

Opening Remarks

Mr. Chipman, Chief Executive of IISS, all the IISS staff and supporters, I appreciate your kind invitation to speak at this prestigious conference once again. As the Japanese Minister of Defense, I am exceptionally honored to be able to speak for a second consecutive year at the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Moreover, I am delighted to share the panel with the British Secretary of Defence Mr. Hammond, and I appreciate this opportunity today to see Mr. Hishammuddin the Malaysian Minister of Defence since our last meeting just a month ago. Their presence once again reminds me of the importance of this annual event.

1. Japan's Defense Policy

The key note speech given by our Prime Minister Shinzo Abe last night unequivocally underscored Japan's security policy and Japan's commitment to peace and stability in the Asia Pacific in accordance with a "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. Over the past year, I have met leaders and defense and foreign ministers of more than thirty countries including India, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Australia, and I have taken the opportunity to explain our security policies directly, and I intend to continue to explain Japan's defense policies transparently.

Last year, I delivered a speech in this room, where I stressed Japan's resolve to promote future-oriented international cooperation based on the deep remorse for the past. I remember the warm welcome and comments following my speech for those then present in this dialogue. Today, again I seek your understanding on Japan's defense policy. But before I start, I assure you that Japan's ongoing security efforts do not mean any change to our path as a peace-loving nation.

2. Expectations for Military-to-Military Cooperation

With regard to today's topic, "Advancing the military-to-military cooperation," I would like to talk about the roles that and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces play in this

region and in the international community.

Asia witnessed a range of disasters and accidents over the last year, which highlights the growing importance of military-to-military cooperation among regional countries. In the wake of Typhoon Haiyan last November, many countries from within and outside of the Asia Pacific conducted disaster relief operations. Japan sent the largest international disaster relief mission in our history in close cooperation with the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom. Japan and the U.K. both deployed mobile units and carried out close cooperation between HMS *Illustrious* and Japanese helicopter carrier *Ise* by exchanging liaison officers.

In the following month, I visited Tacloban on Leyte Island, seeing first hand the disaster stricken areas. When I visited the multinational coordination center in Camp Aguinaldo in Manila, I was deeply impressed by the close cooperation between the military personnel from thirteen countries, through sharing information.

In the on-going search for the missing Malaysian airplane MH370, many countries including Malaysia, Australia and China contributed aircraft and vessels to the search. Japan sent Maritime Self-Defense Force's P-3C maritime surveillance aircraft and C-130 transportation aircraft in close cooperation with other foreign forces. During my visit to Perth, Australia in this April, I visited Pearce Air Base of the Royal Australian Air Force with Australian Minister For Defense Mr Johnston and saw the P-3C operation for searching MH370 aircraft. I am aware that many of the passengers on board this missing Malaysian aircraft are of Chinese and Malaysian citizens, and I sincerely hope for the earliest possible findings of MH370.

When it comes to large scale disasters and accidents like these, I cannot overstate the importance of activities by military forces which are self-sufficient and well organized with expertise in HA/DR missions. In addition, given that the response capability of a single country is inherently limited in the face of frequent cross-border problems, it is essential to continue enhancing regional military-to-military cooperation. For these purposes it is also essential to enhance the skills and smooth communications through exchanges and joint training during peacetime.

3. Japan's Approach and Challenges

Japan is prepared to share the lessons learnt from our past relief activities both home and abroad, including our experience in the 3.11 disaster and various international disaster relief activities, and advance future cooperation in a multilateral framework. We have already taken several steps in this area.

In June last year, the ADMM Plus held its first ever multilateral field exercise in Brunei. Going forward, as the new co-chair country of the Expert Working Group (EWG) with Laos, Japan would like to discuss with our regional partners various issues to include establishing of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in HA/DR to facilitate military-to-military cooperation.

In September last year, Japan hosted a Western Pacific submarine rescue training event called Pacific Reach 2013 with five participating countries and several observer nations and I observed the training as well. This contributed to enhanced international cooperation in submarine medicine and rescue operations in case of a submarine accident.

Furthermore, we will start Pacific Partnership 2014 mainly in South China Sea next week. Japan is going to send a transportation vessel and aircraft to conduct activities to enhance smoother disaster relief operations in the future.

In order for Japan to be proactively involved in military-to-military cooperation in the region, we intend to work on the following three challenges:

The first challenge is establishing a framework that will enable assisting countries to act swiftly in time of emergency. Therefore, joint planning and joint training during peacetime are essential. It is necessary to build in advance a legal framework for both sending forces abroad and accepting foreign forces in swift order. I would like to stress that this is not just Japan's challenge but a challenge commonly faced by many countries participating in regional multinational training and rescue activities.

In addition, it is effective to create a framework for assisting militaries to cooperate with each other. Based on the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with the U.S. Armed Forces and the Australian Defence Force, Japanese Self-Defense Forces undertake assistance by mutually providing fuel and other items in HA/DR situations. And we are currently in negotiations with the U.K. and Canada to establish similar

ACSA, as we expand the network of cooperation.

The second challenge is to expand capacity building assistance. Since 2012 Japan has conducted capacity building assistance in countries such as Timor-Leste and Cambodia. At this moment, I must point out that there are some institutional as well as resource constraints on JSDF's capacity building assistance. That is why I believe Japan needs to make security assistance seamless by enhancing coordination between SDF's capacity building assistance and Official Development Assistance (ODA). Also, because assistance by a single country has its limits, it is important for countries to closely collaborate their capacity building assistance.

The third challenge is to promote equipment and technology cooperation. In this April, Japan established the "Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology". With this new principle, we intend to actively promote our equipment and technology cooperation with other countries, particularly ASEAN member states in non-traditional security fields such as HA/DR. Our efforts are not limited to the military domain but also cover the area of maritime navigation safety as we proceed with the provision of patrol boat for coastal patrolling and maritime law enforcement. In order to appropriately handle the transfer of defense equipment and technology, the Ministry of Defense needs to enhance its organizational structure in a way that can facilitate the transfer of defense equipment and technology, by, for example, newly establishing "Defense Equipment and Technology Agency".

In Conclusion

In December last year, Japan released the new National Defense Program Guidelines. Also, Japan and its ally the United States, which is executing a rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific, are working together for revising the 1997 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, the first review in 17 years. Japan's perception underlining both of these initiatives is a recognition of the increasingly severe regional security environment.

It is unfortunate that there are security concerns in the East and South China Seas. Japan as well as all concerned parties must uphold the "rule of law" and never attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force. Also, no country should ignore

international rules and attempt to take dangerous action counter to military professionalism in both maritime navigation and over-flight in and above high seas. International norms and laws of freedom of navigation and over flight on the high seas are an important basis for the development of future military-to-military relations in this region.

I believe that as a first step, we need frank dialogue about crisis management. In this context, it is of great importance that the Western Pacific Naval Symposium held in April this year agreed on the “Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea” or the “CUES”, which stipulates safety procedures in an event where member nations’ naval ships face an unexpected encounter on the high seas. It is my hope that the participating countries comply with “CUES”.

It is important to continue discussions with relevant countries towards establishing a comprehensive mechanism which will be applied not only to Navy-to-Navy but to all involved military and other services by, for example, establishing similar standards for air forces. Furthermore, I also hope to see as early as possible conclusion of an effective Code of Conducts (COC) in the South China Sea.

I would also like to stress another important norm of military-to-military cooperation. That is a continuation of dialogue and exchanges even when there are problems due to political issues. Setting conditions for commencing dialogues is far from an attitude that facilitates dialogues. Japan does not accept any unilateral action that tries to change the status quo by force, and we should promote defense exchanges for the purpose of avoiding crises.

Finally, the prosperity of the Asia Pacific which we enjoy today was realized by each country’s great effort. I am confident that all of you share the view on the importance of an open sea which connects this region’s countries. The mission of each military and defense organization is to defend stability and to protect prosperity, not to destroy it.

I strongly believe that the discussion and examination on a right of collective self-defense and collective security, currently going on in Japan, will, for sure, contribute to the peace and stability of the region.

In accordance with the idea of “Proactive Contribution to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation, and on the foundation of the lessons learnt from our history, Japan will continue to work actively for advancing regional cooperation and stability, so that we will be able to pass on this region’s prosperity to future generations.

Just 3 weeks ago, I visited the PKO mission in South Sudan and Djibouti where international counter piracy units operate. In spirit of the hands-on policy, I myself will continue to visit frontlines of our international cooperation with foreign forces to further military-to-military cooperation.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

(End)