

**SESSION 1: STATE OF NUCLEAR EXTENDED DETERRENCE IN
EAST ASIA TODAY**

Paper prepared for East Asia Nuclear Security Workshop
November 11-12, 2011 Tokyo, Japan

Extended Deterrence in the Japan-U.S. Alliance

Ken JIMBO

Associate Professor, Keio University

During the process of drafting the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR 2010), the extended deterrence was one of the most important imperative of prescribing U.S. nuclear doctrines, force postures and the readiness. In spite of its importance, there have been wide-ranging apprehensions among U.S. policy makers and scholars about what constitute the effective extended deterrence and how much does the nuclear weapon play the role within its concept. In Japan, silent but vigorous debate on the nuclear extended deterrence took place since the President Obama's Prague speech and during the process of releasing the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR) and NPR.

The extended deterrence in most simplified term is extending the logic of deterrence to third parties. The extended deterrence, however, is harder to achieve than central (or individual) deterrence because: 1) it needs to make a threat credible to adversary on behalf of or in collaboration with the deterrence provider, 2) it needs to convince the credibility of the deterrence among the elites of both guarantor and guarantees on the bipartisan basis, 3) it needs to assure the domestic public that such form of extended deterrence is necessary. The extended deterrence is the sets of multi-dimensional perceptions of the credibility of U.S. security commitments to its allies.

Since the strategic landscape in Northeast Asia presents increasingly complex character, it is also difficult to apply the concept of deterrence in a "one-size-fits-all" manner. For the success of the extended deterrence, the Japan-U.S. alliance needs

continuous updates on the assessment of the distribution of powers and threats, then to apply the tailored deterrence to the regional dynamism.

Asian Dimension of Extended Deterrence

North Korea

In Asian dimension, the extended deterrence is particularly important for two aspects. First, it composes the major function to deter and dissuade the large-scale aggression of North Korea.

The records of failure for North Korea's denuclearization process left Japan to face with their increased nuclear and missile capabilities. In 2010, North Korea has upgraded the level of aggression as clearly seen by the sinking of Cheonan corvette and shelling of Yonpyong Island. These events draw huge lessons for the extended deterrence, that North Korea may extend its aggression to the level that may not invite the major retaliation by the ROK and the United States. With its increased confidence, North Korea might have calculated the level, to the extent that they can provoke ROK or possibly Japan, has gone up.

We may tentatively conclude that the case of "stability-instability paradox" is likely to play here. There is a decreasing probability of major war but an increasing probability of low-level conflicts. North Korea assumes that South Korea and the US do not want minor conflicts to escalate into major ones, making it safe to engage in the former.

North Korea was careful enough to strike a 'disputed' area, one which was – at least from their point of view – not a part of the territory covered by the US umbrella. In so doing, it may have acted like Egypt and Syria did in 1973: facing a nuclear-armed adversary, they were very careful not to attack Israel on its 1948 borders. South Korea retaliated in response to the Yeonpyeong shelling by firing about 80 shells at North Korean barracks, command structures and artillery near the border, but there was no significant military escalation from North Korea despite its verbal attacks. South Korean F-16 and F-15 jets were also rushed to the area, but they did not provoke North Korean targets. More importantly, the US did not take joint action directly on

initial counter strikes. In terms of the range of escalation, the offensive exchanges in the Yeonpyeong case were relatively low in intensity. We can tentatively observe that deterrence has failed in 2010, and it may fail again, but that escalation control has succeeded.

Lessons we have learned from 2010 was that US and ROK have to have a careful review how to respond with from small to medium scale aggression by reconfiguring the deterrence structure vis-à-vis North Korea. And because of the same reason for dealing with China on its probing behavior in East China Sea, Japan recently adopted the concept called “Dynamic Defense” or “Dynamic Deterrence” in the *National Defense Program Guideline 2010* which emphasized the operational domain of the Self Defense Force by demonstrating upgraded intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance activities to close the windows of opportunity for China to expand its activities surrounding Japan¹.

Northeast Asia is also facing with the fragile generational transition in North Korea that also increase the uncertainty of the regime stability. If an internal instability or hard-landing scenario should happen, certainly the U.S. forward presence will play the stabilization operation in the North, and during such scenario the extended deterrence plays a key role to ensure the crisis stability and the damage limitation to the possible attacks from North Korea.

China

The second aspect on the extended deterrence is on China. This is another complex question since China not only modernizes their nuclear arsenals but they significantly increase the capability on their conventional forces. Chinese growing anti-access and area-denial capability would impede the deployment of U.S. forces into the combat theater and limit the locations from which those forces could effectively operate.

¹ “Dynamic Defense” in the New Guidelines show importance especially on principle of the Self-Defense Forces’ “activities.” Particularly on to 1) strengthen preparation against military activities of neighboring countries through reinforcing regular intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance activities which called as “ISR,” 2) quickly and seamlessly respond to various contingencies, and 3) multi-layered promotion of cooperative activities with foreign countries.

These aspects have certainly increase the cost and complexity of the U.S. military response to the crisis in East Asia.

When it comes to the Sino-Japanese bilateral dimension of balance of power, China already has twice the size of the defense budget than that of Japan (according to SIPRI standards), and it is going to be four to six times bigger in 2020, and seven to ten times bigger in 2030, although these are the figures based on the optimistic Chinese economic projection for next two decades. We are now seeing the dynamics where China increasingly have a denial power against the United States, whereas Japan's relative power decline becomes more vivid. Crafting the extended deterrence under this new dynamics is one of the most important challenges of the alliance management in coming years.

In the Nuclear Posture Review, the keyword given for China is "ensuring strategic stability". We need to have a constant updating on this concept. What if they deploy highly modernized strategic forces such as land based DF-31A, tactical DF-21 and submarine based JL-2. It is a matter of time, until China becomes more confident of gaining credible second-strike capability against the United States and its allies. Then the question arises how we define such nuclear relations between U.S. and China, and that still is the remaining agenda.

Tailored Regional Deterrence Architecture

The QDR, NPR and BMDR emphasized the importance of crafting the "Tailored Regional Deterrence Architecture".

This unique DOD approach to the deterrence concept suggest that deterrence has to be adjusted to the uniqueness of the region, whereas the component of deterrence includes various forms: ranging from nuclear, non-nuclear striking forces, missile defense and counter-WMD capabilities. But as a baseline of these reviews are deemphasizing the role of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, the non-nuclear elements should play a vital role for enhancing the extended-deterrence.

As a result, the NPR declared the retirement of the TLAM/N, nuclear tomahawk that has been in storage since the Navy completed the withdrawal in early 1990s. Indeed, there was a certain amount of concern in Japanese policy community that the retirement symbolizes the reducing visibility and signaling of U.S. nuclear commitments in Asia. But as stated in the NPR, TLAM/N was one of the numbers of means to forward-deploy nuclear weapons in the crisis. The role of TLAM/N can be substituted by heavy bombers/dual-capable fighters/ICBMs and SLBMs. I think that ensuring the visibility of U.S. nuclear commitment in Asia by flexibly forward deploy the air-component will become highly important in post-NPR extended deterrence in Asia.

Non-First Use and the “Sole-Purpose” Debate

Japan highly appreciate that the NPR did not adopt a universal policy that “sole purpose” of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack on the U.S. and its allies. Given that North Korea’s potential capability to attack Japan by chemical and biological weapons, it is still crucial for Japan to recognize that U.S. reserved the right that nuclear weapons play a role in deterring CBW attack. Even though there is much debate that conventional forces can replace the role of nuclear weapons both in peace-time and during the crisis, I think that the nuclear extended deterrence still plays a crucial role for simplifying Pyongyang’s calculations over their strategic value of possessing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

NDPG 2010 and Extended Deterrence: Towards Flexible Response

The new NDPG mentions *“as long as nuclear weapons exist, the extended deterrence provided by the United States, with nuclear deterrent as a vital element, will be indispensable. In order to maintain and improve the credibility of the extended deterrence, Japan will closely cooperate with the United States, and will also appropriately implement its own efforts, including ballistic missile defense and civil protection.”* It is significant that Japan recognizes the U.S. nuclear deterrent is the vital and the extended deterrence is indispensable. At the same time, the introduction of Japan’s “dynamic defense” concept will promote the role of JSDF to play more active role on the deterrence especially those North Korean and Chinese activities on *fait accompli* and proving. The U.S. extended deterrence will continue to

play significant role in peacetime deterrence and escalation management. It will be imperative for Japan and U.S. to activate the seamless deterrence capability from low-intensity to mid/high intensity response with merging “dynamic defense” and the extended deterrence.