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# **The End of the Cold War and Japan's Participation in Peacekeeping Operations: Overseas Deployment of the Self-Defense Forces\***

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## **I. Introduction**

The end of the Cold War brought about a reconsideration of the significance of the US-Japan security framework, the focus of which had been the USSR. In addition, as the hypothetical enemy, the Soviet Union began to clearly weaken and before long collapsed, a wave of disarmament began to spread, starting with Europe, which led Japan to begin deliberations on reducing its own self-defense capabilities. In other words, with the Cold War's demise, the conditions were created under which Japan was forced to fundamentally reevaluate its security policy and the appropriate self-defense capacity for the country.

However, in actuality, the Gulf Crisis/Gulf War that began the year after the end of the Cold War gave rise to a major dispute within Japan over whether or not the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) should be dispatched as an international contribution (international cooperation). In this way, the rethinking of the role of the SDF, premised on the ideas of "scaling down" and "expanding duties to include international contributions," became an important post-Cold War issue.

Accordingly, this article will examine why, in response to the changing post-Cold War security environment, Japan decided to take the plunge and send the SDF overseas, as represented by its participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs). The issue surrounding the overseas deployment of the SDF as an "international contribution" (international cooperation) came to the fore during the time of the Gulf War, but in fact the issue was already being discussed among policy officials prior to that time. And the discussion on sending SDF troops overseas was not limited to the PKO context. Indeed, the SDF deployment during the Gulf War was different in nature than the PKOs. Accordingly, we will begin our discussion first with the issue of international cooperation up until the end of the Cold War, then turn to the SDF deployment during the Gulf War, and then the SDF participation in the Cambodian PKO, before concluding with an examination of the issues related to the overseas deployment of the SDF.

## **II. The Background of Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations**

### **1. UN-centrism and the Issue of Peace Cooperation**

Japan's relationship with peacekeeping activities dates back to the 1950s, around the time it was admitted

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to the UN. Japan included “UN-centrism” as one of the “three principles of Japanese diplomacy,” which it announced upon joining the UN in 1956,<sup>1</sup> but the specific substance of “UN-centrism” was called into question by Japan’s response to the Lebanon Crisis and the Congo Crisis. Japan, which refused a request from the UN to dispatch personnel to participate in the UN Observation Group in Lebanon during the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, began deliberations led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) on how to specifically implement “UN diplomacy.” However, the fact that the Diet took issue with a statement made in February 1961 by Japanese Ambassador to the UN Koto Matsudaira, in which he noted, “If Japan claimed to be cooperating with the United Nations based on a policy of UN-centrism, then naturally it must dispatch troops abroad. If that is not possible due to domestic laws (the Constitution and SDF Law), then at the very least it should dispatch observers from the Self-Defense Force,”<sup>2</sup> is indicative of how difficult it was to dispatch the SDF in the context of the contemporary Japanese societal conditions, where “postwar pacifism” had taken hold.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, under the postwar Constitution that renounced war and the maintenance of the potential to wage war, a de facto remilitarization was carried out in the form of the National Police Reserve (Keisatsu Yobitai), the National Safety Forces (Hoantai), and then the Self-Defense Forces (Jieitai), but because of the past history of Japan’s prewar military despotism leading to the tragic war in Asia Pacific, the overseas activities of the SDF were extremely limited, in part by a resolution by the plenary session of the House of Councillors that prohibited such activities.<sup>4</sup> From the time that the SDF was established, the idea of having those troops engaged in overseas activities was viewed as a taboo. And having experienced the “Security Treaty dispute” that divided public opinion, in the 1960s there was a reluctance to make military-related concerns into political issues, particularly as Japan entered a period of rapid growth and the trend of the times was to focus on the economy.

Meanwhile, Japan’s transformation into a major economic power thanks to its rapid economic growth was making it an increasingly important player in the international community. As a country holding a great deal of influence in the global political economy, and given that its economic activities had benefitted from the stable international community, Japan was now expected to make international contributions commensurate with its economic strength. The specific content of that international contribution was represented first by its development assistance measures centered on its official development assistance (ODA), which expanded dramatically in the 1970s. A second area was Japan’s contribution to international peace and security, including the PKOs, which became a topic of deliberation once again within MOFA.

As noted above, the idea had existed within MOFA quite soon after joining the UN that Japan might be able to cooperate with UN activities, and that idea was much more aggressively considered in the 1970s. However, that debate remained strictly within the ministry, centered on MOFA’s UN Bureau; it was not something that extended to the government as a whole. And even those who were talking about cooperating in PKOs did not necessarily share a united view on the question of whether the SDF should be dispatched or not.<sup>5</sup> Rather, it was MOFA that during the consultations on the Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation in 1978 resisted the US request to extend deliberations beyond just the situations for Article 5 (the defense of Japanese soil) to also include those for Article 6 (related to the Far East clause), insisting instead focusing only on the defense of Japan’s soil. That was a decision made based on the political conditions within Japan at that time, and in light of those factors, clearly they had to be cautious in their approach to the dispatch of the SDF. But it is also a fact that, during the Cold War, and parallel to the progress being made in US-Japan cooperation, the foreign ministry was seeking a way to make an appropriate international contribution that would go beyond economic assistance.

## 2. The Issue of International Contributions in the 1980s

In the 1980s, circumstances arose that led to deliberations on whether to deploy the SDF overseas in a different context than the PKOs—namely, the question of sending minesweepers to the Persian Gulf arose as a result of the Iran-Iraq War. As the war dragged on, the mines that had been laid in the Persian Gulf became a serious concern in terms of the safe passage of tankers filled with oil. This was having an impact on Japan itself, since the country is heavily reliant on oil from the Middle East. Then, in 1987, at a time when progress on US-Japan security cooperation had led to good relations between the two countries, the Reagan administration asked the Nakasone administration for its cooperation in clearing mines in the Persian Gulf.<sup>6</sup> If Japan accepted this request, it would have been the first time that the SDF had been dispatched overseas for any purpose other than training.

Prime Minister Nakasone and MOFA were positively inclined toward sending the SDF to the Persian Gulf. However, given that there was no legal framework that could serve as the basis for dispatching the troops, and that the lack of a cease-fire meant there was a danger that the SDF could become entangled in the war, Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda was firmly opposed, and as is well known, Japan ended up holding off on the decision.<sup>7</sup> Gotoda had been deeply involved in establishing the Police Reserve Force and was a person who took a strong stance on guarding the domestic public order, but when it came to the question of SDF deployment abroad, including the later-mentioned dispatch for PKOs, he took an extremely cautious stance. He had served in the former Ministry of Home Affairs along with Osamu Kaihara, who was extremely influential in the Defense Agency from the time of its creation through the 1960s, and their position that the activities of uniformed personnel should be limited was a common thread running through their generation. It seemed that they had a thorough distrust for “military” organizations.

When the cabinet of Noboru Takeshita was formed in November 1987, succeeding the Nakasone cabinet, it was thought that substantial progress would be made on the issue of Japan’s international contributions. More precisely, when the Takeshita cabinet began, it put forth the “three pillars of Japanese foreign policy.”<sup>8</sup> Calling for a “Japan that contributes to the world,” this policy placed “cooperating for peace, enhancing economic cooperation, and promoting international cultural exchange” as the three central pillars of foreign policy and worked to actively promote them. Among these, “cooperating for peace” was put forth with PKOs in mind, and it was the result of the foreign ministry’s recommendation to Prime Minister Takeshita that, given the changes occurring in the Cold War with the emergence of Mikhail Gorbachev (general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and in light of the progress being made in the Cambodian peace process, Japan must actively participate in the process of peace-building in the region. Prime Minister Takeshita had built close ties to politicians in the opposition parties and excelled in “consensus-building politics,” and it was therefore believed that he would remain in office for a long time. Within that context, it was expected that progress could be made under the “three pillars” on the pending issue of Japan’s cooperation on international peace.

However, this debate again remained within the confines of MOFA and the debate on the relationship between PKOs and the SDF never reached the stage of specific discussions within the government.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the Defense Agency, which was directly responsible for dispatching the SDF, had not yet begun concrete deliberations on issues such as participation in UN activities, and its stance clearly differed greatly from that of MOFA on this issue. Moreover, the Takeshita cabinet ended up being short-lived due to the “Recruit scandal” (a political scandal), posing a setback to the anticipated progress on the international peace cooperation issue.

### **III. The Gulf War and Japanese Diplomacy**

#### **1. The Outbreak of the Gulf War**

As Japan continued to search for how it would specifically deal with the issue of international peace cooperation, the Cold War drew to a close. The country was faced with a need to reevaluate the US-Japan Security Treaty and the role of the SDF. But Japan was not granted the time to carefully consider these issues. Instead, an issue arose that would throw the debate at that time into chaos. That issue was the outbreak of the Gulf War. How could Japan concretely cooperate on this issue that occurred in such an extremely important region as the Middle East? It was indeed a situation that would test Japan's diplomatic capability. However, in the end, although Japan went so far as to raise taxes to provide monetary assistance, their contribution was not greatly appreciated by the international community, and Japan itself felt deeply frustrated.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, when Iraq occupied Kuwait, the initial response from the Japanese government came quickly. Having received a request from US President George H. W. Bush to join in sanctions on Iraq, Japan made its decision and announced a set of sanctions against Iraq on August 5—even before the UN Security Council passed its resolution on economic sanctions—that included such measures as a ban on oil imports from Iraq and a freeze on all ODA to that country. However, the United States called for the formation of a multinational force, the UK decided to send troops, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was following suit, so given this state of affairs, with the military response coming to the fore, it threw Japan's response into confusion.

On August 30, it was decided that Japan would provide a \$1 billion financial contribution toward the efforts to restore peace in the Gulf, but a request was made for additional support, and on September 14, it was decided that another \$1 billion would be provided and \$2 billion in economic assistance would be given to countries bordering the conflict. However, as the number of countries participating in the multinational force being deployed to the Gulf rose, the pressure on Japan from the United States and others was rising daily. They saw Japan as only donating financial assistance in small amounts at a time and not contributing any personnel; Japan's government and ruling party as well felt the need to quickly provide personnel, focused on the deployment of the SDF.

As noted previously, MOFA had already been considering the idea of Japan's participation in PKOs, including the dispatch of the SDF for that purpose, but it had never gone past the deliberation stage, and it had certainly never held intensive discussions with the relevant agencies, including the Defense Agency and the Cabinet Legislation Bureau. What is more, what was being discussed was not a PKO following a truce, but rather the deployment of troops in conditions where fighting could be expected to occur. Even assuming that the SDF itself would not participate in fighting, there was a major divide in opinions on whether sending those troops overseas was permissible under the Japanese Constitution.

#### **2. Turmoil Surrounding the Deployment of the SDF**

The debate within the government with regard to dispatching the SDF revolved around what to do about the status of any SDF members who would be sent abroad. To put it simply, there were two opposing positions: MOFA said that, given the constitutional limitations and the political considerations of then Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu's "dovish" sentiments, the SDF members deployed abroad should be separated from the SDF in the form of "secondment" or a "leave of absence," while the Defense Agency insisted that personnel receive a "dual commission" and maintain their positions in the SDF. Takakazu Kuriyama, who served as vice foreign minister at the time of the Gulf War, recalled that among those

within the foreign ministry (himself included), many were concerned about sending the SDF “as is” to participate in activities overseas, not just due to constitutional constraints and public opinion, but also in terms of the impact on ties with Asian countries, and particularly with China and Korea.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, for its part, the Defense Agency stressed that without status as members of the SDF, it raised issues such as the inability of personnel to operate ships or aircraft belonging to the SDF, command during the operations of troops, the handling of small arms, and so on, and they feared that sending people to dangerous regions by simply changing their status would give rise to various issues concerning the insurance system and other SDF personnel’s interests. Makoto Sakuma, who was at that time the chairman of the Joint Staff Council, or in other words the top uniformed official, criticized the members of the Kantei (the prime minister’s office) and MOFA bureaucrats who had no knowledge of real-life defense issues, stating as follows:<sup>12</sup>

In the debate on having a separate organization, someone like me is not in a position to go to the cabinet to talk to them. Therefore, [Head of the Defense Bureau Kazuo] Fujii went alone. There is something called the Relevant Juris Corpus, a black-covered, multi-volume set that covers the Marine SDF’s organizational management. It’s about this thick (50 cm). That serves as the basis for the organization’s creation, management, and education and training. Without having anything at all like that, how do you create a separate organization? Are you going to create everything from scratch? And are you going to lower the flag of SDF vessels? Raising the SDF flag is something determined by law. The people debating in the cabinet have no idea about any of that. Fujii is a genuine Defense Agency person, so he understands what we are saying when we complain that they don’t understand and are just talking off the top of their heads. When he went to talk to them, people who had no real understanding of the background said all sorts of things.

Eventually, confusion arose after Prime Minister Kaifu announced that the troops would be sent in the form of “contracted work,” which brought criticism from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) side and they decided to go with the “dual commission” that the Defense Agency had called for. Moreover, confusion also emerged during Diet deliberations on the hastily drafted UN Peace Cooperation Bill, such as discrepancies in government explanations, and so after approximately a month of discussions, the bill was scrapped. In the end, the SDF was not dispatched to conduct peacekeeping operations.

### **3. The Trauma of the Gulf War**

The impact of the Gulf War went beyond simply creating major havoc in Japanese politics at the time. The historical significance of the war was that it had a major impact on subsequent Japanese politics and particularly on security policy. At the political level, there was a lingering “Gulf War trauma”—a sense that the government must respond as quickly as possible to US requests—that resulted from having received international criticism for Japan’s response having been “too little, too late,” and from the extremely low level of appreciation from the international community in comparison to the large scale of Japan’s financial contribution, for which it had even raised taxes. This was a major factor in laying the groundwork for developments following the subsequent 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

At the same time, it was even more significant in terms of changing public awareness. Namely, it raised doubt among the public about the debate within Japan over the “military.” It can be said that the formation of a multinational force during the Gulf War offered an option for exerting the UN’s collective security function at a time when the circumstances would have made it extremely difficult to form a UN

military force. However, Japan responded only to the use of military force, and the tone of the argument was noticeably critical of the United States, which was at the core of the multinational force. Japan's post-war political discourse that declared that "the military is bad, the armed forces are bad" no matter what the cause was overwhelmed by what was considered to be common sense internationally. This effectively erased the previously held taboo regarding the concept that Japan's international cooperation should not be simply financial but should also include personnel contributions, and depending on the circumstances, should include the dispatch of the SDF. However, that understanding did not develop immediately after the Gulf War; it took some time before the news sank in about the international community's post-Gulf War discussions. What further provided impetus to that development was the success of an actual case of dispatching the SDF overseas.

During the Gulf War, Iraq is said to have laid approximately 1,200 mines off the Kuwaiti coast. These posed an enormous threat that was impeding safe navigation in the Persian Gulf. The United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, France, and Belgium were all participating in minesweeping activities, but the number of mines was tremendous and working in a tropical zone was extremely difficult. Also, criticism was emerging that Japan, which relied on the Middle East for 70 percent of its oil and thus had an enormous interest in safe navigation in the Persian Gulf, was not participating in the minesweeping effort. Given that the war was over, Japan, which had in the end been unable to contribute personnel during the Gulf War, believed that the conditions now were in place for dispatching the Marine SDF minesweeping unit, and it carried out the preparations in strict secrecy in consideration of the domestic criticism. In April 1991, it sent a six-vessel minesweeping unit to the Persian Gulf. There had still been no legal groundwork created at all for deploying the SDF overseas, and Article 99 "removal of mines and other hazardous materials" of the Self-Defense Forces Act (SDF Act) served as the basis for sending them.

The result was that the six-vessel convoy that set off from the port of Kure in Hiroshima Prefecture, surrounded by 60 fishing vessels that were protesting the deployment of the SDF, spent one month and one day traveling 7,000 nautical miles and arrived in the Persian Gulf. Japan's minesweeping unit received high praise from the various nations' troops with whom they carried out joint operations and from the countries along the Gulf coast where mines were laid. The work ended on September 11, 1991, and the troops returned to Kure Harbor on October 30. Prime Minister Kaifu and Yukihiko Ikeda, head of the Defense Agency, attended the welcoming ceremony. The first dispatch abroad of the SDF proved to be extremely successful.<sup>13</sup>

## **IV. Participating in the Cambodian PKO**

### **1. The Establishment of the PKO Act**

Even more so than the minesweeping operations in the Persian Gulf, what made a particularly strong impression on the Japanese people were the efforts in Cambodia.<sup>14</sup> Japan, which was actively involved in the Cambodian peace process, learned the lessons of the Gulf War and laid out a policy of active involvement in such areas as the holding of an election to establish a new Cambodian government, local recovery efforts, and so on. And again, having learned their lesson from the UN Peace Cooperation Bill that had to be abandoned at the time of the Gulf War, three political parties—the LDP, Komeito, and the Democratic Socialist Party—reached an agreement and established the political conditions first, and then based on that, in June 1992, they passed the Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (known as the International Peace Cooperation Act, or the PKO Act). The passage of the bill required overcoming opposition from the Socialist Party and other parties, which

went so far as to employ delaying tactics.

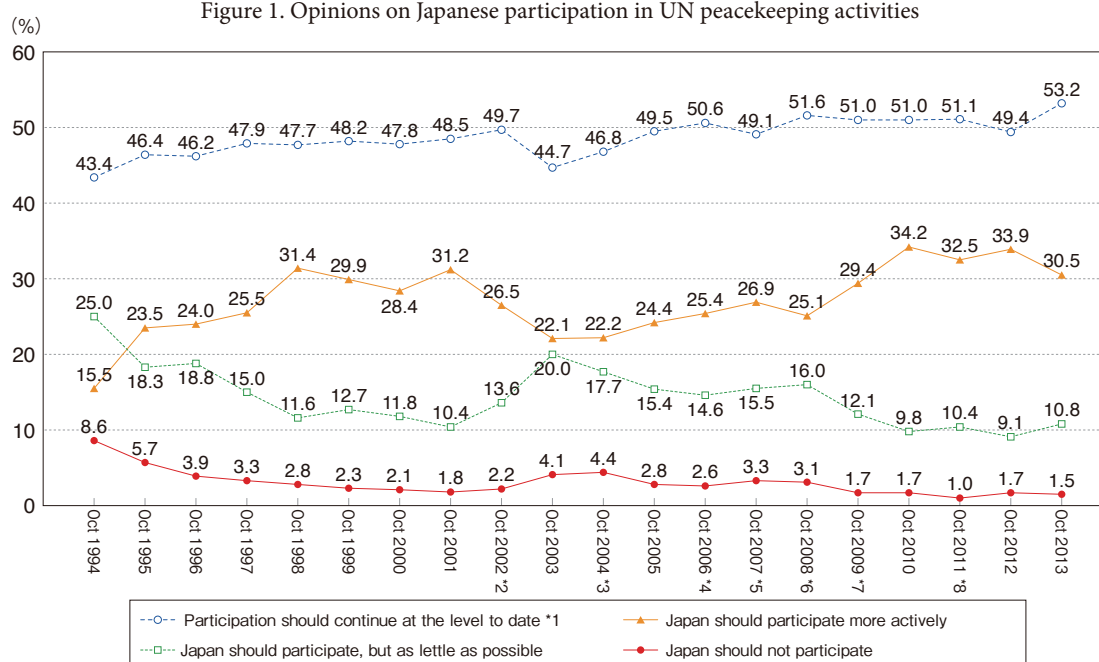
The UN had already launched the PKO in Cambodia in March 1992, and Japan, after passing the PKO Act, moved quickly; it dispatched an investigation team on July 1 and, after a Cabinet decision on September 8, a PKO unit set sail from Kure City on the 17th of that month. However, because the deployment of forces was based on political considerations necessary to reach the three-party agreement, including a freeze on participation by Japan's SDF in the UN Peacekeeping Forces (PKF) and a set of five principles for participation, Japan's involvement in the PKO took place under strict limitations. The five principles for PKO participation are as follows:

- (1) A cease-fire must be in place.
- (2) The parties to the conflict must have given their consent to the operation.
- (3) The activities must be conducted in a strictly impartial manner.
- (4) Participation may be suspended, and if not resumed within a short period of time, may be terminated if any of the above conditions (1)-(3) ceases to be satisfied.
- (5) Use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary to protect life or person of oneself or other unit members.

I will address the impact that the imposition of those limitations had at the conclusion of this article.

The Cambodian PKO, which involved primarily Ground SDF forces, garnered an extraordinary degree of interest, as seen in the fact that 300 members of the media were sent to cover the 600-man PKO unit. At one point, when a civilian police officer and a UN volunteer lost their lives, there was earnest debate over whether to withdraw the SDF troops. In the end, no SDF troops were lost. Moreover, the Cambodian election was a success and the UN's PKO mission in Cambodia ended without event. Not only would the Cambodian peace diplomacy and PKO efforts be spoken of for years to come as a success story of Japanese postwar diplomacy, but the SDF's work in the PKO itself garnered strong praise from the international community, and as that became known within Japan as well, it served as a major impetus for subsequent PKO activities. In fact, as seen in figure 1, in response to a survey on PKO activities that has been carried out since 1994, those expressing positive opinions on PKO activities ("Participation should continue at the same level as to date" or "Japan should participate more actively than it has to date") totaled 58.9 percent at the beginning, but as the success of PKO efforts became more widely known and the praise for those efforts grew, the support rate has continued to average around 70 percent, while those responding "Japan should not participate" or "Japan should participate, but as little as possible" has noticeably declined.

Figure 1. Opinions on Japanese participation in UN peacekeeping activities



Notes:

\*1 In the October 1994 survey, the response was worded, “Participation should continue at about the current level.”

\*2 Up to October 2002, the survey asked, “Currently, approximately 88 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts to aid Rwandan refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and East Timor. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*3 Up to October 2004, the survey asked, “Currently, approximately 90 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Rwandan, Afghan, and Iraqi refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*4 Up to October 2006, the survey asked, “Currently, more than 100 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Rwandan, Afghan, Iraqi, and Sudanese refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*5 The October 2007 survey asked, “Currently, more than 100 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, Nepal, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Rwandan, Afghan, Iraqi, and Sudanese refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*6 The October 2008 survey asked, “Currently, more than 100 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in



PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Iraqi refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as Kosovo. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*7 The October 2009 survey asked, “Currently, more than 100 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, Sudan, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Iraqi refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as East Timor and Nepal. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

\*8 Up to October 2011, the survey asked, “Currently, more than 100 countries around the world are dispatching personnel for UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan has also been participating in PKOs in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, East Timor, Sudan, Haiti, and elsewhere, as well as in international humanitarian relief efforts, including assistance for Iraqi refugees, and in international election monitoring activities in places such as East Timor and Nepal. Do you think that Japan should continue to be involved in activities such as the PKOs in the future as a way of making a human contribution to the international community? Do you not believe that to be true? Which of the answers best describes your opinion?”

Source: Cabinet Office of Japan, “Gaiko ni kansuru yoron chosa—Heisei-25-nen 10-gatsu jishshi” [Public opinion survey on foreign policy—conducted October 2013], <http://survey.gov-online.go.jp/h25/h25-gaiko/zh/z26.html> (accessed November 16, 2014).

## 2. The “Higuchi Commission” and Multilateral Security Cooperation

With the end of the Cold War, an Advisory Group on Defense Issues was created under the non-LDP coalition cabinet of Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa. The group, known as the Higuchi Commission after its chairman, Hirotaro Higuchi (chairman of Asahi Breweries), provided a venue for substantive debate on Japan’s security policy.<sup>15</sup> Given the limited space, I will not go into detail here, but the concept put forth in the report produced by the Higuchi Commission was that of “multilateral security.” The report advocated that with the end of the Cold War, the PKOs were considered to have regained their original function and Japan should thus actively engage in those activities; it stressed that this would not violate Japan’s Constitution.<sup>16</sup> Although it is a bit long, I would like to provide the important section of that report here:

The United Nations, which was created 50 years ago as the organization for collective security, is now awakening to its primary function. . . .

In fact, the UN Charter, in Paragraph 3, Article 2, calls on all members to settle ‘their international disputes by peaceful means’ and, in Paragraph 4, states, ‘All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.’ Thus all UN members have pledged to the entire international community that they shall refrain from ‘the threat or use of force.’ The provision of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution agrees in its spirit to that pledge.

However, if any major nation that supposedly bears special responsibilities for supporting UN peace activities should become a party to a conflict, this function of the United Nations unavoidably would be lost for all practical purposes. As this indicates, for the collective security mechanism of the United Nations to demonstrate its primary function, stability in the international environment

is necessary. At the present time, when no serious military confrontation exists between major nations now that the Cold War has ended, this condition is minimally satisfied. How much nations can achieve in terms of cooperative security by availing themselves of this favorable opportunity, and whether they can acquire such a habit, will determine the fate of the United Nations in the 21st century. Japan, which is deeply committed to peace, must make positive use of this historic opportunity, not for altruistic purposes but primarily from the standpoint of its national interest.

It seems, however, that it will be a long time before the UN collective security organization is established in a complete form. At its present stage, the United Nations is required not so much to deal with military clashes by regular UN forces stipulated in Chapter 7 of the UN Charter as to respond to various modes of crisis by such means as preventing armed conflicts that may develop inside unstable nations where it is unclear who holds the ability to govern; containing their expansion; and supporting the reconstruction of order following the cessation of conflicts. The UN peacekeeping operations are becoming more and more multifarious. *Japan should participate in these operations as actively as possible and needs to make efforts to improve its system and capabilities for that purpose.* [Emphasis added by author.]

This type of active cooperation with UN peacekeeping operations would continue to be a basic element of Japan's post-Cold War foreign policy, although the terminology would change to such terms as "improve the global security environment," or to the "Proactive Contribution to Peace" found in the December 2013 National Security Strategy.

## **V. Conclusion**

Since the successful deployment of troops to the Persian Gulf and Cambodia, the activities of the SDF have earned strong praise internationally, and Japan has sent troops overseas with greater frequency. Along with dispatching troops for disaster response, the importance of which has been growing since the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the SDF's international cooperation efforts have come to be viewed as critical SDF activities in the post-Cold War period. The Defense Agency has been elevated to ministry status, and international cooperation is viewed as a "fundamental mission" of the SDF. In fact the freeze on participation in PKF was lifted, and the restrictions on the use of weapons was subsequently amended so that it is now significantly less rigid than before. However, it is also a fact that there are limitations to the SDF's participation in PKOs.

More precisely, there are still many restrictions on the use of weapons compared with other countries that are carrying out PKO activities, and there are currently many SDF officers with overseas experience who have expressed doubt as to whether the SDF members can in fact defend themselves. Moreover, because legally the SDF is not considered to be an armed force, when they bring weapons overseas it is treated as if they were exporting those weapons and thus entails following the necessary export procedures, which has become an obstacle to cooperation with troops sent by other countries. Above all, the situation whereby a military organization that should be able to protect itself is unable to carry out its activities without relying on troops from other countries to protect it raises the question of why that military organization is sending troops in the first place. The current circumstances raise the possibility that Japan's efforts to send the SDF will not be as welcomed by other countries as might be expected due to the limitations on troop activities and their lack of capacity to defend themselves.

What is more, since the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, the deployment of SDF troops is no longer limited to PKO activities, but has expanded to cover overseas

support for antiterrorist operations. Clearly, we are reaching the limits of continuing the overseas deployment of troops under the current conditions.<sup>17</sup>

- 1 The three principles of Japanese diplomacy were “assigning central importance to the United Nations,” “cooperating with the free world,” and “strengthening Japan’s position as a member of Asia.” This was made clear in the first postwar Bluebook issued by the foreign ministry, *Diplomatic Bluebook 1957*, available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/1957/s32-1-2.htm#a> (accessed November 16, 2014).
- 2 *Asahi Shimbun*, February 22, 1961.
- 3 For the early phase of the UN peace cooperation issue, see Toshihiro Irie, “Ikeda-Sato Seikenki no ‘Kokusaiteki Heiwa Jijū Katsudō’ Sanka Mondai—Kōgō Doran-Mareishia Funso to Jieitai Haken no Kento” [The Issue of Participation in ‘International Peacekeeping Activities’ During the Ikeda and Sato Governments—the Congo Crisis, Malaysian Conflict and Deliberations on the Dispatch of SDF Forces], in *PKO no Shiteki Kenshō* [Historical Analysis of PKOs], Military History Society of Japan, ed. (Kinseisha, 2007). On the concept of “postwar pacifism” taking hold, see Akihiro Sado, *Jieitai Shiron—Sei-Kan-Gun-Min no 60-nen* [Historical Essay on the SDF—60 Years of Government, Bureaucracy, Military, Public] (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2014), chap. 1.
- 4 The text of the resolution passed by the plenary session of the House of Councillors on June 2, 1954, was as follows: “On the occasion of the establishment of the Self-Defense Forces, the House hereby reconfirms, in the light of relevant articles of the Constitution and the Japanese people’s earnest devotion to peace, that no SDF troops will be dispatched overseas. It has been so resolved.”
- 5 *Kuriyama Takakazu Ooraru Hisutorii—Wangan Senso to Nihon Gaiko* [Oral History of Takakazu Kuriyama—The Gulf War and Japanese Diplomacy], National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies COE Project for Oral History and Policy Enrichment, 2005 (hereafter, *Kuriyama Oral History*), 1-5.
- 6 For information on the progress in US-Japan defense cooperation during the Nakasone administration, see Akihiro Sado, *Sengo Nihon no Boei to Seiji* [Defense and Politics of Postwar Japan] (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2003), 328-363.
- 7 For more on Gotoda’s objections, see Masaharu Gotoda, *Naikaku Kanbochokan* [Chief Cabinet Secretary] (Kodansha, 1989), 104-108; and Masaharu Gotoda, *Jo to Ri—Gotoda Masaharu Kaikoroku (Ge)* [Emotion and Reason—The Memoirs of Masaharu Gotoda] (Kodansha, 1998), 188-192.
- 8 For more on the Takeshita cabinet’s “three pillars of Japanese diplomacy,” see Kenji Goto, *Takeshita Seiken—Gohyaku-nanajū-roku-nichi* [576 Days of the Takeshita Administration] (Gyoken, 2000), 284-287; and Akihiro Sado, “Takeshita Noboru ‘Chōsei-gata Seiji’ no Kansei to sono Genkai” [The Pitfalls and Limitations of Noboru Takeshita’s ‘Politics by Adjustment,’” ed. Akihiro Sado, Kazuo Komiyama, and Ryūji Hattori, *Jinbutsu de Yomu Gendai Nihon Gaikoshi—Konoe Fumimaro kara Koizumi Junichiro made* [The History of Japan’s Foreign Policy as Understood through People—From Fumimaro Konoe to Junichiro Koizumi] (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2008), 283-293.
- 9 See *Kuriyama Oral History*, 5-14.
- 10 For more on the chaos surrounding the dispatch of the SDF during the Gulf Crisis, see Takeshige Kunimasa, *Wangan Senso toiu Tenkaiten—Doten Suru Seiji* [The Gulf War as a Turning Point—Upsetting Politics] (Iwanami Shoten, 1999).
- 11 See *Kuriyama Oral History*, 61-62.
- 12 *Sakuma Makoto (Moto Togo Bakuryō Kaigi Gicho) Ooraru Hisutorii (Ge)* [Oral History of Makoto Sakuma (former Chairman of the Joint Staff Council), part 2] (Tokyo: Japanese Modern Historical Manuscripts Association, 2008), 134.
- 13 For more on the activities of the Marine SDF dispatched to the Persian Gulf, see Asagumo Shimbunsha Editorial Bureau, ‘Wangan no Yoake’ *Sakusen Zenkiroku—Kaijō Jieitai Perushawan Sokai Haken Butai no Hyaku-hachijū-hachi-nichi* [Operation Gulf Dawn: The 188-Day Overseas Minesweeper Force Development] (Asagumo Shimbunsha, 1991); Yoshiro Ikari, *Perushawan no Gunkanki—Kaijō Jieitai Sokai Butai no Kiroku* [Naval Ensign in the Persian Gulf—A Record of the Marine SDF Minesweeping Unit] (Kojinsha, 2005); and *Sakuma Oral History*.
- 14 For more on the Cambodian peace process, see Tadashi Ikeda, *Kanbojia Wahei e no Michi—Shōgen Nihon Gaiko Shiren no Go-nenkan* [The Road to Peace in Cambodia—Testimony, Five Years of Japan’s Foreign Policy Test] (Toshi Shuppan, 1996); and Masaharu Kono, *Wahei Kosaku—Tai-Kanbojia Gaiko no Shōgen* [Peace-making—Witness to Japan’s Cambodian Diplomacy] (Iwanami Shoten, 1999).
- 15 The members of the Higuchi Commission are listed below.

(Titles are those at the time of the commission; information in parentheses is major previous post.)

Chair:	Hiroto Higuchi	Chairman, Asahi Beer
Deputy Chair:	Ken Moroi	Chairman, Chichibu Cement
Members:	Kuniko Inoguchi	Professor, Sophia University
	Yoshio Okawara	Executive Advisor to Keidanren (former Ambassador to the United States)
	Toyoo Gyohten	Chairman, Bank of Tokyo (former Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs)
	Makoto Sakuma	Special Advisor, NTT (former Chairman of the Joint Staff Council)
	Seiki Nishihiro	Advisor, Tokyo Marine and Fire Insurance (former Administrative Vice Minister of the Japan Defense Agency)
	Shinji Fukukawa	Vice Chairman, Kobe Steel (former Undersecretary of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry)
	Akio Watanabe	Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University/Professor Emeritus, Tokyo University

- 16 The full text of the Higuchi Commission report, “The Modality of the Security and Defense Capability of Japan: The Outlook for the 21st Century,” is available online as part of “Sekai to Nihon—Nihon Seiji-Kokusai Kankei Database” [World and Japan—Japanese Politics and International Relations Database], <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPSC/19940812.O1E.html> (accessed November 16, 2014).
- 17 A number of important recommendations have already been made in terms of the revisions needed in order to improve the SDF’s participation in international peace cooperation activities. For example, Tetsuya Nishimoto, former Chairman of the Joint Staff Council, raises such points as (1) a review of “the limitations on the use of weapons,” “international peace cooperation operations,” “the five principles for PKO participation,” etc.; (2) a revision of the interpretation of the Constitution with regard to “the exercise of the right to collective self-defense” and “the use of force overseas”; and (3) the enactment of a general law to enable the appropriate and prompt carrying out of international peace cooperation operations. Tetsuya Nishimoto, “PKO Jugo-Nen ni Omou—Kongo no Kokusai Heiwa Kyoryoku Katsudo no Tame ni Kokufuku Subeki Kadai ni tsuite” [Thoughts after 15 Years of PKO—Issues That Must Be Overcome for Future International Peace Cooperation Efforts], in *PKO no Shiteki Kensho*, 9-11.