Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?

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Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?

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Introduction

Desmond Ball of the Australian National University reports that

> "the security relationship between Australia and Japan has now grown to the extent that, if the range of cooperative activities could be summated, Japan would be in the top five of Australia's security partners".

Ball suggests that

> "given the increasing likelihood of their common involvement in US-led coalitions, as

> well as their mutual interest in BMD developments, it becomes increasingly likely that ADF and JSDF elements will serve together in operational situations, including not only combat support activities but also actual combat."

Ball concludes by noting

> "there is an issue as to whether the complexion of the Australia-Japan relationship overall is in danger of becoming too militarised and, indeed, too securitized."

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Nautilus Institute. Readers should note that Nautilus seeks a diversity of views and opinions on contentious topics in order to identify common ground.

Essay - Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?

Cooperation between Australia and Japan with respect to 'hard' security matters began, in secret, in the mid-1970s, at the instigation of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), and was essentially limited to secret intelligence exchanges for more than a decade. However, its purview began to be substantially expanded at the beginning of the 1990s, albeit with very tentative initial steps, to include reciprocal visits by senior Defence officials, official dialogues on security matters of mutual concern, and modest cooperation in some maritime fields (including joint exercises between elements of the respective Australian and Japanese Navies). [1] It was given a critically important public dimension when, in May 1990, Yoso Ishikawa became the first Japanese Defence Minister to visit Australia, and Senator Robert Ray, the Australian Minister for Defence, visited Tokyo in September 1992. Minister Ishikawa's visit 'had little policy content', but that it 'took place without incident or any negative publicity in Australia ... was extremely reassuring to those who wanted a strategic dialogue and the opening of defence contacts between the two countries'. [2] The close cooperation between the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) in the peacekeeping operation in Cambodia in 1992-93 added a further dimension to the security relationship.

By around 1996-97, a fairly comprehensive range of cooperative measures had been institutionalised including regular reciprocal visits by senior Defence officials (including Chiefs of the defence forces), annual political-military dialogues, expanded intelligence exchanges, joint naval exercises and reciprocal port visits and some maritime surveillance operations. A researcher from the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), Naoko Sajima, thought in 1996 that 'a new security partnership' was being forged between Canberra and Tokyo, although she recognised that it had been largely defined by the alliances which each of them had with Washington. [3] By this time it had become common to refer to Japan and Australia as 'the Northern and Southern Anchors of the Free World or Western position in the western Pacific'. [4] (From a Chinese perspective, they were the two claws of a US 'crab' grasping Asia.) [5]

The security relationship has been further intensified and expanded since the terrorist attacks against the US homeland on 11 September 2001. The bilateral connections have been strengthened, but most of the new cooperative activity has derived from the respective relationships with the US, and particularly their supportive roles in the 'war on terror' and their common concerns about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Asia.

The security relationship between Australia and Japan has now grown to the extent that, if the range of cooperative activities could be summated, Japan would be in the top five of Australia's security partners - after the US, UK, New Zealand, but ahead of Indonesia (where the relationship was shattered in 1999 but is now being reconstructed) and some of the other ASEAN countries (i.e., Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand). Australia would probably rank in the top five in Japan's list of security partners.

This paper describes the principal constituent elements of security cooperation between Australia and Japan and provides some assessment of the prospects for this relationship. In addition to the bilateral activities (such as the intelligence exchanges, reciprocal visits, dialogues and joint exercises), it also discusses the principal common endeavours in multilateral forums and coalitions in the region, as well as some of the most important cooperative activities arising from their respective alliances with the US (including their commitments to participating in US missile defence and counter-proliferation programs). It argues that progressive further strengthening of security links is likely, and although they will remain fairly modest in sum they include some quite consequential elements, but that the primary dynamics derive from their coincidence of interests and partnership in multilateral activities rather than direct bilateral factors. Finally, it raises several important issues about the development and character of the security relationship that warrant further consideration.

The Australia-Japan bilateral security relationship

Two points should be made at the outset. The first is that it is often difficult and sometimes even impossible to distinguish purely bilateral activities from the myriad of multilateral activities in which Australia and Japan are engaged, and particularly from collaborative activities undertaken as part of the respective alliance arrangements with the United States. These arrangements provide a framework for bilateral connections between Tokyo and Canberra as well as between Tokyo and Washington and Canberra and Washington. This is especially the case with some of the most important cooperative activities, such as some aspects of intelligence cooperation (particularly those involving technical collection operations), maritime surveillance activities, the major joint exercises, and peacekeeping operations (PKO).

The second point is that there are real resource constraints on expansion of cooperative activity, at least on the Australian side. The ADF is only a small force - perhaps about a sixth of the size of the JSDF. Australia's defence budget (US$11.7 billion in 2004) is about a quarter of Japan's (US$45.1 billion). Australia's total active defence force is 51,800, compared to the JSDF's 240,000. The Australian Army has 25,300 personnel while the JGSDF has 150,000. The RAN has six submarines and only ten principal surface combatants, while the JMSDF has 16 submarines and 54 principal surface combatants (destroyers and frigates). [6] Australia's annual expenditure on defence cooperation averages about A$230 million (about US$150 million) - covering the costs of combined exercises, training programs, overseas visits and various forms of defence assistance, and focused mainly on the ASEAN and Southwest Pacific areas. It also includes the cost of regional maritime surveillance operations by Australia's P-3C long-range maritime patrol (LRMP) aircraft. [7] The ADF has been operating at an extraordinary tempo since 1999, with both platforms and personnel fully committed. There are undoubtedly further areas of bilateral cooperation which might fruitfully be pursued at relatively low cost, but any substantial further enhancement of the relationship will be governed by the extent of their mutual interests in responding to larger global and regional strategic and security developments.

Intelligence exchanges

The first major field of bilateral cooperation involved respective Australian and Japanese intelligence

agencies, and was instituted, at Australian initiative, in secret, in the mid-1970s. The instrumental Australian agency was the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), which had established a secret station in Tokyo in 1955, and in the early 1970s began considering the possibility of entering into a liaison arrangement with the Japanese intelligence authorities. In May 1976, the Australian Foreign Minister approved the establishment of liaison between ASIS and the Japanese Cabinet Research Office (CRO, or Naicho), and formal contact was established in August 1976. [8] After the Office of National Assessments (ONA) was formed in 1977, it took over responsibility for management and oversight of the relationship with the Naicho. The ASIS station in Tokyo has remained one of the Service's largest posts, with usually two officers engaged in intelligence liaison and exchange functions.

The intelligence cooperation was also extended to the respective Defence intelligence agencies. The Australian Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO) had also considered the development of liaison arrangements with Japanese authorities in the early 1970s, but initially made 'no progress'. [9] However, effective liaison and exchange arrangements between JIO and the JDA were established later in the 1970s. The initial exchanges mainly involved assessments concerning the strategic nuclear balance between the US and the Soviet Union and the implications of strategic arms control negotiations. By 1989, when the JIO was renamed the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO), the exchanges involved not only the JDA but also the intelligence directorates of the JGSDF, JMSDF and JASDF, and covered a wide range of intelligence maters of mutual strategic and military interest.

The Japanese and Australian signals intelligence (SIGINT) agencies are involved in the most extensive and productive cooperative intelligence collection activities, but with little direct collaboration. Under the UKUSA arrangements of 1947-48, to which Australia is a Second Party and Japan a Third Party, Australia's Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) is responsible for the comprehensive interception of radio signals and telecommunications traffic from the eastern Indian Ocean through parts of Southeast Asia to the Southwest Pacific, while US and Japanese SIGINT stations in the Japanese island chain cover a large part of northeast Asia. [10] The US maintains large stations at Misawa in northern Honshu and Camp Hanza in Okinawa (scheduled to be dismantled when a new station at Camp Hansen becomes operational in 2006). The JDA maintains about ten stations, from Wakkanai and Nemuro in northern Hokkaido down to Kikai-jima south of Kyushu, several of which have recently been expanded and up-graded with new equipment. However, the cooperative aspects of the respective Australian and Japanese SIGINT activities are mostly managed by the US. There is almost no direct exchange of intercepted material between the Australian and Japanese SIGINT agencies, and no cooperation with respect to cryptographic matters.

Reciprocal visits by senior officials and bilateral security dialogue

Establishing mechanisms for regular official meetings and dialogues about mutual security concerns involved a fundamentally important confidence-building process. These exchanges would increase transparency, engender close personal relationships, enhance mutual understanding and increase mutual trust, but they required a certain degree of trust to be founded to begin with.

The bilateral security dialogue between Australia and Japan was initiated in March 1990, without public announcement, when an Australian party led by Paul Dibb, the Deputy Secretary (Strategy and Intelligence) of the Department of Defence, and Admiral Alan Beaumont, Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) visited Tokyo for official talks. Australia became the second country, after the US, with which Japan engages in regular bilateral security dialogues. The initial talks were hosted by Yukio Satoh, then the Director-General of the Information Analysis, Research and Planning Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and one of Japan's foremost official exponents of multilateralism. The discussion was limited on the Japanese side to Gaimusho and JDA civilians, as

the JDA was at this stage unwilling to approve direct military-military talks between the JSDF and other defence forces (apart from the US). This series of exchanges, referred to as the Dibb-Beaumont talks, continued until 1995, when the Japanese side agreed to the institution of annual Political-Military and Military-Military Consultations, which it hosts. (These are defined respectively as security dialogue among Foreign Ministry and Defence officials at the level of Director-General and Deputy Director-General, and dialogue among Defence officials, including military officers, at that same level.) The first Political-Military ('Pol-Mil') and Military-Military ('Mil-Mil') talks were held in Tokyo in February 1996. [11]

Ministerial visits, which have been fairly regular since 1997 (averaging about once a year), have been extremely important in the development of the closer relationship. They have been used to codify the working arrangements instituted by the senior officials, as well as for discussion of new initiatives; and they have provided the opportunity for issuance of press statements reaffirming the closeness of the relationship at the highest level and promoting public understanding of the relationship.

At the meeting in Tokyo in September 1997, the Ministers (Ian McLachlan and Fumio Kyuma) agreed on 'four priority areas for cooperation'. These were:

- More frequent contact and visits by Defence Ministers;
- more frequent high-level contact by senior officials;
- closer contact and discussion of peacekeeping; and
- enhancing intelligence exchanges to improve understanding of security issues. [12]

Mr Kyuma visited Australia in January 1998, the second time a Japanese Defence Minister had visited, for talks with Minister McLachlan about 'regional security and bilateral relations'. The Ministers reviewed the 'progress in security cooperation' since their Tokyo meeting, and agreed on a program for further high-level visits by and talks between senior officials (including a visit to Japan by the Chiefs of the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force later in the year). They also agreed that Japan would host annual Political-Military talks involving Defence and Foreign Affairs officials, as well as the Military - Military talks between Defence personnel, and that the respective Defence Intelligence Organisations would 'continue to expand their contacts'. [13]

In August 2002, when Gen Nakatani visited Canberra, the Australian Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Hill, said that Australia welcomed Japan making a more active contribution to regional security, particularly through its support for the war against terrorism and its deployment of peacekeepers to East Timor, and its legislative changes which enabled its participation in Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan. He said:

Australia and Japan's strategic interests are closely aligned, and our defence relationship has been growing steadily in recent years. Enhanced strategic dialogue and increased interaction between our defence forces benefit both countries and the region.

Cooperation in peacekeeping and the deployment of engineers from the Japanese Self-Defense Force to East Timor has been a particular highlight. [14]

On 29 September 2003, when Senator Hill visited Tokyo for talks with Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba and senior JDA and JSDF officials, the Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] on Defence Exchanges between the Japan Defense Agency and the Australian Department of Defence, sometimes called the 'Australia-Japan Security Agreement'. The MoU recognised 'Australia

and Japan's common strategic interests in the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region'; it affirmed the commitment of both countries 'to strengthening high level exchanges, strategic dialogue and senior visits, as well as a range of working level contacts, staff college exchanges and regular ship and aircraft visits'; and it committed both the JDA and the Australian Department of Defence 'to explore new areas of cooperation for promoting and deepening the defence relationship', including with respect to counter-terrorism and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Senator Hill said that: 'This memorandum signals the strength of the existing bilateral defence and security relationship. It also demonstrates the increasing emphasis that Australia and Japan are placing on security cooperation'. [15]

Maritime cooperation

Among the defence forces, the closest cooperation is not surprisingly in the maritime area. Both Australia and Japan are island nations, dependent on long and vulnerable sea lines of communications (SLOCs). Australia's 'sphere of primary strategic interest', which covers more than 20 percent of the earth's surface, extends from the mid-Indian Ocean through the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea to the southwest Pacific. [16] This sphere encompasses Japan's longest, most important and most vulnerable SLOCs. It is neither surprising that, among the Services, the closest cooperation involves the RAN (and the RAAF's P-3C LRMP aircraft) and the JMSDF, nor that the closest functional cooperation involves maritime surveillance.

Both the Australian and Japanese maritime defence forces participate in the US Navy's Ocean Surveillance Information System (OSIS), a world-wide network of airborne maritime surveillance platforms, signals interception and direction finding (DF) stations, and ocean surveillance satellites which provides comprehensive coverage of ship locations and movements. In the case of airborne surveillance, both the RAAF and the JMSDF maintain P-3C Orion LRMP aircraft (about 20 and 80 respectively), equipped with sonar receivers, cameras, radar, infra-red sensors and electronic intelligence (ELINT) and electronic support measure (ESM) systems. The RAAF's P-3Cs cover the eastern Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, while the JMSDF's Orions cover the northwest Pacific down through the East China Sea. The respective P-3Cs are equipped with data links - both Link 11 and Link 16/Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS) - allowing them to directly exchange data concerning shipping movements in areas of combined operations. Australian and Japanese SIGINT stations also contribute to the global OSIS high frequency direction finding (HF DF) system, but through their respective arrangements with the US Navy.

Active cooperation between RAN and JMSDF elements has remained fairly modest. Minor combined exercises, called PASSEXs ('Passage Exercises') began in the early 1990s, involving signaling and basic maneouver exercises, but only when JMSDF vessels were in Australian waters. More substantive combined exercising has occurred under the auspices of the US-led RIMPAC ('Rim of the Pacific') series of exercises, which are the largest, best-planned and most sophisticated joint exercise in which the RAN and JMSDF participate, together with US and South Korean Navy elements. The RIMPAC-92 exercise, in which JMSDF elements exercised against the (Orange) side commanded by an Australian Rear-Admiral (R.A.C. Walls), proved to be the impetus for further cooperation. The scope of the PASSEXs was expanded around 1993-94, and by the mid-1990s the two Navies had implemented regular (once a year) visits by fleet elements (in the JMSDF's case, usually 2-4 ships from its Training Squadron) to each other's ports. Further expansion of combined exercise activities, including search and rescue exercises, were agreed in 1997. [17] And as discussed below, the war on terror, and more particularly the resultant JMSDF deployments to the Indian Ocean and the decisions by both Australia and Japan in June 2003 to participate in the US-sponsored Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), have provided additional opportunities and rationales for combined maritime exercises.

Satellite tracking and control

An important area of cooperation that has recently developed involves Australia's support for the Japanese space program, and particularly the provision of ground facilities for tracking and controlling Japan's commercial communications and defence reconnaissance satellites. The first step in this area was purely commercial, and involved the use of the Lockheed Martin Telemetry, Tracking and Control (TT & C) station at Uralla, near Armidale, NSW, to track and control the Japanese N-SAT-110 telecommunications satellite, launched on 6 October 2000, which provides direct television broadcasting services covering Japan 'and nearby regions'. [18]

The much more important facility in terms of Australia-Japan security cooperation is the satellite ground station at Landsdale in Perth, WA. It was established in 2001-02 by Japan's National Space Development Agency (NASDA), following an agreement reached with the Australian Government in October 2001, consists of two 'giant' parabolic dish antennas, and is 'operated remotely from Japan'. [19] One of the dishes is for supporting 'Japanese satellites carrying out scientific, research and commercial functions', and the other supports Japan's imaging intelligence (IMINT) or 'information-gathering' satellite program. [20]

The NASDA/JDA reconnaissance satellite program will consist initially of four satellites - two with electro-optical cameras (with a 1-metre resolution) and two with microwave-radar sensors for recording images through cloud and at night (with a 1.3-metre resolution), which operate in north-south polar orbits at an altitude of about 500 km. The publicised purpose of the program is to monitor North Korea, but it also collects imagery over China and Russia as well as other areas of intelligence interest. The first two satellites (one optical and the other radar-imaging) were launched on 28 March 2003. The second pair was destroyed when the launch vehicle failed in August 2003, and production and launch of replacements are still a few years away. The ground control station is located at Kitaura in Ibaraki prefecture, about 80 km northeast of Tokyo. A new organisation, the Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Centre, was set up in Tokyo to analyse the reconnaissance data. [21] The primary role of the Landsdale station is to support the insertion of the satellites into the correct orbital position and their maintenance at the desired altitude through their operational lifetimes. The station also provides a capacity for sending tasking commands to the satellites as they proceed on south-north orbits over Australia towards their area of direct interest and for relaying imagery collected on north-south orbits back to Tokyo.

Multilateral security cooperation

At the end of the Cold War, both Australia and Japan were very concerned about the lack of any multilateral organisation for security dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. They had worked closely together through the 1980s to establish the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) process. Around 1991-92 they became the leading proponents of institutionalised multilateral security cooperation mechanisms, although their respective efforts were coincidental and mutually reinforcing rather than coordinated - and they each initially generated suspicions among some of the ASEAN countries about their motivations and their proposals. [22] Most notably, Japan played a leading role in the conception of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the centrepiece of the multilateral security cooperation architecture in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held its first meeting in Bangkok in July 1994, but its genesis and operating modalities date back to the 24th ASEAN Post-Ministerial Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 1991. The Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Taro Nakayama, presented a major statement at the July 1991 meeting, drafted mainly by Yukio Satoh, then the senior official in charge of Research

and Planning in the Gaimusho, in which he stated:

I believe it would be meaningful and timely to use the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference as a process of political discussions designed to improve the sense of security among us. In order for these discussions to be effective, it might be advisable to organize a senior officials' meeting which would then report its deliberations to the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference for further discussion. [23]

Dr Nakayama noted that 'a worthy topic' for regional security dialogue was the regional anxiety about the future direction of Japanese foreign policy concerning the region. [24] The ideas of extending the annual ASIAN Post-Ministerial Conferences to include a security forum, of using senior officials' meetings (SOMs) to support the proposed forum, and of using the forum for confidence-building had several progenitors, but Dr Nakayama was one of the most prominent. [25]

Although Foreign Ministers and their senior officials are paramount in the ARF process, much of its agenda has concerned defence matters and Defence officials (including military officers) formally participate in the process. Most of the CSBMs considered and implemented during the ARF's first half decade dealt with defence issues either directly or indirectly, such as the proposals for dialogue on defence policy positions, publication of Defence White Papers, enhanced contacts between senior Defence officials, exchanges between military academies and staff colleges, exchanges concerning peacekeeping operations, cooperative maritime surveillance, etc. [26] The desirability of increasing defence participation was recognised by the ARF at the outset, and by 1998 concrete steps were being taken. For example, most of the delegations at the meetings of the ARF Inter-Sessional Group (ISG) on Confidence-building in Honolulu in November 1998 and in Bangkok in March 1999 included defence officials. They 'exchanged views and information on their respective defense policies, including defense conversion, and reviewed their political-military and defense dialogues, high-level defense contacts, joint training and personnel exchanges with fellow ARF participants'. [27] It was also agreed that 'participation in [the] Leaders Retreat at [the] ARF SOMs should continue to include [the] SOM leader plus one in order to accommodate participation by defense officials'. [28] Meetings of the ISG now include a Defense Officials' Lunch for informal discussions 'on issues of common interest'. [29]

Unfortunately, however, both Australia and Japan withdrew from their leadership roles later in the 1990s. Australia refocussed its foreign policy priorities towards the US alliance, according somewhat less attention to regional initiatives. Japan's leadership endeavours were severely damaged by the Asian economic crisis in 1997-98, although its concerns about the proliferation of WMD (and especially North Korea's programs) and international terrorism have reinvigorated them.

The second-track security cooperation process

Japan was also at the forefront of the development of second-track security cooperation, especially in the early and mid-1990s. This was exemplified in the establishment of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), which has emerged as the premier second-track organisation in the region. The Japanese Institute of International Relations (JIIA) was a co-sponsor of the series of meetings which led to the foundation of CSCAP in 1992-93. [30] Ambassador Nobuo Matsunaga, a former Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs (1983-85) and Ambassador to the United States (1985-89), and since March 1990 an advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, served as the second non-ASEAN Co-chair of CSCAP (1996-98) and played an important role in the promotion of the Council. The Japanese CSCAP committee has been particularly active in the Working Group on Maritime Cooperation (of which Australia is a co-chair) and the Working Group on the North Pacific (which Japan co-chairs). Senior JMSDF officers, both retired and currently serving, regularly participate in the Working Group on Maritime Cooperation. The Chairman of CSCAP-Japan in 2003-

05 was Ambassador Yukio Satoh, former Ambassador to Australia (1996-98) and to the United Nations (UN), and the Gaimusho official who was centrally involved in Japan's initiatives concerning multilateral security arrangements in the early 1990s. The Australian and Japanese CSCAP committees cooperated closely (together with the Canadian and Indonesian committees) in the sponsorship and organisation of a CSCAP General Conference in Jakarta in December 2003, which provided a venue for discussion (with several Foreign Ministers and numerous Foreign Ministry officials) of practical measures to enhance regional cooperation with respect to counter-terrorism.

On the defence side, the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) has actively promoted second-track exchanges with other defence 'think tanks' in the region, including in Australia. [31] With regard to broader conceptions of security, other Japanese organisations (such as the Japan Forum on International Relations) have played leading roles in the promotion of cooperation concerning preventive diplomacy and human security. [32]

Multilateral naval dialogue

The RAN and the JMSDF also cooperate in regional multilateral forums concerned with naval and other maritime matters. In particular, they have been prominent participants in the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), a biennial conference initiated by the RAN in 1988, which brings together representatives of the ASEAN states, the US, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of China, Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand for a frank exchange of views on a wide range of issues, including law of the sea and SLOC protection. It is a unique forum and has substantially improved understanding between regional navies. The JMSDF hosted the 5th WPNS in November 1996 and the 8th in October 2002. The 8th meeting focussed on 'inter-operability' with specific reference to 'search and rescue, humanitarian support, disaster relief, minesweeping, refueling, etc.'[33] Coinciding with the WPNS, the JMSDF also organised a multilateral search and rescue exercise, in Southern Kanto waters and Sagami Bay, in which RAN elements participated. [34]

Peacekeeping operations (PKO)

The joint participation of ADF and JSDF elements in UN-sponsored multinational peacekeeping operations (PKO) since 1992 has involved extensive and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two defence forces. The ADF has had substantial experience in UN PKO, including leadership of the largest recent PKO interventions in the region - i.e., the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992-93 and the UN International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) in 1999-2000 and the subsequent UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

Japan's first military contribution to a UN PKO was its involvement in UNTAC. UNTAC was headed by Ambassador Yasushi Akashi, as Special Representative of the UN Secretary General. The JSDF contributed two successive non-combatant Engineer Battalions (each with about 600 personnel) from September 1992 to October 1993, which mainly worked on roads, bridge-building and other construction projects in the area southwest of Phnom Penh. The contingent served under the UNTAC Force Commander, Australian Lieutenant General John Sanderson, who evinced a strong personal interest in ensuring the success of Japan's contribution. The UNTAC success 'set the scene' for subsequent UN PKO deployments by the JSDF. [35]

In the case of East Timor, Japan provided 'prompt and substantial' financial support to INTERFET but declined military participation. [36] However, Japan decided to send JSDF personnel to East Timor in November 2001, and made a long-term foreign aid commitment, and there has been close coordination of JSDF and ADF efforts with regard to 'nation-building'. The first JGSDF contingent, an Engineer Battalion with 680 personnel, arrived in East Timor in May 2002. [37] It was replaced by a

second contingent (also with 680 personnel) in October 2002, which was in turn replaced by a third contingent (with 522 members) in March 2003. [38]

The US alliance

For both Japan and Australia, the respective alliances with the US are fundamental bases of their strategic policies and plans. These alliances, and the US strategic directions, affect their respective strategic priorities, force development planning and acquisition programs, and operational commitments. They also affect the scope and opportunities for important cooperative activities between Australia and Japan. The war on terror, embracing many fronts, has opened up a wide expanse of new areas for cooperation, ranging from law enforcement measures to air and marine security practices to joint participation in US-led 'coalitions of the willing' and post-war reconstruction operations. The decisions by Australia and Japan in December 2003 to participate in US ballistic missile defence (BMD) programs also raise collaborative possibilities. In June 2002, the US officially withdrew from the Anti-ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and embarked on a wide-range program to develop and deploy both theatre and strategic/national BMD systems, but this really only codified commitments made by the Bush Administration before September 11. Both Australia and Japan had also been interested in different aspects of missile defence well before September 11. However, the war on terror has provided new justifications, with the US explaining its need for defences in terms of the proliferation of WMD among 'rogue states', and, potentially, international terrorist organisations - with North Korea being prominent in this mileu.

Missile defence

The respective Japanese and Australian missile defence programs and plans provide several avenues for cooperation, such as intelligence cooperation concerning the technical details of current and prospective missile/WMD developments in the region, collaborative research and development (R & D) projects, real-time sharing of tactical early warning information (including missile launch detection and indicative flight trajectories), and the coordination of prospective BMD operations (especially those involving ship-based anti-missile systems). The extent to which any of this might be implemented is largely dependent upon Washington.

Japan has had a very limited anti-missile capability, at least against shorter-range and relatively slow missiles, since the acquisition by the JASDF of the first-generation Patriot missiles for high-altitude air defence in the late 1980s. [39] These were distributed among six Air Defense Missile Groups, located to protect areas of 'political, economic and strategic importance' - the 3rd Air Defense Missile Group, based at Chitose, and protecting the central and southwestern parts of Hokkaido; the 6th, based at Misawa, covering the area around the Tsugaru Strait; the 1st, based at Iruma, protecting the Kanto area (around Tokyo); the 4th, based at Gifu, covering the Keihanshin district; the 2nd, based at Kasuga, covering the northern part of Kyushu; and the 5th, based at Naha and protecting Okinawa. [40] In 1991, following the poor performance of Patriot missiles of this vintage against Iraqi Scud ballistic missiles during the Gulf War (Operation *Desert Storm*) in January-February 1991, the JASDF decided to acquire Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC)-2 systems; and in 1995, following the test launch by North Korea of a Nodong-1 MRBM on 29 May 1993, it decided to acquire 24 enhanced PAC-2 (so-called PAC-2 Plus) 'fire units' to protect key military installations and urban areas against missile attacks - though only by cruise missiles or ballistic missiles with slow re-entry speeds. Delivery of the PAC-2 Plus missiles began in 1998. Each of the 24 'fire units' (four per Air Defense Missile Group) has eight launch stations, with four missiles per launch station, or 768 missiles. [41] Another three 'fire stations' (with 96 missiles) were acquired around 2000-01.

The JMSDF also acquired a limited anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATBM) capability during the 1990s, in the form of the *Standard* SM-2 (MR) Block IV surface-to-air missiles aboard its four Kongo-class

Aegis destroyers, commissioned in 1993-98. (Two additional Kongo-class destroyers are currently under construction.) The SM-2 (MR) Block IV missiles have a range of 200 nautical miles and an operational ceiling of 95,000 feet, and can be used against cruise missiles and tactical ballistic missiles. [42]

In the late 1990s, as part of the 'mid-term defense build-up plan for 2001 to 2005', and charged by North Korea's ballistic missile program, especially the launch of a Taepodong-1 MRBM across Japan on 31 August 1998, the JDA began to formulate plans for the acquisition of more advanced versions of the Patriot and *Standard* systems as the basis for a nation-wide layered BMD system. Initial plans included the addition of 16 PAC-3 'hit-to-kill' missiles to each of the 24 'fire units', or 384 missiles. [43] In August 2003, the Cabinet approved the first phase of this program - a 144 billion Yen (US$1.23 billion) package which included funds for nine SM-3 missiles for one of the Aegis destroyers (with missiles for the other five to follow), and PAC-3 missiles for the four 'fire units' in the 1st Air Defence Missile Group protecting the Kanto area, based at Narashino, Takeyama, Kasumigaure and Iruma. The JDA also announced that a new type of radar called the FPS-5 (formerly referred to as the FPS-XX) would be developed to compliment the current FPS-3 radar system and provide earlier detection and characterisation of ballistic missiles. The SM-3s (which cost two billion Yen each) are intended to intercept incoming MRBMs during their mid-course phase beyond the Earth's atmosphere, while the PAC-3s (which cost 500 million Yen each) provide a terminal defence against missiles that have eluded the SM-3s. Both systems are to be deployed in 2007. [44] It was reported in March 2004 that Japan now planned to acquire 'about 200' PAC-3s. The first 16 PAC-3, have been purchased directly from the US and the JDA expects them to be operational by March 2007; subsequent missiles are to be produced in Japan. [45] The JMSDF is forming a new 'missile defence regiment' which will eventually consist of eight Kongo-class Aegis destroyers fitted with SM-3 missiles. [46]

However, Japan remains dependent upon the US for the provision of early-warning information from the US geostationary infra-red missile launch detection and tracking satellites stationed over the eastern hemisphere, which provide the first warning that launches have taken place anywhere in this enormous region. These satellites would provide the Japanese authorities with precious minutes of warning of missile launches before they could be detected by ground-based radars in Japan itself. And hence the most important connection with Australia, which hosts important ground facilities for relaying early-warning information from these satellites. For two decades, the ground control station for these DSP-E [Defense Support Program - Eastern hemisphere] satellites was located at Nurrungar, South Australia, which both controlled the satellites and processed and analysed the early warning data, while at the same time relaying it to the US North American Air Defense (NORAD) complex in Colorado. [47]

The Nurrungar station ceased operations on 30 September 1999 (and was officially closed on 12 October), by which time a smaller Relay Ground Station (RGS) had been constructed at Pine Gap in central Australia for receiving and relaying early warning information from the current DSP satellites and their prospective successors, the Space-Based Infra-Red System (SBIRS) satellites. [48] The SBIRS satellites are able to detect the launches of smaller missiles (with fainter infra-red luminosity) and to track them through their flight, and hence are critical elements of any future US homeland or theatre ballistic missile defence system.

The Nodong-1launch on 29 May 1993 and the Taepodong-1 launch on 31 August 1998 were both detected by the DSP-E satellites and the information proceeded at the Nurrungar station. Warnings were quickly communicated to the US and thence to Japan. In the case of the Nodong-1 launch, the JDA had been informed by the US beforehand that the launch was imminent, and was told it had been detected by the early-warning satellites as soon as the HQ of the US Forces, Japan (USFJ) at

Yokota Air Base, west of Tokyo, had been notified. But by this time the missile had already been detected and was being tracked by the JASDF air defence radar station at Wajima, on the Noto peninsula. [49] By the time of the Taepodong launch in August 1998, mechanisms had been established for the direct transmission of launch detection data from Colorado to the JDA HQ. [50] And by mid-2003, when the US Air Force Space Command activated a Shared Early Warning System (SEWS) Centralized Distribution Facility in Colorado, a terminal had been set up in Tokyo for the direct receipt of relayed DSP/SBIRS data. [51] By then, however, Australia's role in the control of the US satellite early warning system had substantially diminished. The SBIRS ground segment is very dispersed and highly redundant, with numerous back-up or alternative satellite control and data relay modes, and with the data about missile launches and trajectories being disseminated to multiple command posts around the world. A 60-GHz satellite-to-satellite cross-link also enables the data to be relayed to the national command centres in the US without passing through any ground facility.

The RGS at Pine Gap is staffed by only 3-4 personnel, as compared to the 400 or so staff who had maintained the Nurrungar DSP ground station. In official US terminology, it is a 'bent pipe' facility which automatically relays satellite data without any data processing or analysis. [52] The SBIRS is certainly essential to any future US ballistic missile defence system, but particular ground elements such as the RGS at Pine Gap are really quite marginal elements. They could be removed or redeployed without significant detriment to US (or Japanese) missile defence activities.

It is possible to envisage operational cooperation in missile defence in contingencies involving ADF and JSDF elements when both forces have SM-3 anti-missile missiles. Australia plans to acquire three or four 6,000-7,500 ton Air Warfare Destroyers, the first two of which are to be in service by 2015, and to equip these with SM-3s for theatre missile defence. [53] Working together, a joint force of, say, 4-6 platforms carrying hundreds of SM-3s for exo-atmospheric interception of MRBMs and a multitude of other anti-missile systems for defence against shorter-range ballistic and cruise missiles, would provide an effective shield over ADF and JSDF elements participating in coalition operations or PKO - or even over substantial parts of their respective homelands.

The war on terror

The terrorist assault of September 11 and the resultant US-led war on terror have generated a myriad of opportunities for expanded cooperation - in US-led 'coalitions of the willing', regional multilateral forums, new trilateral (US-Japan-Australia) arrangements, and new fields of bilateral cooperation. The 'bilateral consultation and cooperation in the fight against terrorism' was formalised in the Australia-Japan Joint Statement on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism, adopted by the Foreign Ministries on 16 July 2003. It reaffirmed 'our shared interest and common purpose in cooperating to fight the scourge of international terrorism', renewed 'our commitment to strengthening cooperation in APEC, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and other regional forums to disrupt terrorist networks', and recognised the 'urgent need [to] strengthen cooperation between us ... to help build the capacity of countries in the region, especially in South-East Asia, to fight terrorism'. [54] It was accompanied by an 'Action Plan', which included expanding the 'exchange of information and assessments on terrorism issues and developments, including through visits by senior officials'; improving transport security, energy security, and 'cyber security and critical infrastructure protection'; enhancing cooperation between law enforcement agencies in relation to both operational and counter-terrorism capacity-building issues'; and 'strengthening measures to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems'. [55]

On the defence side, it means expanding dialogues and intelligence exchanges, intensified cooperation with regard to maritime surveillance activities, and increasing joint exercise activities. For example, in September 2003, ADF elements exercised for the first time with a Japanese

Coastguard vessel in Exercise *Pacific Protector* in the Coral Sea, in which a vessel 'suspected' (for training purposes) of carrying WMD was interdicted, boarded and inspected by Australian and Japanese officers, as part of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The exercise was widely regarded as being aimed at North Korea. [56] Indeed, North Korea denounced the exercise as 'a wanton violation of the sovereignty of [North Korea]' and as an 'intolerable military provocation'; it saw the maneuvers as 'a prelude to a nuclear war' and declared that it would, in response, 'further increase its nuclear deterrent force'. [57]

It also means that there is an increasing likelihood of cooperation in operational situations, at least with respect to the provision of intelligence and logistic support, but also in interdiction operations and prospectively even joint combat operations. Australia and Japan were the only countries in East Asia to provide a military contribution to Operation *Enduring Freedom*, although only the Australian forces participated in combat operations.

Japan's support for the war in Afghanistan was both unprecedented in terms of breaking the constraints on overseas deployments of the JSDF but also very conditional. On 19 October 2001 the diet approved anti-terrorism legislation which authorised the JSDF to provide military support to the US-led war on terrorism - including escorts, guards, intelligence and logistics, but not direct combat services. The JMSDF moved quickly to organise a task force, consisting of a non-Aegis destroyer, minesweepers and supply ships, which deployed to the Indian Ocean in November â€" the first time Japan had assisted forces in combat since the end of the Second World War. [58] The mission of the destroyer was declared to be intelligence collection, in line with the new legislation allowing the JDA/JSDF to conduct necessary 'research' activities, rather than direct support for US operations. [59] The JASDF committed almost half of its C-130 transport aircraft in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*, flying US military equipment and personnel to Singapore, Guam and other places in the region. [60]

In September-October 2001, the JDA/JMSDF had suggested deploying one of the new Kongo-class Aegis destroyers, equipped with the SPY-ID radar systems (allowing them to simultaneously track hundreds of targets). This proposal was welcomed by the US Navy, but 'was blocked ... by Japanese politicians, who were concerned about upsetting Asian neighbours [i.e., China]'. [61]

In May 2002, when the 6-month review of the November commitment was underway, Washington raised the question of Japanese support for a US-led attack on Iraq, and reportedly asked specifically for the deployment of Aegis destroyers and P-3C Orion long-range maritime patrol aircraft (which would replace US capabilities in the Arabian Sea if the US forces were to move to the Persian Gulf for the attack). [62] The issue was embroiled in military politics in Tokyo, with the unabashed lobbying by some Japanese naval forces for accession to the US request causing some dissatisfaction. [63]

In the case of the war in Iraq, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said on 20 March 2003 that 'Japan supports the US position'. [64] However, the actual Japanese support for Operation *Iraqi Freedom* was very limited. The Kirishima, one of the Aegis destroyers, was sent to the Indian Ocean in December 2002 to protect Japanese supply ships which were refuelling US and British naval vessels, and to conduct surveillance activities in the area, in accordance with another special anti-terrorist law passed in November 2002. [65] It was widely (if only tacitly) understood that this was an indirect contribution to the forthcoming war in Iraq in that it relieved a US Aegis destroyer from Afghanistan operations to move into the Gulf. [66]

Following the declared end of war in Iraq on 1 May 2003, and the passage by the Diet of the Iraq Humanitarian Reconstruction Support Special Measures Law in July, JSDF forces have been sent to Iraq to assist the US-led coalition forces 'reconstructing' the country - the first time that JSDF units

have served abroad outside the UN PKO framework. [67] About 1,000 JGSDF, JMSDF and JASDF personnel were despatched to Al Muthanna province in Iraq in February 2004. [68] As of March 2004, the ADF still had some 850 personnel in Iraq (a decline from about 2000 personnel during Operation *Iraqi Freedom* a year before), performing both reconstruction and protective security duties. [69] In February 2005, the Howard Government deployed an additional 450 ADF personnel to Iraq specifically to guard the JSDF personnel engaged in reconstruction work as well as help train new Iraqi Army units in Al Muthanna province. The Al Muthanna deployment cost some $200 million in the 2005-06 fiscal year, compared to a total of about $270 million for all ADF activities in Iraq in 2004-05, but was justified in terms of ensuring that the Japanese stayed in Iraq and the strengthening of the Australia-Japan security relationship. [70]

The prospects

There is no doubt that current and prospective geopolitical trends will lead to a further strengthening of the Australia-Japan security relationship. Given the increasing likelihood of their common involvement in US-led coalitions in the war on terror, counter-proliferation initiatives and peacekeeping operations (with and without UN mandates), as well as their mutual interest in BMD developments, it becomes increasingly likely that ADF and JSDF elements will serve together in operational situations, including not only combat support activities but also actual combat. It is not difficult to envisage Australian Army and JGSDF units, for example, committed to the same theatre, being embroiled in firefights in which they fight, and survive, together. But however much the direct bilateral relationship is strengthened, it will remain distinctly secondary to the respective alliances with the US. And it will be US strategic policies and defence decisions which will primarily determine the directions, pace and dimensions of the continuing expansion in cooperative activities. The degree of incoherence and unpredictability in US policies imposes considerable uncertainty on the unfolding shape of the bilateral relationship.

By 2010, a third of a century after the first steps were taken in secret, the intelligence relationship will be comprehensive and matured, the RAN and JMSDF will be well-practised in joint communications, navigational procedures and tactical maneuvers, and substantial elements will be fully inter-operable. It will be routine for the JMSDF's Aegis destroyers, one of which was continuously stationed in the Indian Ocean, to provide intelligence, refueling, and air defence and anti-missile protection for RAN vessels, still involved in the maintenance of political stability in the Gulf. The Australian and Japanese P-3C aircraft and Global Hawk high-altitude unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) will directly exchange sensor data, including electronic intercepts and imagery, concerning activities in important maritime areas, such as the South China Sea. The collaborative interdiction, boarding and inspection of vessels suspected of transporting WMD-related materials will have become fairly commonplace - despite vociferous complaints from North Korea, whose vessels will bear the brunt of the searches. And there will be extensive cooperation with respect to ballistic missile defence (BMD) programs, including cooperative research programs, sharing of intelligence relating to missile launches (and most importantly the direct relay of launch detection data from the SBIRS satellites through the RGS at Pine Gap to the SEWS facility at the JDA HQ in Tokyo), and operational activities involving their SM-3 anti-missile missile capabilities.

Issues for consideration

The elevation of the Australia-Japan security relationship, transforming it from one involving limited bilateral activity, with most of the important exchanges and joint activities mediated through the respective US connections, to one in which there is substantial bilateral activity, albeit largely configured by prevailing directions in US policy (and especially US concerns about WMD proliferation and global terrorism), but resulting in both Australia and Japan now ranking each other among their top five security partners, raises several issues which warrant serious consideration.

The security relationship was spawned in secrecy. It was nurtured and shaped by particular agencies, such as the intelligence organisations and the Navies, and reflects their particular bureaucratic interests and perspectives. All of the initial steps and most of the subsequent advances were undertaken at Australian initiative. It has expanded through a cumulation of essentially ad hoc responses to different global and regional developments, crises and opportunities. It has never been subject to comprehensive or systematic bureaucratic audit or informed public discussion.

The first and most fundamental issue concerns the need for informed public debates in both Japan and Australia about the significance of the elevated and transformed security relationship, the precise nature of the cooperative activities and the implications for the respective polities in terms of both the benefits and the costs and risks. The relationship was founded in total secrecy and developed for two decades without any official acknowledgement. I had disclosed the existence of the intelligence connections involving ASIS, JIO and ONA in 1985 in The Ties That Bind, [71] but there was no official mention of intelligence matters until January 1998 when a media release by the Australian Minister for Defence said that he and his Japanese counterpart had agreed at their meeting in Tokyo in September 1997 to 'enhance intelligence exchanges'. [72] There was no official mention of any bilateral activity whatsoever until July 1997, when the JDA's Defence of Japan 1997 noted that 'Japan-Australia politico-military consultations' had been held in February 1996 and May 1997. [73] However, few experts on Australian defence policy or, dare I say, specialists on Japan-Australia relations, let alone the respective general publics, fully appreciate the relative magnitude of the expansion of the security relationship or the range of its constituent elements. However, these have profound implications not just in the defence and security realms, they also manifest, through the particular values that the two countries choose to jointly promote, the sorts of people that Australians and Japanese are and the sort of international society to which they aspire.

The second issue concerns the extent to which the evolving relationship, shaped mainly by narrow bureaucratic interests on the one hand and the US alliances on the other hand, reflects Japan's and Australia's respective geopolitical interests and their national security priorities. Notwithstanding the extensive areas of common security interest, the two countries lie in sub-regions of East Asia with very different strategic dynamics. Northeast Asia, accounts for the great bulk (nearly 85 per cent) of total defence expenditures in East Asia and Australasia, including some of the more disturbing new capabilities. China and Japan have the third and fourth largest defence budgets in the world. A complex arms race is underway, involving multiple inter-actions, especially with respect to maritime and missile/missile defence capabilities. Nuclear weapons figure in frequent crises, whether on the Korean Peninsula or across the Taiwan Straits. Given the possibility of strategic competition between China and Japan, it may not be in Australia's interests either to be partisan or to encourage a greater Japanese presence in Southeast Asia or the Indian Ocean, thus drawing that competition into sub-regions of direct strategic interest to Australia.

From the point of view of the defence of Australia, Japan lies far outside Australia's 'sphere of primary strategic interest'. [74] The increasing emphasis being accorded coalition operations and inter-operable capabilities risks diversion of resources and distortions in force structure development. The cost of the Al Muthanna deployment to guard the JSDF personnel in Iraq could amount to some $300 million, assuming it is extended to around the end of 2006. This is roughly equivalent to the cost of two Wedgetail airborne warning and control aircraft, or five Global Hawk UAVs, or a dedicated multi-transponder geostationary communications satellite for the ADF. It is more than the total annual costs of Australia's defence cooperation programs in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific, including the residual commitment in East Timor and Operation *Anode* in the Solomon Islands.

Some elements of the cooperation are of dubious utility. The Japanese reconnaissance satellite

program, for example, is probably not cost-effective. The US has been apprehensive about the independent Japanese initiative, being concerned that the cost will prove exorbitant while yielding an inferior product, compromising systems integration and inter-operability with US satellite imaging systems, and damaging 'alliance coordination'. [75] A good friend might have suggested either different satellite programs or alternative imagery sources.

Another issue concerns the appropriate balance in Japan's and Australia's cooperative endeavours between those activities involving strategic and defence matters on the one hand as compared to those relating to confidence-building, conflict resolution, peace-building and 'human security' on the other hand. The two countries cooperated with respect to the construction of important pieces of regional security architecture in the early 1990s including the institutionalisation of multilateral security dialogues and CBMs, but their activity in these areas since the mid-1990s has been fitful. Neither country now has much interest in multilateralim. The Australian Government remains wary of embracing 'human security'. Japan has adopted the concept as a 'core objective' of its foreign policy, but has defined it primarily in terms of developmental projects such as those that address poverty or infectious diseases or involve post-conflict reconstruction.

Finally, there is an issue as to whether the complexion of the Australia-Japan relationship overall is in danger of becoming too militarised and, indeed, too securitised. As the defence relationship expands, it tells the rest of the world that Japan and Australia care not so much for other dimensions of cooperation -- such as cultural and artistic exchanges, environmental programs, health and disease prevention programs, or scientific and technological exploits. It suggests that the Australian and Japanese people have little compassion, little commitment to social justice and little imagination of quality of life as a universal concept. Is this really the case? Is it really the image we wish to convey to the rest of the world?

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End notes

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