



# JAPAN AND THE US PIVOT TO THE ASIA PACIFIC

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## CHINA'S MILITARY RISE AND THE AMERICAN PIVOT TO ASIA

America's increasing strategic focus on the Asia-Pacific has been one of the distinctive features of the foreign and security policy of the Obama administration.<sup>1</sup> This renewed attention has been determined both by the global power shift towards Asia, caused by the rapid economic development of Asian countries, and by the new challenges the region poses to American primacy and the present international order.<sup>2</sup>

The main element of instability over the longer term is represented by the economic, political and military rise of China. Militarily, the challenge posed by the PRC is represented by its capacity to erode the United States' 'Command of the Commons' - that is, its ability to control and use the commons of air, sea, space and cyber-space militarily, and to credibly threaten to deny their use to other states.<sup>3</sup>

As a consequence of the development of these capabilities, US forces could find themselves locked out of the area between mainland China and the First Island Chain, losing the capacity to project power in this increasingly relevant area. Economically, the seas within the First Island Chain are decisive for the control of the maritime lines of communication connecting China with the Pacific region, but also with the Middle East and Europe. Strategically, the creation of a 'no go zone' for American forces would decisively damage the capacity of the United States to exercise extended deterrence and to protect its Asian allies.

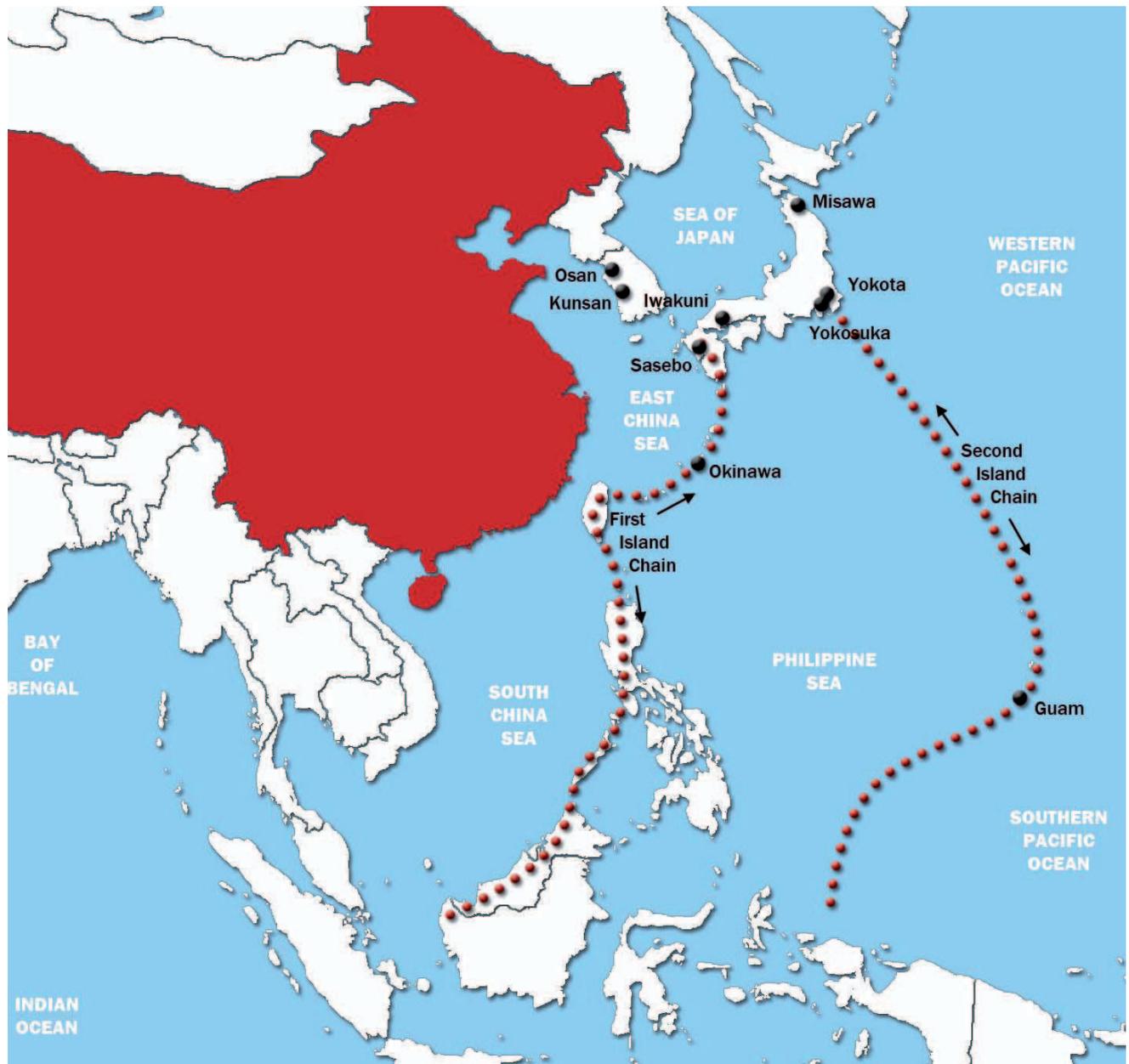
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1 Hillary Rodham Clinton, 'America's Pacific Century' *Foreign Policy*. (November 2011). accessed November 19, 2012, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas\\_pacific\\_century](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century)

2 On 'power shifts' see Kishore Mahbubani, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift in Global Power to the East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009). Danny Quah, 'The global economy's shifting centre of gravity,' *Global Policy* 2 (2011): 3-9. For a critical view, Michael Cox, 'Power Shift and the Death of the West? Not Yet!' *European Political Science Review* 10 (2011): 416-424.

3 Barry Posen, 'Command of the commons. The Military Foundation of U.S. Hegemony,' *International Security* 28 (2003): 5-46.

Figure 1



Source: Jan Van Tol and Andrew Krepinevich, *AirSea Battle A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept*. Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment. May 2011. <http://luckybogey.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/r-20100518-2.jpg>

There are three main trends of the Chinese modernisation programme that have contributed to a gloomier threat assessment on the part of American planners: the growth of China's ballistic and cruise missile capabilities, the ongoing development of a blue-water Navy and the technological development of the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLA).<sup>4</sup>

4 David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems and Prospects* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002). Dennis J. Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today. Tradition and Transformation in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2012)

According to the most recent assessments, the PLA has gained the Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD) capabilities necessary to potentially degrade the United States' ability to operate in airfields near Chinese territory; to hinder forward deployments within the area encompassing the First Island Chain; and to prevent naval surface assets from operating in waters near Chinese shores.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the PLA would be able to disrupt severely the command and control, early warning, or supply capabilities of forward-deployed forces to a degree great enough to force potential combatants to relocate to more distant locations.

As a consequence of these trends, a recent report of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment (CSBA), an non-partisan think tank with close links to the Pentagon and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), recently argued that 'US force structure will be compelled to pay an increasingly high – and perhaps prohibitive – price should Washington attempt to conduct traditional types of power-projection operations'<sup>6</sup>.

The magnitude of the challenge posed by China's new capabilities has led the US to 'pivot towards the Asia Pacific', a process of diplomatic and military re-engagement and a renewal of America's commitment to the region.<sup>7</sup>

The 'pivot to Asia' is having a significant impact upon Washington's bilateral relationship with key local partners, but primarily with Japan, historically the United States' main political and strategic partner in the area.<sup>8</sup>

The pivot is multidimensional, encompassing diplomatic, economic and military aspects. Washington recently undertook a sustained diplomatic effort that led to a bilateral *détente* with former enemies, such as Myanmar and Vietnam. Moreover, the Obama administration promoted a number of initiatives aimed at re-establishing the 'network centrality' of the US in economic and commercial fields.<sup>9</sup> The main aim of such initiatives is to restore America's role as the main promoter of regional economic integration and to reassert its function as the 'indispensable nation' to that process.

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5 Anti-access capabilities are those associated with denying access to fixed-point targets, especially large forward bases, while area-denial capabilities are those that threaten mobile targets over an area of operations, principally maritime forces. Jan Van Tol and Andrew Krepinevich, *AirSea Battle A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept*. Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment. May 2011.

6 *ibid*

7 Daniel Drezner, 'Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy? Why We Need Doctrines in Uncertain Times'. *Foreign Affairs*. 90 (2011). Xenia Dormandy, 'Prepared for Future Threats? US Defence Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region.' *Chatham House Program Report*. June 2012.

8 Apart from Japan, key allies of the US are Australia, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia. Julius Cesar I. Trajano, 'US Alliances with the Philippines and Thailand: Partnerships or Interests?' *RSIS Commentaries* 154 (2012). Bruce Vaughn, 'Australia: Background and U.S. Relations'. *Congressional Research Service*. January 2012. Thomas Lum, 'The Republic of the Philippines and U.S. Interests'. *Congressional Research Service*. April, 2012

9 On the concept of network centrality in US grand strategy see Anne-Marie Slaughter, 'A Grand strategy of Network Centrality' in Richard Fontaine and Kristin M. Lord, *America's Path Grand Strategy for the Next Administration*. Center for a New American Security 2012.

The military dimension of the pivot encompasses two main components: a phase of internal balancing aimed at boosting US military capabilities, and a phase of external balancing to deepen and strengthen security relations with local allies.

The 'pivot to Asia' will lead to a reconfiguration of US military posture overseas, including a reduction in the forces deployed to Europe, and possibly to the Middle East, and an increasing American presence in the Asia Pacific theatre. Furthermore, the Obama administration is developing a number of tactical and technological countermeasures in order to offset China's A2AD strategy and has been developing a new operational concept labelled 'Air-Sea Battle', which seeks to re-organise US force posture and reaffirm American hegemony in the contested commons.

AirSea Battle – a product of the CSBA – is an operational concept focused on the development of integrated air and naval capabilities designed to maintain the capacity to project military power even if adversaries are able to deploy a sophisticated anti-access area denial strategy. Its significance lies in its centrality for future US procurement, and signifies a return to more symmetric capacities following the drawdown of counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Whilst officially it is not exclusively directed against the PLA and its A2AD capabilities, the new concept is clearly aimed at strengthening extended deterrence in the Asia Pacific region and limiting China's capacity to blackmail or coerce Asian allies of the United States. Moreover, this new concept provides operational guidance in the case that deterrence fails, outlining a detailed battle plan to degrade the PLA's A2AD capabilities and to re-establish America's capacity to project power within the First Island Chain.

At the same time, and perhaps more importantly, the Obama administration is trying to turn its main Asian allies, and primarily Japan, into active security providers in the region, inducing them to expand their roles and to increase their military capabilities.

## **THE PIVOT AND THE US-JAPAN ALLIANCE**

The American pivot toward the Asia Pacific, as well as the increasing A2AD capabilities of the PLA, has accelerated the development of the US-Japan alliance that has been evolving since the end of the Cold War, and particularly after 1997. The pivot reinforces trends initiated after the end of the Cold War aimed at renewing and deepening the alliance and encouraging a more active Japanese security strategy in East Asia.

During the Cold War, the US-Japan alliance was based on America's provision of deterrence and security, in return for which Japan behaved as 'America's Unsinkable Aircraft carrier', supplying bases and remaining committed to the West.

This logic of security for fidelity was embodied by Article 5 of the Mutual Security Treaty signed in 1960, which obliged Washington to defend Japan in case of attack, while Tokyo had no such obligation in case of a direct attack against the United States. This allowed Japan to develop a Pacifist security strategy and to keep to a minimum its involvement in the proxy wars that destabilised East Asia throughout the Cold War.

Since the end of the Cold War, the shifting security environment has stimulated two distinct moments of redefinition and enhancement of the alliance, in 1997 and 2005. On both occasions, amendments to the Mutual Security Treaty highlighted a progressive increase in the importance of article 6 of the Mutual Security Treaty that emphasises collaboration between the US and Japan in the promotion of peace and stability in the region.

The first post-Cold War amendment to the regime established by the Mutual Security Treaty took place with the 'Review of the Defense Guidelines on US-Japan relations and regional security' released in November 1997.<sup>10</sup> That agreement established an improved structure and policy guidelines for US-Japan roles and missions in order to reach a higher degree of cooperation and coordination, both in normal circumstances and in the case of emergency. Previous agreements foresaw joint military activities and common planning only the case of a major international crisis or a direct attack against assets on Japanese soil. The new peacetime cooperation therefore represented a major change to the mechanics of the alliance. In addition, the revised guidelines provided a normative framework for cooperation regarding issues not previously covered by existing agreements, such as international humanitarian relief activities, emergency relief operations, and cooperation in UN peacekeeping activities. The 1997 revision therefore represented an important step in Japan's quest for a more equal security partnership with the US. Nevertheless, Japan did not totally commit itself to its expanded role, which was still marked largely by non-combative, rear area functions. Above all, Japan's desire to hedge against entrapment and to avoid excessive entanglements was clear.<sup>11</sup> In 1997, the Japanese firmly maintained their position on the principle of the non-exercise of collective self-defence and reasserted their commitment to the exclusive use of military means for self-defence, setting out fundamental limits to their security policy.<sup>12</sup>

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10 The 1997 guidelines, together with the 1978 guidelines are to be considered legally binding amendment to the Mutual Security Treaty signed in 1960. The 'transformation initiatives' are considered equally relevant 'material amendment' to the security regime build around the MSA. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/security.html> Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Joint Statement U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation New York, New York.' 9-23-1997

11 On Japanese hedging strategies, Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, 'Japan's Dual Hedge,' *Foreign Affairs* 81 (2002): 110-21.

12 Ralph A. Cossa and Brad Glosserman. 'U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation: Has Japan Become the Great Britain of Asia?' *Issues & Insights CSIS Pacific Forum* 5 (2005).

Another relevant step in the redefinition of the alliance took place in 2005, with the approval of 'US-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future' by the Security Consultative Committee, made up of the American and Japanese Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs.<sup>13</sup> The document highlighted the evolution of the duties of Japan's armed forces, from limited self-defence to a progressively more marked commitment to 'Far East contingencies' issues related to Article 6, and broader US-Japan cooperation beyond the geographical boundaries of the Far East.

This evolution of the US-Japan alliance has accelerated as a consequence of the American pivot to Asia. Whilst the Treaty and the Guidelines themselves have not been revised since 2005, recent trends have enhanced the regime logic, transforming Japan's role from a mere supplier of bases into an active member of the US-led security architecture in the Asia Pacific.

At the heart of the pivot is a process of 'alliance diversification', that is, enhancing pre-existing alliances – such as those with South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines – and opening new diplomatic channels with former adversaries, including Vietnam and Myanmar. Even if Japan remains the cornerstone of the US engagement in the Asia Pacific Region, its capacity to dictate terms to the US is diminished by the renewed relevance of other bilateral partnerships connecting Washington and other key actors.

The effect of the US's alliance diversification is that Japan is no longer able to behave as a 'security consumer', whose mere alignment with the US guaranteed security and stability. Instead, Japan is being increasingly forced to rethink its role and enlarge its duties in the provision of security and deterrence in the area.<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, since Tokyo can no longer play the role of military and logistic rearguard for the US military complex it used to, its value to the US geopolitical exchequer is considerably diminished. The new Chinese A2AD capabilities increasingly render the main US bases in Japan and Okinawa vulnerable to a possible first strike. Whilst this does not imply that American forces are likely to abandon such bases altogether, it does mean that they will seek to share their power projection hub role with other facilities located outside the First Island Chain. This fundamentally alters the strategic relevance of Japan as supplier of bases. Since Japanese territory is no longer able to provide a safe rearguard for American troops, the United States is increasingly asking Japan to provide different contributions to the alliance and to the stability of the region. As a consequence, the Obama administration has recently been increasing the pressure on Japan for a more active military role in the alliance and less unequal burden sharing.

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13 Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Security Consultative Committee Document U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future October 29, 2005.

14 Patrick M. Cronin, Paul S. Giarra, Zachary M. Hosford and Daniel Katz, *The China Challenge Military, Economic and Energy Choices Facing the U.S.-Japan Alliance*. Center for a New American Security. April 2012.

## THE NORMALISATION OF JAPANESE SECURITY STRATEGY

Asia's changing security environment, characterised most markedly by China's growing capacity and the United States' pivot in response, is forcing Japan to rethink its role in the region. As such, Japan is being forced to pursue a process of 'normalisation' that is gradually overcoming the legal and political limits of its Pacifist security identity of the post-war era. Recently, Japan has accelerated the evolution of its security posture, progressively abandoning the identity of a 'peace loving country' (*heiwa kokka*), in favour of turning itself into a 'normal nation' (*futsū no kuni*).

During the Cold War, the intellectual and political basis for Japanese foreign and security policies was the 'Yoshida Doctrine' espoused by Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. In essence, this was an attempt to gain protection under the US military umbrella, thus enabling Japan to focus national energy and resources on economic regeneration and wealth creation.<sup>15</sup> Yoshida believed the alliance with the United States was necessary to protect Japan from the Soviet threat and to enhance domestic political stability. In the aftermath of World War II, the Japanese public considered the military responsible for both the war itself and Japan's defeat, and strongly opposed any active role of Japanese forces beyond strict self-defence. The Yoshida doctrine therefore represented a compromise between the imperative to protect the country from the Soviet threat and the domestic need to minimise the role and the size of the armed forces.<sup>16</sup>

The Yoshida doctrine was entrenched in Japanese institutions in Article Nine of the Constitution, that forbids the use of force and the maintenance of a 'war potential' whilst allowing for a 'defensive defence'.<sup>17</sup> Under the Yoshida doctrine, Japan self-imposed fiscal limits on defence spending and submitted the military to strict governmental control.<sup>18</sup> In order to minimise its role in the alliance and to institutionalise its 'pacifist identity' the Japanese government approved seven self-binding prescriptions: no participation in collective self-defence arrangements; no power projection capability; no production, transport and storage of nuclear arms; no arms exports or sharing of defence-related technology; no more than one percent of its GDP for defence expenditure; and no military use of space.<sup>19</sup>

15 On the Yoshida Doctrine, Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Japanese Question: Power and Purpose in a New Era* (Washington: AEI Press, 1996). Andrew L. Oros, *Normalizing Japan: Politics, Identity, and the Evolution of Security Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). Richard Samuels, *Securing Japan. Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

16 Thomas U. Berger, 'From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism,' *International Security*, 17 (1993): 119–150.

17 Article Nine statutes that 'Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognised.' The *de facto* power to interpret Article Nine lay in the hands of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB). The whole debate is focused on the definition of 'war potential' (*senryoku*). On the Article Nine and the debate on possible constitutional revisions: J. Patrick Boyd and Richard J. Samuels 'Nine Lives?: The Politics of Constitutional Reform in Japan,' *East West Center Policy Studies* 19 (2005).

18 Sun-Ki Chai, 'Entrenching the Yoshida Defense Doctrine,' *International Organization* 51 (1997).

19 Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan Rising: The Resurgence of Japanese Power and Purpose* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007).

By institutionalising these restrictions Tokyo was precluded from playing an active part in the containment of Communism in East Asia, and the Japanese government therefore managed to avoid entanglement in Cold War politics and in proxy-conflicts involving their American ally.

Since the mid-1990s, however, the Yoshida Doctrine has been subject to a gradual erosion of its principle directives, as part of a process of the 'normalisation' of Japanese foreign policy.<sup>20</sup> The clearest indication of the overcoming of the Yoshida doctrine has been the progressive dilution of the seven self-binding restrictions. Although Japan maintains the main symbols of post-war anti-militarism, including Article Nine and the fiscal cap on military spending, many of the central tenets of the post-war strategy have now vanished. Indeed, over the course of the last decade Japan has dispatched the Japanese Self Defense Forces (JSDF) abroad, sending a small contingent to Iraq between 2004 and 2006 and participating in anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden since 2009; shared military technology with the United States and, since 2012, with the United Kingdom; acquired power projection capabilities, with the procurement of weapon system such as the Kongō class destroyer and Hyūga class helicopter destroyer; started to use outer space for military purposes;<sup>21</sup> and reconsidered the ban on the exercise of collective defence.

The process of normalisation of Japanese security strategy has been accompanied by a redefinition of Japan's military posture, most recently highlighted by the release of the 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines.<sup>22</sup> The document introduces 'dynamic deterrence' as one of the basic roles of the Japanese forces. This concept is designed to close any 'windows of deterrence' by increasing JSDF activities in the East China Sea, and to arrest Chinese 'creeping expansion' to avoid any possible *fait accompli*. According to the documents released by the Japanese Ministry of Defense, the Japanese Self Defense Forces should exercise dynamic deterrence through continuous steady-state ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), information gathering, military exercises, and demonstration of operational effectiveness and readiness through actual military operations, such as international cooperation or disaster relief.<sup>23</sup>

The 2010 NDPG also introduced a new concept establishing the appropriate size and structure of Japan's military forces. Since the 1976 NDPG, the size and the structure of the JSDF had been determined by the 'basic defence forces concept' (*kibanteki boeiriyoku koso*), which established that Japan had to possess only the military capabilities necessary to defend its territory from a foreign invasion. The new NDPG replaced 'basic defence

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20 Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Reemergence as a Normal Military Power* (London: Routledge, 2004).

21 The Ballistic Defense system entails the military use of space, since ballistic missiles can be intercepted during the exo-atmospheric, (i.e. outside the Earth's atmosphere) phase of their trajectory.

22 The NDPG is the highest level document of Japan's defence policy. It sets principles, roles and force posture of the Japanese Self Defense Force.

23 Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2012*.

forces' with the 'dynamic defence force' (*doteki boeiryouku*) concept, which fundamentally changes the role and structure of Japan's military. Japan's dynamic defence forces should now retain autonomous capabilities able not only to repel an invasion, but also to exercise active deterrence and contribute to stability and deterrence in the region.

The Armitage-Nye Report, released in August 2012, highlights the fact that the 2010 NDPG is consistent with how Air-Sea battle is shaping US posture in the region and conditioning military to military relations with Asian allies. The new Japanese concept of dynamic defence, like Air-Sea Battle, stresses Japan's role in maritime security, and gives primary importance to anti-submarine warfare capabilities, as well as emphasising the increasing strategic relevance of the joint US-Japanese Ballistic defence system.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, the NDPG, consistent with the United States' request for increased interoperability and 'jointness' between the allied armed forces, mandates the enhancement of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities in order to increase operational readiness as main priorities for the JSDF and for the alliance. Under the new dynamic defence concept, Japanese forces will emphasise regional deterrence at sea, and ensure the security of the maritime areas surrounding the archipelago. Moreover, Japanese maritime forces will maintain the ability to patrol and, if necessary, gain control of the waters of the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea.

The new NDPG also foresees an extra-regional role for Japanese forces, that would be deployed as an instrument of a 'multilayered security network' encompassing states beyond the US – including Korea and Australia – in order to foster maritime security in the Indian Ocean and in the Western Pacific.<sup>25</sup> The NDPG therefore represents an important step in the dismantling of Japan's post-war self-binding consensus. Moreover, the document presents the joint American-Japanese Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system as fundamental to the exercise of dynamic deterrence. Japan's increased involvement in BMD has major consequences for the process of normalisation.<sup>26</sup> Participation in the system triggered the acquisition of potentially offensive military assets such as Aegis destroyers and SM-3 medium range and PAC-3 missiles, increased command and control capability, and induced a significant restructuring of the defence establishment, instigating substantial doctrinal changes that could allow pre-emption should an attack be deemed imminent. Under the broad rubric of missile defence, Japan had to re-evaluate its position on the military use of space and on the export of military technology.<sup>27</sup> In order to enable Tokyo to enter into BMD cooperation with the United States in August 2003, a new 'Basic Space Law' entered into force.

24 Richard L. Armitage, Joseph S. Nye, *The U.S.-Japan Alliance. Anchoring Stability in Asia*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. August 2012.

25 Alessio Patalano, 'Japan's Maritime Strategy. The Island Nation Model,' *The RUSI Journal* 156 (2011): 82–89.

26 Matteo Dian, 'The Chrysanthemum and the Shield. The Pacific Theater Missile Defense and its consequences for Japanese Security Strategy,' *WARning Rivista Semestrale di Studi Internazionali*. 2 (2012).

27 Saadia M. Pekkanen and Paul Kallender-Umezu, *In Defense of Japan. From the Market to Military in Japanese Defense Policy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). Andrew Oros, 'Explaining Japan's Tortured Course to Surveillance Satellites,' *Review of Policy Research* 24 (2007).

The law lifted the ban on the use of space for defensive purposes, changing that interpretation to 'nonaggressive', meaning the JSDF now can manufacture, possess, and operate its own satellites to support military operations such as ballistic missile defence. Indeed, since participation in the BMD system authorises the JSDF to intercept a missile directed towards the US, Japan's BMD cooperation implies a *de facto* legalisation of collective self-defence, and marks a fundamental departure from the Yoshida Doctrine, which was centred exclusively on self-defence and did not consider pre-emption a legitimate option.

As far as other dimensions of the cooperation under the new operational concept are concerned, Japan has started a process of modernising its Air Force, acquiring interoperable fifth generation aircraft such as the Lockheed Martin F-35, and has expanded its submarine fleet, deploying the new *Sōryū* class of diesel propelled submarines, and preparing to build the 'Ryukyu barrier', designed for anti-submarine warfare against the Chinese Navy.<sup>28</sup>

## THE DECLINE OF *KOKUSANKA*

Paradoxically, the enlargement of Japanese military duties has been coupled with a decline in its military budget. During the last two decades, Tokyo has faced a number of structural, economic and political problems that indirectly influenced Japan's level of military capabilities. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Japan's economy has suffered a prolonged period of slow growth. At the same time, the Japanese government never abolished the one percent of GDP ceiling on defence spending, which is still considered a fundamental binding prescription. Therefore, despite the renewed priority of defence, military expenditures have declined continuously for a decade. From 2002 to 2012, the military budget shrank by 5.3 percent, while the level of expenditures of other powers in East Asia grew massively, including South Korea by 80 percent and China by 208 percent. What has been described as the '*Heisei* remilitarisation'<sup>29</sup> is largely a number of life extension measures, budget rationalisations and shifts from procurement of new weaponry to equipment maintenance.

The declining budget, coupled with the enlargement of the JSDF role, accelerated the demise of the policy of *kokusanka* (internalisation and indigenous production), and so the practice of pursuing technological self-reliance in the formation of a defence base that has been considered one of the fundamental pillars of post-War Japanese

28 Christopher W. Hughes, 'Japan Officially Selects F-35' *The Diplomat*. December 2011. Accessed November 19, 2012 <http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2011/12/20/japan-offically-selects-f-35/>

29 The Heisei is the current reign period for Japan. It started in 1989 with the death of the 'Showa Emperor' Hiroito and the ascension to the throne of his son Akihito. Richard Tanter, 'With Eyes Wide Shut: Japan, Heisei Militarization and the Bush Doctrine', in *Confronting the Bush Doctrine: Critical Views from the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Melvin Gurtov et al. (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 153-180.

security strategy. At the heart of the Yoshida doctrine was a 'techno-nationalist' strategy of the internalisation of military technology and catch-up industrialism. This strategy, realist at its core, was based on a particular definition of Japanese comprehensive security. During the entire post-war era, Tokyo's security strategy reflected a complex calculus, under which the maximisation of military security was frequently subordinated to the pursuit of 'techno-economic' security interests.<sup>30</sup> The post-war conservative elite had understood, as the first generation of Meiji leaders before them, that long-term technological advancement was at least as relevant for security as short-term military autonomy, and opted for a limited degree of military autonomy in order to activate a virtuous circle of technological innovation and indigenisation.<sup>31</sup>

Thus during the Cold War, while the US was increasingly pushing for the realisation of autonomous defence, Japan opted for a long-term strategy of technological indigenisation focused on economic advancement and autonomy, but not necessarily on military self-sufficiency in the short-term. From this point of view, Japan did not need to establish large defence capabilities, but instead needed to introduce foreign technology from the United States to start a process of indigenisation, nurturing and diffusion of foreign military technology to both the military and the civil sectors.

Recent financial pressures on the defence budget substantially impede the continuation of these three steps of indigenisation, nurturing and diffusion of defence technology that had characterised Japanese defence production during the post-war period. The research and development of technological self-reliance, coupled with the Three Principles of Arms Exports, presented obstacles for the maintenance of Japan's defence base since they isolated the Japanese defence market from an increasingly globalised defence industry.<sup>32</sup> Deliberate *kokusanka* policy resulted in extremely high costs and low production rates.

The arms export ban had long prevented Japan from exporting weapons, as well as taking part in international collaborative activities regarding defence technology developments, thereby making the Japanese defence industry dependent solely on domestic procurements, and causing it to lag behind the global technological competition. These limits notwithstanding, the Japanese government maintained an elevated degree of self-reliance in defence as a fundamental priority throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Japanese policymakers made

30 Richard J. Samuels, Eric Heginbotham, 'Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy,' *International Security* 22 (1998): 171-203.

31 On this point Richard J. Samuels, '*Rich Nation. Strong Army.*' *National Security and Technological Transformation of Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Michael J. Green, *Arming Japan : Defense Production, Alliance Politics, And The Postwar Search For Autonomy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

32 The Three Principles of Arm Export approved by the Japanese Government in 1967 prohibited Japan from exporting weapons to Communist-bloc countries, those countries subject to embargoes on arms exports under the U.N. Security Council's resolutions, and those countries engaged or 'likely to be engaged in international conflicts'. This ban seriously handicapped Japan's defense production. The absence of an external market, indeed, reduced the possibility of developing a state of the art weapons production capacity. The arms export ban had long prevented Japan from exporting weapons as well as taking part in international collaborative efforts regarding defense technology developments, thereby causing the Japanese defense industry to be solely dependent upon JDA orders and to lag behind in the global technological competition.

efforts to maintain the domestic industrial base, ranging from materials to end product industries, in the name of economic and national security, even when it had generated higher costs and inefficiency. Thus Japan has sought to maintain an indigenous production base by initiating new projects, such as the P-1 maritime patrol aircraft, equivalent to the American Boeing P-8 Poseidon, and the military transport aircraft XC-2, equivalent to the C-130 Hercules. These programmes were designed to nurture indigenous technologies and preserve the potential for systems integration and building larger platforms. The launch of these new programmes notwithstanding, it appears clear that Japan is not able to pursue the policy of *kokusanka* and temporarily maintain its prohibition on arms exports. The export ban was considered one of the cornerstones of Japanese pacifism, since it safeguarded against the development of 'vested interests' in the spreading of conflicts around the world, and limited the role of the domestic military industrial complex.

Tight budgetary conditions, the expansion of the role of the Japanese armed forces, and the high costs associated with the development of state of the art autonomous projects made it difficult for Japan to maintain the process of internalisation, nurturing and diffusion. At the same time, Japanese defence industries are not able to produce state of the art weapons when restricted to relying solely on the internal market.

The Japanese government progressively recognised the impossibility of maintaining a high level of military autonomy. Their solution was to try to preserve Japan's capacity to produce state of the art systems in particular strategic sectors in order to be able to participate in a restricted number of international projects, such as the SM-3 Block, UAVs, and sonar. The crisis of the Japanese techno-national project is causing the 'slow death' of Tokyo's defence base, further undermining Japan's technological and comprehensive national strength, and, therefore,<sup>33</sup> its autonomy in security policy.

Broadening Japanese security options and the enlargement of its role in the alliance with the United States shifted concern for self-reliance in military production away from centre stage, but also reinforced the importance of maintaining an independent defence technology base that Japan considers fundamental to its long-term security interests. The overlapping effect of the expansion of the JSDF role and the recognition by the Japanese government of the necessity of opening the Japanese defence base to co-production and co-development efforts implied a further integration of Japan into the US military complex, with a relevant effect on the alliance. These developments are likely to foster military integration in the alliance and redesign the division in military roles between American forces in the area and the JSDF.

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33 Christopher W. Hughes, 'The Slow Death of Japanese Techno Nationalism? Emerging Comparative Lessons for China's Defense Production,' *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 34 (2011): 451-479.

For Japan, the increasing acknowledgement that the maintenance of its technological and industrial base substantially depends on joint production with the US undermines its bargaining power within the alliance. Self-reliance was intended to create bargaining power in the alliance, provide diplomatic autonomy, and generate latent autonomous military capabilities, whilst avoiding technological dependence. The failure of *kokusanka* means that Tokyo has been compelled by its increasing dependence to cooperate with American wishes and integrate itself in the US-led security complex.

The 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) reflects the perceived demise of the policy of technological self-sufficiency in the defence base, anticipating the relaxation of the ban against arms exports, later approved by the government in December 2010.<sup>34</sup>

This facilitates Japan's integration into the Western and global defence market. Recently, indeed, the Noda government agreed to the export of the SM-3 Block IIA sea-based missile interceptor to NATO members, as well as to participation in the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter project, and to broad technological cooperation with Great Britain.

These recent developments testify to how Japan is no longer able to insulate itself from the global defence industry and to pursue *kokusanka* while preserving post-war self-binding prescriptions such as the Three Principles of Arms Exports. More broadly, the new security imperatives determined both by the US pivot and China's military expansion are making the demise of the basic pillars of the Yoshida Doctrine as a comprehensive grand strategy more evident.

Overall, the lifting of the Three Principles and the opening of the sector to international cooperation has helped slow the decline of Japan's industrial defence base. However, the need to rely on cooperation with the United States and, increasingly, other partners such as Britain, inhibits Japan from achieving the strategic objectives of *kokusanka*, namely creating room of manoeuvre and bargaining power within the US-Japan alliance.

These trends presage a further weakening of Japanese bargaining power, highlighting the increasing incapacity of the Japanese government to resist US pressures for a more active role in the alliance and less unequal burden sharing.

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<sup>34</sup> The original ban forbade Japan to export weapons and military technology to Communist countries, countries under UN embargo and countries involved in international conflicts. In 1976 the ban was reinforced completely stopping exports of arms and technology sharing with other nations. After the relaxation only export of arms functional to peace building and humanitarian assistance. Moreover the share of military technology has been allowed.

## CONCLUSION

The pivot to Asia constitutes the main pillar of the grand strategy of the Obama administration. It reflects the recognition of the growing geopolitical centrality of the Asia Pacific and testifies how the Chinese economic and political challenge became the central priority in US foreign policy.

US military planners currently believe that the effort to maintain American primacy should be sustained both by a continuing military presence in the region and by increased burden sharing with the local partners. They therefore consider the progressive normalisation of Japan fundamental to the current strategic equilibrium. The United States wants to encourage the rise of friendly Asian powers, able to act as democratic security providers.<sup>35</sup> In other words, American strategy in Asia seeks to turn the 'reluctant allies' of the Cold War into active contributors in the present order and enforcers of American command of the commons.

The military rise of China, coupled with the relative decline of the Japanese defence base, necessitated Tokyo's increased dependence upon Washington. Japan's progressive integration into the US military complex entails significant American control of Japanese choices and restrictions on Tokyo's capacity to preserve a degree of independence and avoid entanglements. Moreover, Japan's bargaining power in the alliance has been undermined by the demise of the Yoshida Doctrine, which set out a coherent vision of the country's role in the post-war world, across economic, political and military domains. The progressive inadequateness of Yoshida Shigeru's vision in the post-Cold War period, and the need to rethink both Japan's path to development together with its role in East Asia and the alliance, reinforced the United States' effort to force Tokyo to assume a more cooperative stance and became an engaged ally.

The expansion of the Japanese role in the alliance, as well as the new roles of the JSDF in the Asia Pacific, are not symptoms of Tokyo's autonomy, of a new and more independent stance *vis à vis* Washington, or even an act of balancing against the rise of China or the threat posed by North Korea. They are instead a manifestation of the failure of Japan's strategy that sought to resist US pressures for an expanded Japanese security posture through the maintenance of constitutional limits and the preservation of autonomy in the military, technological and political realms. ■

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35 Quoted in Daniel Twining, 'America's Grand Design in Asia,' *The Washington Quarterly* 30 (2007): 79–94.

## Glossary

A2AD	Anti-Access/Area Denial
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defence
CSBA	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment
DARPA	Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
NDPG	National Defense Program Guidelines
JSDF	Japanese Self Defense Force
PRC	People's Republic of China
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army Air Force
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

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# JAPAN AND THE US PIVOT TO THE ASIA PACIFIC

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This paper analyses the consequences of the US pivot to Asia on the US-Japan alliance and on Japanese foreign and security policies.

On the one hand, the US pivot is reassuring for Tokyo, since it seeks to 'rebalance' Chinese military ascendancy and to strengthen extended deterrence in the region. On the other hand, it contributes to the acceleration of the 'normalisation' of Japanese security policies, speeding the process of overcoming the institutional self-binding prescriptions that underpinned Japan's post-war pacifism.

This process, inaugurated by the first post-Cold War renewal of the US-Japan Alliance in 1997 and culminating with the adoption of the 'dynamic defence concept' in 2010 and the relaxation of the Three Principles of Arms Control in 2012, created a vicious cycle for Japan. During the post-war era, pacifist self-binding prescriptions functioned as 'anti-entrapment devices' preventing Tokyo from becoming involved in the conflicts that marked the Cold War in Asia.

Today an increasingly 'normal' Japan is no longer able to resist US pressure for a more active role in the alliance and less unequal burden sharing. Moreover, China's military rise renders Tokyo ever more dependent on US forces. These trends compel Japan to accept further integration into the US military apparatus in the region and to take additional steps towards the definitive abandonment of Japan's pacifist identity.

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