as deterrence against attacks.

Japan intends to create a seamless posture and secure its peace and security by effectively utilizing the deterrence capabilities of the U.S. military as well as maintaining its own adequate defense capability.

2 Maintenance of Peace and Stability in the Region Surrounding Japan

Article 6 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty states that contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East is the purpose of the use of facilities and areas by USFJ. This provision is based on the recognition that the security of Japan is closely tied to the peace and security of the Far East region to which Japan belongs.

In the regions surrounding Japan, there are many states and the like with massive military power, including some states that retain nuclear weapons or continue nuclear development. In addition to issues or tension caused by changes in the balance of power, situations that we call “gray zones” over sovereignty of the territory or vested interests are likely to arise, and this risks further aggravation of the situation.

In such a security environment, the military presence of USFJ provides deterrence against unexpected

contingencies caused by various security issues or destabilizing factors, not only protecting the interests of Japan and the United States but also providing a great sense of security to the nations in the region and thus fulfilling a role as public goods.

Also, the close bonds of cooperation based on the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements constitute the foundation of the United States’ commitment to the peace and stability of the region surrounding Japan. These arrangements, complemented by the alliances established between the United States and other countries in the region such as the Republic of Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines and also by the friendly relations developed with other countries, play an indispensable role in maintaining the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

3 Further Stabilization of the International Security Environment

The Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements are the foundation for a comprehensive and friendly cooperative relationship between Japan and the United States, not only in defense but also in a wide range of areas, including politics, economy, and society.

The Japan-U.S. Alliance, with these security arrangements at its core, also forms the axis of Japan’s foreign policy. It contributes to Japan’s ability to implement positive efforts to maintain the peace and security of the international community, including promotion of multinational security dialogue and cooperation, and cooperation with the United Nations.

Currently, we are confronted with global security challenges that are extremely difficult for any single country to tackle alone, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, international terrorism, and acts of piracy, as well as new risks concerning stable use of the seas, outer space and cyberspace, and it is important for countries to work together from peacetime. The strong bonds forged

between Japan and the United States are also playing an important role in the efforts implemented by Japan to effectively respond to such challenges.

In particular, under the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, the SDF and the U.S. Forces are working together in peacetime in a variety of areas to strengthen their cooperation. This close coordination lays the foundation for various forms of international collaboration such as antipiracy, undertaken by the SDF and the U.S. Forces, and leads to enhancement of the operational effectiveness of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements.

The peace and prosperity of the international community are closely linked to those of Japan. Accordingly, by cooperating with the United States, which possesses preeminent international operational capabilities, Japan is able to advance measures to further stabilize the global security environment. This in turn is enhancing the security and prosperity of Japan.



The Importance of the Japan-U.S. Alliance

— The Value of Japan to the United States

The United States has been a Pacific state for over a hundred years. Today, in the 21st century, the Asia-Pacific region is the center of world economic growth, in addition to being a region home to various security challenges such as the nuclear weapons and missile issues of North Korea. The national interests of the United States are increasingly closely intertwined with the peace and stability of this region. Japan is an extremely important partner for the United States since it is an economic power that shares universal values such as freedom, democracy, respect for basic human rights and rule of law, and has an outstanding Self-Defense Forces that has built a close cooperative relationship with the U.S. Forces over a long period of time.

By stationing its forces in Japan, made possible by the Japan-U.S. Alliance, the United States can respond to a conflict in this region, should one occur, by deploying troops more swiftly than by sending troops from the U.S. mainland. The facilities of the U.S. Forces in Japan also serve as the base for receiving military reinforcement from the U.S. mainland. Moreover, on a day-to-day basis the United States can conduct a wide variety of activities that contribute to regional stabilization more efficiently than if they were initiated from the U.S. mainland, such as drills with the armed forces of allies and friendly countries, defense exchanges and cooperation with other countries in the region, and disaster relief. In this manner, the Japan-U.S. Alliance, as the foundation of peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific, contributes to the stabilization of the regional security environment, and thereby, plays a major role in promoting the national interests of both Japan and the United States. The Japan-U.S. Alliance is not a framework under which only one of the two partners benefits.

The fact that very soon after the inauguration of the new U.S. presidency in January 2017, new Defense Secretary Mattis visited Japan and held a Defense Ministerial Meeting with Defense Minister Inada and President Trump held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Abe indicates that the new U.S. administration regards Japan with importance. The Japan-U.S. Alliance that is the linchpin of Japan's diplomacy and security policy is now as strong as ever. In order to advance both Japanese and U.S. interests, it is essential to continue to make the unwavering Japan-U.S. Alliance framework even sturdier and to bolster the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance underpinned by the relationship of trust with the new U.S. administration.