

January 10, 2025

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Provisional translation by FPCJ

◆Introduction: Considering the challenges for Japanese diplomacy over the 30 years since the Cold War.

◆First half of the post-Cold War period: How and to what degree Japan should be involved in the US's repeated military actions in the Middle East was the biggest issue. Gulf War (1991), Iraq War (2003).

◆Second half of the post-Cold War period: Maintaining the US's involvement in East Asia in response to North Korea's progress in developing nuclear weapons and the rise of China became the biggest challenge. Resulted in security legislation (2015). Strengthening Japan-US unity.

◆Situation in 2025: Potential to become a new turning point.

Demands for increased defense spending from the US Trump administration. While some increase is necessary...

• Where would the funding for increased defensive capabilities come from? (Under the Fumio Kishida administration, spending was increased. Using national debt.)

Potential difficulties in implementation. Political parties will all compete over reducing the burden on the public. There is opposition within Japan to increasing taxes for defense spending.

• The Japan Self-Defense Forces are not reaching their target numbers for enlistment due to declining birthrate and aging population.

• Using funding smartly will become important. Construction of the new Henoko Base in Okinawa is questionable (weak foundation, total cost still unclear. Insufficient capabilities. Original goal was to eliminate the dangers of Futenma Base: Implement a more logical approach.)

◆What are the challenges for Japanese diplomacy?

→ Is easing tensions necessary from a fiscal perspective as well? Is stability in East Asia through diplomacy possible?

• Leadership in diplomacy and public opinion: China (Xi Jinping visiting Japan), North Korea

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(abductions, normalization of relations).

Easier to gain support by taking a hardline stance. In the LDP. Public opinion. East Asia.

- By focusing exclusively on strengthening the US-Japan alliance, there is a risk the Trump will make some deal going over Japan's head.
- Possibility of more active diplomacy in East Asia due to Trump-style deals? US-North Korea, US-China.
- Japan-South Korea: Exhaustion on Japan's part regarding history. A pioneer in the global trend of decolonization.
- "Taiwan Crisis": How realistic is a full-scale invasion→occupation? Efforts to maintain the status quo. Massive blow to global economy.

◆Necessity for a diplomatic framework (and arguments surrounding it)

- Second Abe administration: "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." What about East Asia (China, North Korea, South Korea)?
- Yukio Hatoyama administration (DPJ): US military presence only in times of crisis, East Asian Community, moving Futenma base "at least outside the prefecture"
 - Discussing these topics became taboo with this administration's loss.
- Komeito: Asian OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), Communist Party: Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in East Asia (modeled on ASEAN). As a framework for easing tensions in East Asia.
- Ishiba's Asian NATO?: Is there any need to use the term "NATO?"
 - : Lack of clarity on China's position. In his book, he emphasizes connections with Kakuei Tanaka (interested in pursuing Japan-China relations?).

https://www.nippon.com/ja/in-depth/d01070/?cx_recs_click=true