

Maritime Cooperation : Challenges and Opportunities

...Japanese Perspective...

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To prepare for any conflicts with other countries in scramble over maritime resources and energy, or in territorial disputes including the determination of maritime territory under the sovereign right of a nation, each country shall develop a full crisis response system, while adopting various maritime security and confidence building measures to mitigate the rise of tense situation and to prevent the manifestation of armed conflicts.

Japan, with the allied US, is to jointly maintain and deploy robust maritime defense power in preparation for unstable security environment arisen when regional power balance collapses, especially as a nation seeking hegemony advances toward the oceans. Japan, with the allied US, should proceed to share common strategic interests and responses with other trustworthy maritime nations, like Australia.

On the other hand, for many years in the past, Japan has taken active initiative in the regional maritime security cooperation. Its activities have been highly valued and welcomed by regional nations. Especially the international cooperation activities among navies and coast guards have made significant contribution in promoting the confidence, transparency and mutual understanding among nations through their efforts to stabilize regional maritime security environment. Japan will continue to proceed this way with like-minded maritime powers, like Australia.

For the security of broader ranged regional or global SLOCs, ultimately the international collaboration among maritime nations sharing the common values should be essential from the peace time. In order to develop and ensure international collaboration in maritime security, Japan proposes to build a maritime security coalition

that loosely binds like-minded nations with common values, like Australia. Those nations participating in this maritime security coalition are required to comply with international norms or rules, at least, and to share willingness to contribute to and cooperate with international community.

1. Rising Maritime Power of China

(1) Chinese Ambition to Expand Maritime Power

Chinese military advancement toward oceans has been especially evident around the Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, and the “String of Pearls” through the Indian Ocean where vital SLOCs pass through. Japan’s neighboring seas are no exception to their advancement. As seen in the strong stance China has recently taken in the issues of Japan-China mid-line and their repeated invasion of Japan’s territory water near Senkaku Islands, China is forcibly advancing its ways into the East China Sea. Chinese Navy is openly exhibiting its military power through various military activities, such as Han class nuclear submarine’s unlawful submerged invasion of Japan’s territory water near Okinawa, and Song class submarine’s adventurous approach toward a US aircraft carrier. At the end of 2008, their one surface squadron navigated throughout the Sea of Japan, as well as another squadron throughout the East China Sea, demonstrating their strong military interests in the waters surrounding Japan. Moreover, their maritime survey activities were observed near Ogasawara (Bonin) Islands and Oki-no-Torishima Island for possible purpose of submarine activities.

These activities clearly indicate China’s intention to make the South China Sea a “Sanctuary (Sacred Area : 聖域)” surrounded by China’s southern coastlines and their “First Island Defense Line,” connecting Japanese archipelago, Okinawa (Nansei) Islands, Taiwan, Philippines and Borneo, which they consider as their Ultimate Defense Line. At the same time, China starts to make the East China Sea as their “Front Yard (Control Area : 制域)”, and demonstrates their intention to further expand their Forward Defense Line (extended maritime defense border) east-ward, as their military power and ocean-going capability develop further. In this way, they are to create a strategic “Buffer Zone (Expedition Area : 征域)” on the waters inside their “Second Island Defense Line” along the line of around 150 degrees East Longitude, extending from the Western Kuril Islands, Ogasawara Islands and Mariana Islands (Guam) to New Guinea.

This “Buffer Zone” encompasses almost all of Japanese territory waters including Japan’s Pacific Islands and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), as well as major

military and commercial SLOCs.

Chinese Navy will likely intend to overwhelm Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force in terms of military power in this “Buffer Zone”, which may ultimately be the waters where Chinese Navy thinks to compete with the activities of the US Navy in fight over the hegemony of the Western Pacific Ocean. These waters will be the area where they are to deny the access of the US Naval intervention forces in case crisis arises over Taiwan and others. Chinese Navy is building their power mainly by increasing the number of modernized nuclear strategic and attack submarines as well as conventional attack submarines that can take actions in these waters, with large surface combatants, ground-based aircrafts with air refueling capability, anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles.

(2) Chinese Aircraft Carrier

However, the Chinese Navy lacks one capability if they are to combat with the US Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force in these waters, that is, the aircraft carrier battle group. As they are to take actions as far away as possible from the mainland China, it is essential to have the capability of ship-based air powers.

Military experts worldwide share a common view that Chinese Navy has actually started the plan to build aircraft carrier battle groups. First, they are to remodel Varyag, an incomplete aircraft carrier of former Soviet Union Navy stationed in Dalian, as a training (experimental) aircraft carrier, and create three aircraft carrier battle groups by 2020 through their self developing efforts and Russian aids.

To support such a view, the deputy director of General Equipment Department of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) stated in March 2006 that “PLA is to build aircraft carriers” and “to develop aircraft carrier battle groups”, indicating their intention to promote research and development in escort ships and ship-based air powers for aircraft carriers. At the end of 2008, the spokesmen of Chinese MOD stated that “aircraft carriers are the embodiment of a nation’s overall capability”, and “it is not surprising” that “China seriously study and consider issues related to aircraft carriers.” Moreover, China is said to have a plan to build nuclear powered aircraft carriers.

China’s efforts to build power projection capability following the completion of aircraft carrier battle groups may reach the level that can endanger regional military balance, increasing the risk of Chinese political leaders driven toward the exercises of adventurous or even imprudent military actions. Han class nuclear submarine’s unlawful submerged invasion indicates a sign of danger in Chinese domestic politics, in which political leaders with less military experiences such as President Hu Jintao and

Premier Wen Jiabao may lose the control over the adventurous ambition of PLA to demonstrate their military power, even before the completion of aircraft carrier battle groups.

2. Reassurance of Japan-US “Maritime Defense” Alliance

(1) Japan-US “Maritime Defense” Alliance

If the safety and security of the military and commercial SLOCs in the Asia-Pacific region could be disrupted, it will seriously and adversely affect global economy and the security of the region and coastal nations. Especially for Japan, free use of oceans is the very fundamental and essential factor in its “existence” and “prosperity”, and the securing the safety of SLOCs presents critical importance. Still, SLOCs extend over vast areas of waters in the world, and it is apparent that Japan alone cannot ensure the safety of these SLOCs.

Since the end of the Second World War, Japan has valued and maintained the strong alliance with the US (as a “Maritime Defense” Alliance) that provides powerful maritime defense commitments. As international security environment undergoes significant changes, it is extremely critical in a long term to sustain this “Maritime Defense” Alliance between the US “on the cross road in its position as a global leader” in the international community, and Japan “on the cross road toward rise or fall as an influential nation.” Both nations clearly indicated their intention to maintain this alliance healthy.

Japan and the US have strong points and weak points. In their relationship, it is essential to maintain cooperative and complimentary relationship as a “pair in the three-legged race,” with the US as a “Strong and Desirable” global power, and Japan as a “Tough and Reliable” influential power of the world. To maintain such relationship of Japan-US Alliance is not only preferable for the US and Japan, but also as a key factor to bring favorable impacts to the region and the international community in terms of sustaining and developing international system based on liberal democracy.

More straightly speaking, in terms of regional security, the issue is how to maintain effective defense over Japan’s territory, EEZ and SLOCs against the apparent ambition of China to create their strategic “Buffer Zone.” When looking at the map of these waters, it is evident that China’s strategic “Buffer Zone” almost coincides with a “Triangle” connecting Japanese archipelago, Okinawa Islands, and Guam.

Upon the transfer of US Marine Corps stationed in Okinawa to Guam, if the US forces and Japan Self-Defense Forces can actively and jointly operate military aircrafts

and naval ships in the waters of this “Triangle” and the East China Sea to demonstrate their powers of control over these waters, it may thwart the ambitious advancement of China.

In other words, this “Triangle” can signify “Strategic Delta Waters” to weaken the strategic “Buffer Zone” of China. This means, however, that Japan itself might need to possess some nuclear-powered attack submarines and tactical aircraft carrier battle groups. In this sense, Japan should have serious discussion on this subject upon the development of new National Defense Program Guideline and the revision of Mid-Term Defense Program scheduled to be completed by the end of 2009.

(2) Reassurance of Japan-US Alliance

In the United States, a new Obama administration has been started. The Administration has appointed Asian experts such as Assistant Secretary of State Campbell and Assistant Secretary of Defense Gregson, as the cores of its policy making on the Asian diplomacy and military issue. Recently, those two have visited Japan to attend mini “2+2” talks with those counterparts of Japan, focusing on the US extended nuclear deterrence issue for the defense of Japan in this talks.

On the other hand, while the Secretary of State Clinton selected Japan as the first country to visit calling it the “keystone of Asian policies”, and signed the “Agreement to transfer US Marines in Okinawa to Guam”, at the almost same time, however, she declared the promotion of “strategic and economic dialogue” with China including the resumption of defense dialogue.

As Japan’s political decision making to dispatch the naval forces on Somali piracy issue has been far behind than China, if Japan does not voice its own opinion loudly, the US is likely to lean on China. Japanese politics need to regain effective functions so it can clearly demonstrate its intention to maintain solid and complimentary alliance relationship between “Tough and Reliable Japan” and “Strong and Desirable US” as a “three-legged race pair”, in order to subjectively contribute to and cooperate for the solutions of global issues in international politics, economy and so on.

At the same time, Japanese politics need to share the concerns with the US over China’s ambition to build strategic “Buffer Zone” and the recognition on the needs to create and secure the “Strategic Delta Waters.” Regardless to the results of the coming general election in Japan, the elected administration must keep this line in its diplomatic and defense policy.

Then, a question is how we should do in the outer area of this “Strategic Delta Waters.” Who should be reliable members for Japan and the US to play a “four-legged

race trio” or more legged?

3. Cooperation with Other Reliable Influential Maritime Nations

(1) Semi-Alliance with Australia in the “North-South Extended Asia”

Major SLOCs can be described as the artery of the maritime nations such as Japan, which extend beyond the “Strategic Delta Waters” to run through the waters of the East China Sea and the South China Sea peripheral to China, Indian Ocean, southern peripheral of the “Strategic Delta Waters”, Oceania, South Pacific region, and East Pacific region adjacent to the region, and expanding further in a global scale. It is impossible to attain the security of such broad ranged SLOCs by Japan-US “Maritime Defense” Alliance alone. There must be cooperation and coordination with other reliable maritime nations of each region.

For Japan and the US, the relationship with Australia has special significance as it neighbors Asia-Pacific region and has strong interests in the security of South East Asia and the safety of SLOCs. Considering recent international economic situation and security environment, Australia is one of the most important countries in the “North-South Extended Asian” region. These three countries of Japan, the US and Australia share the same “values” based on liberal democracy, and Japan and the US, and the US and Australia are allies, while Japan and Australia have been establishing a so-called “Semi-Alliance” relationship. For the peace and stability of Asia, such trilateral “Maritime Semi-Alliance” has vital significance.

Although Japan has several issues with neighboring countries over sovereign rights, including the mid-line issue and territorial disputes over islands, they are bilateral issues, inviting less interest from Australia, than the US.

The issue of China’s military challenge over the Western Pacific Ocean, or the east-ward expansion of their “Second Island Defense Line”, however, is the issue not only Japan and the US, but also Australia cannot neglect in terms of their own security. A traditional and historic strategic view of Australia, “Threats will come from North”, would not be changed. This issue can become common strategic issue among these three countries.

If Japan and the US take appropriate actions, there can be an opportunity to jointly develop the approaches to restrain and control political and military advances of China toward their strategic “Buffer Zone”, that is, “Strategic Delta Waters” and its peripheral for Japan-US alliance. Moreover, if Australian Defence Forces would join military actions with Japan and the US based on Guam, it can provide considerable strategic

significance in the “Strategic Delta Waters” and its southern peripheral. In the future, such actions can develop to joint actions extended into outer region such as in Oceania/South Pacific region, the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

(2) Cooperation with India in the “East-West Extended Asia”

In regards to the Indian Ocean region, the regional countries used to form “Arc of instability” and were recognized as the region of state to state and in-state struggles offering bases for international terrorist group activities. These countries also had weaker linkage with the Pacific region. In recent years, however, the SLOCs connecting both the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean are increasingly recognized as the major artery of “Arc of inseparability” linked by solidarity and coordination in terms of security and economy.

For Asian countries, India becomes one of the most important nations in the “East-West Extended Asia.” For three countries of Japan, the US and Australia, India is the only stable maritime nation with willingness and capability to provide close coordination in ensuring maritime safety in the Indian Ocean, and the only nation that can share the “values” of liberal democracy.

“Maritime Semi-Alliance” among Japan, the US and Australia needs to start close linkage with India, maintaining close cooperative relationship with South East Asian countries, and work with influential powers of other regions to create global maritime coalition centered around a global and reliable maritime power, the US, and shared a common goal of pursuing “existence, prosperity and values” based on liberal democracy.

4. Regional Maritime Security Cooperation

(1) Progressing Regional Maritime Security Cooperation

Any maritime nation in a region has the needs to secure freedom of navigation on oceans, and to stabilize maritime security environment, while avoiding and preventing armed conflicts over maritime interests, and promoting the sustainable development of oceans.

The ocean is a gigantic entity that requires a comprehensive measure to solve any issues concerned, hence the cooperation among regional maritime countries is increasing importance, especially in the aspects of military/security, resources/environmental protection, and the promotion of science and technology.

For many years in the past, Japan has taken active initiative in the regional maritime security cooperation. Its activities have been highly valued and welcomed by

a broad range of regional nations.

Especially the international cooperation activities among navies and coast guards have made significant contribution in promoting the confidence, transparency and mutual understanding among nations through their efforts to stabilize regional maritime security environment. Examples include “the Western Pacific Naval Symposium” for which Japan has taken an initiative to create with Australia, “North Pacific Maritime Security Summit” and “Head of Asian Coast Guards Agency Meeting” launched under Japan’s initiative.

Japan intends to continue expanding such international activities and building multi-layered regime in maritime security cooperation with regional countries.

Japan actively supports the Global Maritime Partnership (GMP), which is a program promoted by the United States for the purpose of providing disaster relief and preventing maritime terrorism, piracy, and the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, through the use of various types of maritime forces possessed by regional nations. Furthermore, Japan, with Australia, supports the notion of the United States that the GMP activities should be promoted in the Western Pacific region including the South East Asia and the Oceania, in addition to the waters surrounding Japan.

Under these notions, Japan continues to provide extensive efforts, in cooperation with the United States, to develop Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) as international public goods. Moreover, it intends to offer cooperation in preventing nations and non-state entities to misuse MDA as way to disturb the freedom of navigation.

In regards to GMP, Japan believes that the support activities to ensure navigational safety at the Malacca/Singapore Strait and neighboring areas should be extended to the Indian Ocean, Oceania or South Pacific. Japan further plans to promote cooperation with the developing countries, to the extent permissible for Japan to exercise in such area. As an example, Japan has been participating in international efforts for the suppression of piracy off the coast of Somalia and Gulf of Aden. This would provide excellent opportunities for Japan to share cooperative activities, directly and indirectly, with many other countries participating in such efforts, including the US, EU, Australia, India, Singapore, ROK and so on, including even China or Russia. Japan considers that these efforts may provide ideal opportunity in developing a multilateral system to ensure the maritime security.

(2) Further Promotion of Maritime Security Cooperation

Japan appreciates the role of International Maritime Organization (IMO) or other international entities in addressing maritime security issues. In regards to the piracy

issue, Japan welcomes that the “Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP)” has been developed into a regional cooperation framework through their information exchange and data analysis activities as well as the capacity building supports. Moreover, it appreciates this as a valuable model of international cooperation in solving the piracy issue off the coasts of East and West Africa. Japan strongly hopes for the early accessions of Indonesia and Malaysia to ReCAAP, while considering this “ReCAAP model” as a model to be applied to other regions on the various maritime security issues.

Japan considers that it should further promote diplomatic efforts in offering cooperation to developing countries, especially in the fields of: coastal development, navigational safety and security in international waters and straits; support for environmental protection activities, training and education of coast guards, and information exchanges in the maritime security. Furthermore, Japan is currently assessing the possible mitigation of its three principles for the embargo on arms export, in view of maintaining maritime security, so that it can provide some useful assets such as flying boats or patrol boats for that purpose, to further enhance the effectiveness of aids and supports to developing countries.

In addition, Japan intends to continue supporting and contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of several “cooperative mechanisms,” which relevant countries have introduced for the purpose of securing navigation and conserving environment around Malacca and Singapore Strait. Japan also hopes to continue promoting measures for the enhancement of cooperation among not only governments but also private sectors such as shipping companies or maritime industries.

5. Maritime Security Coalition

Here the “Maritime Security Coalition” is defined as the “global or regional nation-to-nation coalition with the objective to maintain and secure safe and free use of oceans from the peace time.” “Maritime Security Coalition” centered by “Maritime Semi-Alliance” consisting of Japan-US-Australia should take responsibilities, cooperating with the other regional responsible maritime powers, appropriate to ensure the maritime security, as the core “responsible stakeholders.” In addition, such coalition need to develop closer cooperative relationships with other democratic maritime powers in view of developing “Broad Maritime Security Coalition” to cover “Broad Sea Lane”, and ultimately to build a “Global Maritime Security Coalition.”

(1) Democratic Maritime Powers

The democratic maritime powers should strengthen their relationship as “Maritime Security Coalition” based on their common three features of “democratic countries”, “maritime powers” and “modernized maritime forces.”

In terms of the first feature of “democratic countries,” their universal interests and benefits would be to attempt the dissemination and solidification of the concept and values common to the powers, i.e. democracy. Since the powers inevitably involves countries with different traditions and governance systems, to ask their cooperation in maintaining the maritime security would be a big challenge to those. In addition, the powers have fundamental differences in geopolitical, historical, environmental, cultural, linguistics, and religious backgrounds, although they share the values founded on democracy. Their national concepts are not entirely the same and there are some differences in their political system. However, the democratic maritime powers undoubtedly share basic concepts as the democratic countries, and their history of fight on the ideology for the last 60 years after the end of the World War Second clearly demonstrated the presence of such common concepts.

For the second feature of “maritime powers”, they need to maintain “properly managed maritime freedom” for their existence and prosperity. As for the security of the “Broad Sea Lane”, they need to recognize this matter straightly related Chinese strategic and military aggressive advancement toward the “string of pearls” through Indian Ocean, and disputed area in South and East China Sea, and vast Western Pacific Ocean, specifically their strategic “Buffer Zone” between their First and Second Island Defense Lines. Considering these factors, to ensure the “Maritime Security” and “Management of Marine Interests” will become important for the maritime powers as a way to effectively deter the aggressive and unlawful advancement of China anywhere in the “Broad Sea Lane.”

On the other hand, to find common interests with regional countries including China in terms of “maintaining regional maritime order (law enforcement)” is possible. This is because to maintain regional maritime order, such as to prevent the indiscriminate terrorist attacks including maritime terrorism that international terrorists groups are likely to launch in association with local terrorist groups, and to address the issues of piracy, and drug/human trafficking, is to the interests of all the countries and their people in the region. There is no reason they refuse to cooperate in such responses.

Finally, in terms of the third feature of “modernized maritime forces”, the region has some countries with many islands and broad area to patrol, yet insufficient

maritime military and police forces quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Therefore, to provide “capacity building” and other supports acceptable to concerned countries will be the responsibility common to the maritime powers. In this sense, it is still noteworthy that Japan, the US and Australia, cooperating with India and other countries, swiftly sent troops for the relief and recovery support activities at the time of Sumatra earthquake and Tsunami disaster of 2005, and their efforts were welcomed by local government and people.

(2) Maritime Security Coalition

The “Maritime Security Coalition” is the “global or regional nation-to-nation coalition with the objective to maintain and secure safe and free use of oceans from the peace time.” This kind of coalition does not necessarily require the entry into force of a treaty or international convention, but can be a multi-national network based on mutual confidence with common concepts.

Therefore, it is basically possible to enter into a coalition relationship with any coastal countries as long as they can share the common objectives. In building such global or regional maritime coalition, each member country is required to take a responsible role proportionate to the features of the country or the region. How to take responsibility may differ from a nation to a nation, and each can decide on what each can contribute within each intention and capacity.

One precondition for accession to such Maritime Security Coalition will be whether a country can share three basic Marine Interests with other countries. Those are, in the maritime domain: (i) to cooperate in maintaining the security of the region from peace time as well as in emergency or crisis (Existence); (ii) to cooperate and to prosper together in the commerce and trades as well as marine resource development (Prosperity), and (iii) to sincerely pursue the conservation and development of various benefits the seas can provide in terms of marine environment protection and marine resource control (Value).

In short, the basic requirement to join the coalition is that “a country has no severe dispute over marine interests or territories, economic conflicts, or objections toward environmental conservation or the development of marine resources.” Even if there is a seed of dispute, to build a coalition among countries that allow fair and democratic way of solving disputes is essential for maintaining the coalition. More importantly, the coalition needs to be built on the national action principle of each participant as “service to others,” which is based on the idea of democracy.

Each Japan, the US and Australia, maybe India, holds very positive and eager will

to be a “Responsible Stakeholder” for “Maritime Security Coalition” in the “Expanded Asia.”

(3) Broad Maritime Security Coalition

In consideration of the above, it will be the best to create a coalition among the US allied or friends (in other words, among democratic maritime powers that share the same three indicators of Existence, Prosperity, and Value), then add the regional democratic maritime powers that can fulfill these three indicator conditions and the action principle of the powers as “service to others”, and eventually expand to include other countries.

First of all, the link between North East Asia and Oceania including South Pacific region, are likely to have the “Maritime Semi-Alliance” of Japan, the US and Australia taking a role to assure maritime security in principle.

On the other hand, it is urgently needed to develop “Maritime Security Coalition” centered around the “Maritime Security Cooperation” of Japan, India and the US to ensure the maritime security of the Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific region from the peace time, since the SLOCs that navigate through “East-West Expanded Asia” extending from the South of Suez Canal (East of Cape of Hope) to the North East Asia are the most important and vulnerable among “Broad Sea Lane.” If other influential democratic maritime powers, such as Singapore, are to join this coalition, it will boost the creation of “Maritime Security Coalition.”

Although the obvious security collaboration between India and Australia is said to be unlikely and needed to pay a close attention to the movement of the administrations of both countries for a moment, still it will not be difficult for such stakeholder countries to make efforts for the maritime security in each relevant region, through “Maritime Security Coalition” such as the one among Japan-US-Australia, and Japan-India-US, with a view to unify and develop more regional wide “Broad Maritime Security Coalition” in the “Broad Sea Lane” sometime in the future.

For the “Broad Maritime Security Coalition”, it is important to build global coalition with other global democratic maritime powers. It is certainly possible to build a “Global Maritime Security Coalition” that is founded on freedom and democracy, and shares common indices of pursuit of “Existence, Prosperity and Values”, mainly by the various “Maritime Security Coalitions” centered around the US in the regions adjacent to broadly unified SLOCs, such as the coalition with Canada in East Pacific Region, Turkey, France and Italy in the Mediterranean Region, the UK in the Northern Atlantic region, and Germany and others in the Europe.

In case of Japan, the initiative of the “Broad Maritime Security Coalition” coincides with the “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” proposed by then Foreign Minister Aso, and the “coalition of nations based on common values” stated by the former Prime Minister Abe. The ex-Prime Minister Fukuda promised to continue Abe’s concept in his diplomatic policies as “Synergy with Japan-US Alliance and Diplomacy toward Asia.”

(4) Challenge for “Maritime Security Coalition”

Finally, an important element of the global or regional “Maritime Security Coalition” is how to assure maritime security especially at the choke points of SLOCs on the coasts from the peace time, even if a coalition can be formed in and covered the area as discussed above, for the most part. As these regions are the stages of historic confrontations over territories and marine interests of coastal countries, as demonstrated in relations of Japan with China, ROK, and Russia, and the national interests of relevant countries intertwined, it will be difficult task to form a cooperative system.

For example, it will not be so easy to build coalition system in the North East Asia and South East Asia due to their coastal SLOCs involving many seeds of confrontations. In the East China Sea and South China Sea, China has coerced and aggressively advanced toward oceans, which has led to the rise of confrontations over territories, and marine interests such as sea-bottom resources. For the region, the security coordination with three countries of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore at the coasts of Malacca-Singapore Strait will be the most important one of all.

In addition, there are other areas that have similar and complicated problems, such as the Persian Gulf, Arabian Peninsula and its coasts, where remains religious confrontations centered on Islam, conflicts over oil rights and concessions, and the hot-bed of international terrorism or piracy, and East African coasts as well as Eastern Mediterranean Areas. However, it is possible to develop the opportunities to resolve the issues in the future, if we are to aim for the regional “Maritime Security Coalitions” among relevant coastal countries. As described before, the joint action among relevant countries can be relatively easy to develop, if the focus is limited to the “maintenance of maritime order (law enforcement)” in order to respond against international terrorism and piracy, or non-traditional maritime risk factors.

Conclusion

Chinese military advancement toward oceans is especially evident in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean where vital SLOCs pass through as well as Japan’s

surrounding seas including East China Sea. These activities clearly indicate China's intention to make the South China Sea a "Sanctuary (Sacred Area)", the East China Sea a "Front Yard (Control Area)" inside their "First Island Defense Line." They also try to create its strategic "Buffer Zone (Expedition Area)" on the waters inside their "Second Island Defense Line."

Japan-US alliance is essentially a Maritime Defense Alliance. Both Japan and the US have strong points and weak points. In their relationship, it is essential to maintain cooperative and complimentary relationship as a "pair in the three-legged race," with the US as a "Strong and Desirable" global power, and Japan as a "Tough and Reliable" influential power of the world. More straightly speaking, in terms of regional security, the issue is how to maintain effective defense over Japan's territory, EEZ and SLOCs against the apparent ambition of China to create its strategic "Buffer Zone."

Beyond the Chinese Sanctuary, Front Yard or even strategic "Buffer Zone", vital SLOCs can be described as the artery of Japan, expanding further in a global scale. It is impossible to attain the security of such broad ranged SLOCs by Japan-US Maritime Defense Alliance alone. There must be cooperation and coordination with reliable maritime nations of each region, such as Australia which is one of the most important countries in the "North-South Extended Asia." These three maritime countries of Japan, the US and Australia share the same "values" and common "interests", based on liberal democracy.

For these three countries, India is the only maritime nation with willingness and capability to provide close coordination in ensuring SLOC security in the Indian Ocean, and that can share the "values" of liberal democracy. India is one of the most important countries in the "East-West Extended Asia." In the South-East Asian region, we can find some reliable maritime countries, such as Singapore, as like as India in the Indian Ocean.

From the peace time, the "Maritime Semi-Alliance" of Japan, the US and Australia must create "Maritime Security Coalition", sharing same values with other democratic maritime nations, such as India or Singapore. And further, Japan-US-Australia "Maritime Semi-Alliance" should take initiatives in developing broader "Maritime Security Coalition" through the efforts of relevant countries in the global stage to unify voluntary coalitions.

For many years in the past, on the other hand, Japan has taken active initiative in the regional maritime security cooperation. Its activities have been highly valued and welcomed by regional nations. Japan will continue to proceed this way with like-minded maritime powers, like Australia.