Multilateralism Recalibrated: Japan’s Engagement in Institution Building in the Past 70 Years and Beyond

Akiko Fukushima

Introduction

In the 1980s, the international community criticized Japan for free riding on the international order without paying its dues. But did Japan actually undermine institution building in the 70 years after the end of World War II? No—on the contrary, Japan never opposed multilateral institutions either at the global level, such as the United Nations (UN), or at the regional level in the Asia-Pacific. Emerging from the ashes of the war, Japan did not engage in visible leadership in building multilateral institutions, nor was it expected to take such leadership by the international community. Instead, Japan was expected to be on the receiving side of the international order created by the victors of the war.

Japan, however, has consistently been an active supporter of institutions throughout the past 70 years. On the global front, although Japan was not a party in establishing institutions, particularly in the earlier decades after the war, Japan sought ways to contribute as a loyal member. On the regional front, after the end of World War II the Asia-Pacific region was infertile ground for institution building, in sharp contrast to Europe, as demonstrated by the failure of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The only exception was the sub-regional Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and track two and three institutions such as the Pacific Basin Economic Conference (PBEC) and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC).

Since the 1990s, however, the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed budding regional institutions with varying geographical footprints in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific more broadly. Some of these institutions have competed against each other. In some areas there are too many overlapping institutions, what is described as “alphabet soup” or the “noodle bowl.” During this evolution of regional institutions spanning the past three decades, Japan has sought to pursue its own initiatives but was perceived to lack leadership in proportion to its economic strength. As a result, some have claimed that Japan “led [regionalism] from behind.”2

This paper reviews how Japan has engaged in global and regional institutions since the end of World War II, particularly in response to the international community’s increasing demands for Japan to pay its dues as its economy grew. The paper then considers how Japan’s multilateralism has been recalibrated to fulfill its responsibilities as a legitimate global citizen for international peace, security, and prosperity against the backdrop of geopolitical changes

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2 Michael J. Green, Japan’s Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 208-227.
including the end of the Cold War, deepening global interdependence, increase of transnational issues, and rise of emerging countries on both global and regional fronts.

**Seeking to be a legitimate citizen of the international community**

Japan’s debut to multilateralism goes back to its accession to the Geneva Convention in 1886 and the Hague Convention of 1899. As a “civilized country,” Japan tried to demonstrate that Japan honored internationally recognized laws of war during the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War and 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. The Emperor specifically instructed the Japanese military to abide by these international laws even in the event the enemy did not reciprocate. The International Red Cross recorded that the Japanese military treated hostages and the wounded according to the Geneva Convention during these two wars.3

These steps were taken because Japan wished to be recognized as a civilized member of international institutions on par with other European and American powers after the Meiji restoration. The motive behind its zeal to engage in institutions was to rectify inequality in bilateral treaties signed at the time of the opening of the country after its long period of seclusion. By engaging in international institutions, Japan strongly hoped to get out of a second-tier citizen status and to climb up to a first tier. This was the origin of Japan’s DNA for universalism.4

After the end of World War I, Japan was invited to participate in the Paris Peace Conference and joined the League of Nations in 1919 as one of the victorious powers. This was a milestone in Japanese multilateral diplomacy while it pursued a bilateral alliance with the United Kingdom. The League created a supreme executive Council of Ten, to which Japan was invited to join. Japan felt that it was finally recognized as a power not only in Asia but also in the international community. Reporting on the Paris Peace conference, the Japanese media proudly trumpeted that Japan had finally become a ‘First-Class Country.’5

The Japanese delegation to the Paris Peace Conference proposed that a “racial equality clause” be included in the Covenant of the League of Nations, asking for equal treatment of Japan and its nationals. This was the extension of its demand for equal status with the Western powers. Being a victorious power of World War I, Japan wanted to make sure that it was treated as a peer in the League. Despite the majority vote to approve the Japanese proposal, it was not approved due to the strong opposition from the United Kingdom and United States. Instead of a majority vote, they demanded a unanimous vote for the clause. As a result the racial equality clause was defeated. This case left bitterness, dissatisfaction, and a sense of alienation on the part of Japan. Inazo Nitobe, the Japanese diplomat who served in the League of Nations as under-secretary general from 1920 to 1927, felt strongly dissatisfied with the decision. Meanwhile in 1924 the U.S. Congress unilaterally repudiated the agreement to receive 146 Japanese

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4 I thank Dr. Michael Green for this insightful framing.
individuals a year to immigrate to the United States and passed the Oriental Exclusion Act, forbidding any Japanese to immigrate to the United States. Nitobe was outraged by the Act. Moreover, the Oriental Exclusion Act by the United States made Japan feel evermore alienated in the international community.

Another multilateral forum that Japan was invited to attend was the Washington Naval Conference, which was held from November 1921 to February 1922. By that time the naval armaments race among the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan had become so fierce that the financial burden was too heavy to bear during the recession. The United States took the initiative to host a conference on naval arms control and invited Japan, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy to Washington, D.C. The conference produced the Washington Treaty, which reduced the number of warships and carriers to a ratio of 10:10:6 among the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The Japanese delegation had insisted upon a naval power reduction to a ratio of 10:10:7 and remained dissatisfied with this much deeper cut. Despite Japanese dissatisfaction over the outcome of the Washington Conference, then Foreign Minister Kijyuro Shidehara did try to honor the agreement to maintain multilateral cooperation with the United States and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless the sense of alienation on the part of Japan deepened.

Ultimately, the League of Nations became concerned with Japanese expansionism in China. It sent an investigatory mission headed by Victor Litton in response to the case, brought to the League’s attention by China. Upon the adoption of a Litton report blaming Japan for events in Manchuria, on February 24, 1933 the Japanese Delegation voted “no” to a resolution recommending that Japan withdraw its occupation troops restore Manchuria to Chinese sovereignty. The resolution was adopted 42 to 1. Yosuke Matsuoka, the head of the Japanese delegation, left the hall of the General Assembly and remarked, “We are not coming back.” This marked Japan’s withdrawal from the League.6 From that point on, Japan was isolated from the international community and sought other means of increasing its influence in Asia, as exemplified in its vision of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Isolation led Japan to turn its back to universalism and to shift to Pan-Asianism. Asianism is another DNA that Japan embraces, which surfaced most strongly during this era.

After World War II ended, Japan wanted to avoid isolation and aspired to return to the international community as a legitimate citizen. Japan shifted back to universalism and regarded international institutions, such as the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions, as a critical platform for Japan.

The Japanese people have had the DNA for both universalism and Pan-Asianism since the Meiji Restoration. Japan is geographically an Asian nation but has aspired to be accepted as one of the Western countries as a citizen. When Japan was forced to sign unequal treaties with Western countries when it opened the country after 300 years of Tokugawa seclusion, it has pursued a way to be accepted as an equal partner by Western societies. While it pursued universalism until the early 20th century, Japan turned to Pan-Asianism when it was isolated by the Western powers. Its DNA for universalism was expressed again when Japan sought to return

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to the international community after the end of World War II. In its diplomacy, Japan has tried to reconcile the two DNA. This double DNA perspective also helps explain Japanese engagement in multilateralism in the past 70 years.\(^7\)

**Applying for membership in the United Nations**

Thus, on June 16, 1952, immediately after the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Foreign Minister Katsuo Okazaki sent a letter of application for membership to UN Secretary General Trygve Lie and stated, “The Government of Japan hereby accepts the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations, and undertakes to honor them, by all means at its disposal from the day when Japan becomes a member of the United Nations.”\(^8\) The application to the United Nations, however, was rejected by one of the five permanent members (P5), namely the Soviet Union. Japan’s application was denied three times due to the fact that diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Japan had not resumed because the Soviet Union did not sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Another reason for the Soviet denial of Japanese membership was the Cold War divide between the Soviet Union and the United States, during which both wanted to prevent the other’s sphere of influence from expanding by adding new members. Finally, after the arrival of the Khrushchev administration and the proposals to admit new members from both sides of the Cold War divide, Japan was accepted as the 80\(^{th}\) member of the United Nations on December 18, 1956.

**Japan’s UN-centered diplomacy**

Following Japan’s accession, Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi stated in a February 4, 1957 speech to the Japanese Diet that the basis of Japan’s postwar diplomacy would be an attempt to further world peace and prosperity. Kishi outlined the three pillars of the country’s postwar foreign policy: (1) centering its foreign policy around the United Nations, (2) cooperating with the free, democratic nations of the Western alliance, and (3) identifying closely with Asian nations. The second pillar has subsequently been realized and maintained particularly through cooperation with the United States based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, as well as reflected in Japan’s first National Security Strategy (NSS) released in December 2013. The strategy describes the relations as follows under the section on “Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance”:

For more than 60 years, the Japan-U.S. Alliance, with the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements at its core, has played an indispensable role for peace and security in Japan as well as peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. In recent years, the Alliance has also played a more critical role for peace, stability, and prosperity in the international community. The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan’s security.\(^9\)

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\(^7\) I thank Dr. Michael Green for this insightful framing.


Also revealed in the strategy is the emphasis in recent decades on cooperation with other like-minded countries and regional organizations, including the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, and their regional organizations, namely the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).10

Similarly, the third pillar—cooperation with Asia—has been maintained and implemented up until now in terms of Japan’s relations with Asian countries and ASEAN. The National Security Strategy names the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia, India, and China as other partners with which Japan can collaborate.11

The first pillar—UN-centered diplomacy—however, was withdrawn one year after its enunciation due to the ineffective functioning of the United Nations. While UN-centered diplomacy appeared in the beginning section of the 1958 Diplomatic Bluebook, the phrase was pushed to the latter section and subsequently disappeared from the annual Bluebook. This was in response to criticism that the United Nations, and particularly the UN Security Council (UNSC), was paralyzed by the Cold War and could not hammer out policies for peace and security. There was no UN policy on which to center Japanese diplomacy. The phrase “UN-centered diplomacy,” however, was occasionally used by prime ministers and foreign ministers in speeches to the Diet and the UN General Assembly.

Another element that bothers Japan in the United Nations is the former enemy clause that still remains in the UN Charter pertaining to Articles 53, 77 and 107. The Charter reads, “Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory to the present Charter.” This means member states can take any action without abiding by the Charter to former enemies including Japan. Japan has long asked for the deletion of these former enemy clauses from the Charter. In 1995 the Special Committee on the Charter of the UN and the Strength of the Role of Organization recommended deleting the former enemy clause, and the General Assembly adopted a resolution to delete the clauses when the Charter is next amended. Despite the resolution, the former enemy clause has yet to be deleted because the Charter has not been amended since the 1995 resolution.

Despite these misgivings, Japan has remained a loyal supporter of the United Nations and a contributor in key areas, such as economic issues. Japan did not make contributions on security due to its constitutional constraint in sending troops overseas, even though Foreign Minister Okazaki said that Japan would undertake its responsibility as a member by using “all means at its disposal.” Since the day the letter was prepared, there has been an active debate within on what “all means at its disposal” includes.12 The debate still continues in the context of the new Japanese peace and security law in terms of how far Japan can contribute to UN collective security measures.

10 Ibid., 61-62.
11 Ibid., 60-61.
12 Regarding the details of the domestic debate on “all means at its disposal,” see Fukushima, Japanese Foreign Policy, 55-59.
Japan’s contribution to United Nations

Japan has certainly contributed financially to the organization. As Figure 1 shows, its assessed contribution exceeded 10 percent in 1983, and peaked at 20.57 percent in 2000. From 2013 to 2015, the Japanese contribution was 10.83 percent, making it the second largest contributor after the United States, ahead of the other P5 members. In the assessments for 2016 to 2018, Japan’s contribution declines to 9.08 percent while China’s contribution is 7.92 percent, rising from 5.15 percent in the preceding period. As Figure 2 shows, Japan remains the second largest contributor; meanwhile China has surpassed Germany and France.

However in terms of peacekeeping operations (PKO) assessed contribution, after long being the second largest contributor after the United States, Japan declined to third in 2016 while China has surged from the sixth in preceding years to the second largest contributor after the United States, surpassing France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. What kind of impact this change will bear on Japan’s position in the United Nations or for that matter on China’s remains to be seen.

Figure 1: Japan’s Assessed Contribution to the United Nations (1997-2018)

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Japan’s contribution to the United Nations was not only financial. Japan made strenuous efforts to reform the administration of the United Nations when the United States, in particular the Congress, was critical of UN inefficiency and ineffectiveness and incurred arrears in its annual dues payment. The United States was instrumental in creating the organization and was very supportive. However, when the United States found that it could not always achieve its national interests in the United Nations, it was disappointed. Thus the relations between the United States and the United Nations are described as love-hate cycle. Relations were very sour under the Reagan administration. The United States was disappointed with the inefficiency of the organization as well as the voting results at the General Assembly, which often ran counter to U.S. interests. Then UN ambassador Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, in her testimony in 1984 before the Senate, pointed out that the United States’ position in the United Nations is disadvantaged by the great number of small countries that often vote against the United States, thereby allowing the Soviet Union to take advantage of the situation. The administration and Congress were frustrated that the United Nations had proven to be so ineffective in achieving U.S. foreign policy interests.\textsuperscript{14} Expressing its discontent, the United States incurred chronic arrears by not paying its annual UN contribution.

Witnessing these relations between the United States and the UN, then Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe—Shinzo Abe’s father—proposed to establish a Wiseman’s Group at the United Nations to redress inefficient administration of the organization in his speech to the 40\textsuperscript{th} General Assembly. The Japanese government took the initiative to create what was later called the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to recommend the reform of the UN budget administration. Japan brought Canada, Australia, and 12 other countries to co-host the resolution.

This was approved by the General Assembly, and the Group was launched as the advisory organ to the Secretary-General, submitting their recommendation in August 1986. Since the recommendations were put into practice, this opened a path for the United States to resume its payment of arrears. This was a case in which a Japanese initiative to reform the United Nations rescued the relations between institution and the United States.15

Furthermore, in the 1990s, Japan started to send the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) on UN peacekeeping operations. This was in response to the call for Japan to make physical contributions in addition to financial ones. This call was most prominent at the time of the 1990-1991 Gulf War.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the UN Security Council, freed from its Cold War paralysis, swiftly adopted resolutions demanding that Iraq withdraw immediately and threatening the use of force if Iraq did not comply with UN Security Council resolutions. Coalition forces under U.S. leadership were sent to Saudi Arabia and conducted an extended air offensive against Iraq as part of Operation Desert Storm.

Meanwhile, shortly after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, President George H. W. Bush asked Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu to dispatch minesweepers and oil supply ships. Nevertheless, Japan had to decline the request due to constitutional constraints against sending JSDF units into combat zones. The following month, at a Japan-U.S. summit meeting in New York, President Bush told Prime Minister Kaifu, “if the Japanese Self-Defense Forces contribute to the coalition forces in the Persian Gulf, not by taking part in the combat but by providing logistical support, transportation, and medical care, troop-contributing countries would appreciate Japan’s contribution.”16 Aware of Japan’s constitutional constraints, the United States asked for cooperation that would not involve the use of force by Japan overseas. Still, due to domestic opposition to sending even civilians on such activities, and also due to the unwillingness of the civilians themselves, the Japanese government could not comply with the request.

Thus, Japan made financial contributions to coalition forces, going so far as to urge the Japanese people to accept an emergency tax increase. Although Japan’s initial funding was criticized as being too small, Japan’s contribution ultimately totaled approximately $13 billion. However, Japan did not receive gratitude for its financial contribution, not even from Kuwait. Kuwait placed a full-page advertisement in both the New York Times and the Washington Post on March 11, 1991, thanking countries that helped Kuwait during the Gulf Crisis, but Japan was conspicuously omitted. Moreover, the U.S. government and Congress criticized that “Japan imports 70 percent of its crude oil from overseas, 12 percent of which comes from Kuwait and Iraq. Why do we have to shed blood while another country concentrates on its own economic interests and takes no responsibility in the maintenance of international order.”17 The Japanese contribution to Operation Desert Storm was thus dismissed as “checkbook diplomacy.”

15 Fukushima, Japanese Foreign Policy, 31-32.
16 Ibid., 66-67.
As a matter of fact, the Kaifu government sought to pass a new law enabling dispatch of the JSDF for logistical support of UN sanctioned operations in the Gulf. However, the legal argument about the exercise of collective self-defense overshadowed the Diet debate and the bill was subsequently withdrawn. However the lesson was learned. In June 1991, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) organized ‘a Special Committee on Japan’s Role in International Society,’ which came to be known as an Ozawa Committee taking the name of the chair who was the Secretary General of LDP. In the report published in February 1992, the Ozawa Committee recommended that when a UN-sanctioned coalition force is established pursuant to UN Charter Articles 42 and 43, under the current Japanese constitution Japan could provide cooperation to such a force up to and including a dispatch of the JSDF. The report categorically stated, however, that the use of force by multinational forces based on the UNSC resolution is beyond the Japanese constitution. Thus Japanese’s involvement in multinational forces should be limited to monetary and logistical cooperation. However, the report recommended that Japan can and should fully participate in UN peacekeeping operations. This led to a thinking that Japan could engage in UN operations so long as it is peacekeeping operations.\textsuperscript{18}

Thus, Japan in 1992 decided to introduce an enabling law to dispatch JSDF troops. This legislation is known as the Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (also known as the PKO Law). Japan has since dispatched the JSDF to UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Timor Leste, the Golan Heights, and elsewhere. Japanese contribution to UN peacekeeping operations was further endorsed by the Advisory Group on Defense issues headed by Hirotaro Higuchi, Chairman of the Board of Asahi Breweries Ltd. This was a non-statutory advisory group for the prime minister that offered input to the new National Defense Program Outline announced in 1995. The Higuchi Commission recommended in its 1994 report titled \textit{The Modality of Security and Defense Capability of Japan: The Outlook for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century} that “one of the major pillars of Japan’s security policy is to contribute positively to strengthening the UN functions of international peace, including further improvement of peacekeeping operations. The report further emphasized that “it is important to consider it a major duty of the JSDF, along with the primary duty of national defense, to participate as positively as possible in various forms of multilateral cooperation that are conducted within the framework of the United Nations for the purpose of international security including peacekeeping operations.”\textsuperscript{19}

As of March 2016, approximately 400 JSDF personnel from an engineering unit are currently in South Sudan as a part of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Japan is assisting South Sudan peace building through engineering work to repair and enhance infrastructure. Japan has been collaborating with Australian forces in conducting peace building tasks, which represents a new form of cooperation between like-minded countries in a third country. Due to the political disorder in South Sudan, the mandate of UNMISS has been reprioritized as of 2014. The Mission prioritizes the protection of civilians, monitoring of human rights, and support of implementation activities of cessation of hostilities environment. Thus, the

\textsuperscript{18} Fukushima, \textit{Japanese Foreign Policy}, 76.

JSDF provides assistance to internally displaced persons and contributes to the protection of civilians activities through road and site preparations.20

Japan’s contributions to UNPKO have long been constrained by its legal interpretation of the exercise of collective self-defense and collective security. The 1992 PKO Law has certainly changed the environment and allowed Japan to dispatch its peacekeepers. Nevertheless, the use of weapons by the JSDF had been limited to the protection of the lives of JSDF peacekeepers under the instruction of senior officers. Then in 2001 the law was further amended to enable JSDF peacekeepers to use weapons to protect individuals who have come under their control. As shown in Figure 3, the new law for peace and security which came into force in March 2016 enables the JSDF to adopt of rules of engagement (ROEs) for use of weapons that align with current UN standards. The Law also enables the JSDF to escort and protect individuals and troops engaged in the same mission upon request.

Figure 3: Matrix of the Legislation for Peace and Security21

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Japan was also instrumental in establishing and developing the UN Peace building Commission (PBC). The PBC was established to promote a more coordinated, coherent, and integrated approach to post-conflict peace building and recovery, and was the result of UN reform around the United Nations’ 60th anniversary. Japan was a founding member of the PBC in 2005 and served as a chair from June 2007 to January 2009. Japan also assumed the chairmanship of the PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned in 2011. Despite the shortcomings of the Commission, Japan has strived to make it more effective in supporting peace building.

Thus, although Japan failed to realize the original meaning of UN-centered diplomacy enunciated by Prime Minister Kishi, Japan has been supporting the functions of the United Nations. This includes the core function of international peace and security in collaboration with like-minded countries, and not limited only to the United States. This case demonstrates how Japan positively contributed to global multilateralism.

**Fitting the United Nations into the current international order**

Japan wishes to engage more proactively in the global institutions, including the United Nations. This is reflected in Japan’s National Security Strategy. The strategy declares that Japan will play an active role in the peace and stability of the international community as a “Proactive Contributor to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation and stresses “strengthening diplomacy at the United Nations.” The strategy specifically expressed Japan’s intention to:

…further engage in active efforts by the [United Nations] for the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security. Moreover Japan will actively contribute to diverse UN-led efforts including UN peacekeeping cooperation (PKO) and collective security measures; diplomatic efforts such as preventive diplomacy and mediation; seamless assistance efforts from the phase of post-conflict emergency humanitarian relief to recovery and reconstruction, as well as assistance through the UN Peace Building Commission.22

In this context, Japan regards the UN Security Council as the core UN organ of a collective security system for maintaining international peace and security. The strategy also called for its reform.23 The Security Council was reformed once in 1965, when non-permanent seats were increased from 6 to 10, as shown in Table 1. This was in response to the increase in the number of member states due to decolonization. Although the number of member states grew due to the continuation of decolonization and the end of the Cold War, the core composition of the Security Council has been maintained since then, making the Council less representative than it was when the organization was founded.

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23 Ibid., 62-63.
Table 1: Ratio between Members of the United Nations and the Security Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UN Members</th>
<th>Security Council</th>
<th>Permanent Members</th>
<th>Non-permanent Members</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1:8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1:13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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While Japan has expressed its interest in obtaining a permanent seat on the Security Council, it will not become a reality unless the UN General Assembly approves changes in the composition of the Council and the revision of the Charter, as Article 23 stipulates the specific names of the permanent members.

Since the developing member states have complained that the UN Security Council does not represent the interests of the UN general membership equitably, they have tabled many ideas for Security Council reform over the years. They argued that the United Nations, in its current structure, is a relic of World War II, which needs to be remodeled to suit the post-Cold War world.

In 1992, during the 47th session of the General Assembly, India and other non-aligned countries took the initiative to submit a resolution on Security Council reform. This resolution was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly and led to a questionnaire survey by the Secretary General that resulted in the establishment of an open-ended Working Group on the Questions of Equitable Representation and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council in 1993. The working group was established by the General Assembly to debate reform but found it very difficult to create consensus.

In the first half of 1997, Security Council reform began to gain momentum. On March 20, 1997, Malaysian ambassador Razali Ismail, president of the General Assembly and a chairman of the Working Group, presented a paper synthesizing the majority view regarding expansion of the Security Council and proposed to increase Council membership from 15 to 24 by adding five permanent members (one each from the developing states of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, and two from the industrialized states, generally recognized as Germany and Japan) and four non-permanent members (one each from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean). Razali’s proposal, however, failed to secure enough majority.

While the momentum for Security Council reform seemed stalled, four member states, namely Japan, Germany, India, and Brazil (the so-called G4), in 2005 started their campaign to be permanent members. Their draft resolution failed at the last minute when the African nations could not come to a consensus on supporting the draft resolution. Meanwhile the United States expressed its support for a permanent seat for its ally Japan, but was passive in supporting the G4

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24 Information based on the website of the United Nations.
campaign. U.S. ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton often said, “Don’t try to fix it when it isn’t broken.”

For the period from 2016 to 2018, Japan sits as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the 11th time. Japan explores ways to contribute to international peace through the United Nations such as peace keeping and peace building. It also runs a new G4 campaign to adjust the makeup of the UNSC to make it fit better with current size of the organization. This time around, it asks to create a new category of semi-permanent seats which would allow them to stay on the UNSC for longer than the current two years of non-permanent members and be elected when the term expires without waiting for another two years, though these seats would not enjoy a veto. This would make SC more representative and viable. One experienced Japanese ambassador posted to the United Nations, Kenzo Oshima, uses the analogy of adding business class to an airplane that has only first class and economy class today. He asks whether Japan can fly business class.

### The G7 Summit as an important venue for Japan

Another illustration of Japan’s participation in a global institution has been in the global economy, namely the G7 Summit meetings. Since its first meeting in 1975 at Chateau Rambouillet in France, Japan has been a founding and loyal participant in G7 Summits and has explored ways to contribute to the G7 agenda. The G7 was very significant to Japan because it was the only summit-level meeting that Japan participated in, unlike other members who had the NATO Summit, European Council Summit, and other occasions for leaders to meet. Since the G7 was originally a meeting on economic issues, Japan did not have any constitutional constraints in contributing. Thus, the value of the G7 was extremely high for Japan.

Then, in 1997, the G7 Summit expanded to G8 due to the initiative of President Bill Clinton and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, which was realized in the Birmingham Summit of 1998. President Clinton’s motive was to encourage Boris Yeltsin to promote economic reform and to maintain a neutral position on the expansion of NATO. With this expansion, the G7 Summit lost some of its significance and momentum in the eyes of Japanese. Certainly there were voices in favoring of enlarging the membership of the summit; France even invited African countries to the Evian Summit. However, African countries were dissatisfied because their summit was a side event, which subsequently led to the creation of the G20. Enlargement diluted the ability of the G7 to show solidarity and to act on a common agenda. Gradually the G8 Summit was positioned as just another summit meeting. Some criticized the G8 Summit for becoming a mere talk shop. On the other hand, others criticized its lack of representativeness as the combined gross domestic product of the G7 declined to one third of global GDP. The G20, which includes emerging countries like China, India, and Brazil, has 85 percent of global GDP.

The G7 seems to have regained its momentum when it was transformed back into the original G7 due to the Russian seizure of Crimea and invasion of Ukraine. In 2015, Chancellor

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26 Ibid., 4-5.
Angela Merkel noted, “the G7 cannot meet these challenges alone; we will need many other partners. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the G7 can be, indeed must be, the driving force for a world worth living in, in the long term… That is the value-added that can be expected from G7 summits. And that is the standard against which we should measure our actions.”  

Despite all the criticisms about the relevance and power of the G7 Summit, it is an important institution for Japan to be part of “a like-minded coalition of market democracies dedicated to the international rule of law.”

On global trade, Japan has supported the Uruguay Round of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, serving in the Quadrilateral Trade Ministers Meeting along with the United States, European Union, and Canada. The Quad was instrumental in leading the negotiations. However, in the Doha Round agriculture was the main challenge, meaning that Japan, which has a strong agricultural lobby, could not lead, and the Quad was disbanded. Japanese agricultural lobby compromised in the Uruguay Round and was not ready for another major compromise for opening of the Japanese agricultural market.

These are a few examples that demonstrate Japan’s record of participation in global institutions. Though it faces legal constraints, which led to criticisms of Japan’s contributions to multilateralism, Japan has made its efforts in building and developing global institutions. With the changes mentioned above and in geopolitics, Japan has an opportunity to engage more proactively in these international institutions, if it so wishes. Japan is now turning into a proactive contributor to international order, which allows Japanese DNA for universalism to work.

**Leading regional cooperation “from behind”**

Now turning to the regional level, how has Japan promoted its association with the Asia-Pacific region (the third pillar of Japanese diplomacy mentioned in the previous section) in the past 70 years? While the Asia-Pacific could not launch regionalism until the 1980s—except in track two or three processes—it embraced mega-regionalism with an Asia-Pacific framework in the 1990s, including through Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Then, from the end of the 1990s to the 2000s, East Asian institutions such as ASEAN+3 and the East Asia Summit (EAS) emerged. This created competition between the geographic footprint of the Asia-Pacific and East Asia. However, from the late 2000s onward, the tide has flowed back toward the Asia-Pacific. The EAS now includes the United States, as does the recently concluded Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), but East Asian groupings have not faded away. Rather, these institutions coexist, offering a multi-layered architecture for regional cooperation.

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28 Ibid.
This flourishing of the alphabet soup of institutions represents a sea change in the region, which had been characterized by a web of bilateral ties in the post-World War II period. All military alliances are bilateral, as are Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and regional economic mechanisms did not emerge in the first three decades except the sub-regional Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Some of the many institutions launched are shown in Figure 4, published in a 2016 CSIS report.

**Figure 4: Regional Architectures in the Asia-Pacific**

Taking initiative in launching PBEC and PECC

Soon after World War II, Japan engaged the region, most notably Southeast Asia, through the provision of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to assist economic development. This was

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reflected in Japan’s relations with ASEAN. Successive prime ministers paid official visits to the region and made speeches to enhance relations, most notable among which were the heart-to-heart relations of Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, the human security assistance provided by Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi after the region was hit hard by the 1997 financial crisis, and the five new principles for Japanese diplomacy toward Asia by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2013.\footnote{Shinzo Abe, “The Bounty of the Open Seas: Five New Principles for Japanese Diplomacy” (press release, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, January 18, 2013). The speech was scheduled to be delivered in Jakarta. Prime Minister Abe did not actually deliver his speech because he had to cut his schedule short and return to Japan to deal with the Algerian hostage crisis. The full text was subsequently posted. The Prime Minister has referred to his principles later on at numerous occasions. In the speech the prime minister “wholeheartedly welcomed the American rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region.”} Prime Minister Abe mentioned that Japan’s relations with ASEAN form “a supreme vital linchpin” for Japan’s diplomatic strategy during his visit to Jakarta in January 2013.\footnote{Takaishi Shiraishi, “Abe’s Visit to Southeast Asia and Japan’s Five New Diplomatic Principles,” Nippon.com, January 30, 2015, available at http://www.nippon.com/en/editor/f00016/, accessed February 22, 2016.}

Even in the earlier days after the end of World War II, Japanese business leaders took the initiative in launching a regional grouping of Pacific Rim countries. Japan was instrumental in launching the Pacific Basin Economic Conference (PBEC) in 1968. PBEC has hosted annual plenary meetings ever since. It has been a venue for business professionals in the region to exchange views. The President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Noboru Goto, nicknamed “Mr. Pacific,” was known for his strong leadership in PBEC when he served as Chairman of the Council. Successive presidents of the Chamber have inherited his spirit and developed the institution. This institution has served as a platform for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) at the governmental level, and business leaders advise APEC before the Leaders’ Meeting every year.

Japan took yet another initiative by launching a track two dialogue with Australia called the tripartite process, including government experts in their private capacity, business leaders, and academics. In 1978, Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira created a committee to study cooperation among Pacific Rim countries, which was chaired by Dr. Saburo Okita. This group proposed the creation of a Pan-Pacific Association in its May 1980 final report, hoping to promote free trade, transfer of capital, market openness, economic and technological cooperation by developed countries, and self-help efforts by developing countries, to mitigate North-South issues. In January 1980, Prime Minister Ohira met with Prime Minister Fraser of Australia and agreed to host an international seminar on the Pan-Pacific in Australia, which was subsequently held in Canberra later that year. Scholars, business people, and government officials from Australia, the United States, New Zealand, Japan, ASEAN, South Korea, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga participated and agreed to launch the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC) to promote regional cooperation. This tripartite process was produced in response to strong reservations by ASEAN countries to establish an inter-governmental organization that could be swallowed up by the big powers in the region.\footnote{Fukushima, Japanese Foreign Policy, 168.} PECC offered another intellectual infrastructure to create a habit of dialogue in the region, which served as another platform for APEC.
In founding PECC, Japan thus took initiative not alone but with Australia to make the proposal more acceptable to regional members. This method of working with like-minded countries rather than taking initiative alone has been the *modus operandi* of Japanese leadership in promoting regional institutions. Some observe that this is due to its historical legacies and to a possible association with the pre-war Japanese “Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.” Others argue that it comes from the fact that Japan did not want to impose its leadership in light of its dominant regional economic power. This has, however, frustrated some Asian countries, which complain that Japan does not exercise its full potential leadership in the region.

**The case of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation**

Since there was no regional institution until the end of the Cold War, it was significant that the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference at the inter-governmental level was born in November 1989, the same month that the Berlin Wall came down in Europe.

In creating APEC, Japan again worked closely with Australia. The idea originally came from the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), which thought it would be beneficial for the region to have an institution to promote regional trade and investment. This view arose against the background of deepening economic interdependence and the emergence of regional institutions elsewhere, such as the single market in Europe and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

In January 1987, MITI Minister Hajime Tamura proposed to organize a Pan-Pacific Industry Ministers Meeting when he visited Australia. This proposal aimed to gather ministers in charge of industry in Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to discuss their economic situations, industrial restructuring, technologic development, and small and medium industries. MITI followed up on Minister Tamura’s proposal by creating the Asia-Pacific Trade Development Study Group within the ministry in 1988. The study group recommended that Asia-Pacific countries should promote cooperation by consensus, should pursue a gradual approach, and should maintain outward looking cooperation rather than building a fortress. This idea was conveyed to the Australian Minister of Commerce and Industry during his visit to Tokyo in September 1988. The “Asia-Pacific Trade Ministers Meeting” proposal promoted the negotiation of the Uruguay Round of negotiations and helped reduce trade barriers in the region and promote common economic interests in the region.33

MITI, instead of launching the idea itself, left the task to the initiative of Australia, which was also interested in the idea and was looking to participate in a multilateral venue, since it was excluded from the G7. Thus, during a visit to South Korea in January 1989, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke officially proposed the idea to create a consultative body working toward open regional cooperation. After the speech both the Japanese government and the Australian government visited capitals in the region to explain and to ask them to participate. Some potential members were interested in launching an institution without the United States but Japan persuaded them to include the United States. In June 1989, U.S. secretary of state James Baker mentioned in a speech in New York on Asian policy that he would also like to promote a

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mechanism for pan-Pacific economic cooperation in collaboration with Prime Minister Hawke and MITI Minister Mitsuzuka. This led to the launch of the foreign and trade ministers conference in November 1989 under the APEC name.

APEC was further fortified by President Bill Clinton’s initiative, with Australian support, to organize a leaders meeting of APEC participants in Seattle in 1993. In July 1993, President Clinton also proposed the creation of a new “Pacific Community” during a speech in San Francisco. APEC was another case of institution building in which Japan spawned an idea and asked Australia to lead while Japan remained behind the scenes but made strenuous efforts to get everyone on board.

The case of the ASEAN Regional Forum

For regional security, the creation of the ARF was a watershed. In this case, Japan proposed the creation of an institution, but it was eventually left to the management of ASEAN. Witnessing the successful evolution of APEC in the economic sphere, the impetus for a regional security framework grew gradually.

In fact, there were proposals on regional security cooperation that preceded the ARF. It was General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union who proposed a Pacific Ocean Conference (which was not accepted) along the lines of the Helsinki Conference in his Vladivostok speech of July 1980.

In July 1990, Gareth Evans, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, proposed a Conference on Security Cooperation in Asia (CSCA)—an Asian version of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)—for addressing the apparently intractable security issues that exist in Asia.34 Also in July 1990, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Joe Clark gave a speech at the Foreign Press Club in Tokyo and suggested that it was time to create an Asia-Pacific security organization.35 These proposals, however, were received coolly by ASEAN member states, if not rejected outright. ASEAN was concerned that such an organization might force them to adopt European type human rights, which were perceived as a central theme of the Helsinki Final Act. On the other hand, the United States was concerned that if the CSCA emulated the CSCE, it would possibly focus on arms control, which might in turn be dominated by the Russian proposal to reduce naval arms in the Pacific.36

In early 1990s, Japan was also reluctant to participate in the multilateral regional security framework, because it was originally proposed by the Soviet Union. It was perceived as propaganda masking a hidden agenda that aimed to drive a wedge in the Japan-U.S. security relationship. Thus, Japan also rejected the idea on the grounds that security in Europe and Asia

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35 Canada News, No. 18, September 1990.
36 Fukushima, Japanese Foreign Policy, 139-141.
were different and therefore required different mechanisms to maintain security. Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu said in July 1990 that it was too early for an Asian CSCE.\textsuperscript{37}

Although the major powers in the region rejected the creation of a regional security institution in the early 1990s, these proposals slowly influenced their mindset. Asia-Pacific governments that were initially negative on institution building gradually became more receptive to the idea of less institutionalized and less formal security cooperation in the form of a dialogue process, following in the footsteps of APEC.

The first clear change of attitudes came from the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS). ASEAN countries held a conference in Jakarta in June 1991 to discuss recommendations for the fourth ASEAN summit to be held in Singapore the following year. Directors of ISIS proposed to consider creating a multilateral security framework using the existing ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC). Mindful of these changes Japan reversed its position after Gorbachev’s visit to Tokyo in April 1991. Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama gave a speech at the ASEAN PMC in July 1991 proposing the creation of a security and political framework for dialogue within the annual ASEAN PMC in order to enhance peace and security in the region. Nakayama’s proposal was in line with the recommendations of the ASEAN-ISIS. However, the ASEAN countries did not receive this proposal warmly. The Nakayama proposal was too early as ASEAN-ISIS recommendations were intended for the January 1992 ASEAN Singapore summit. Also, Foreign Minister Nakayama’s proposal was tabled too abruptly without building sufficient support in advance from the United States and ASEAN. Another explanation for its rejection was that the initiative should not have come from a large power in the Asia-Pacific. It would have been more palatable if it had come from one of the smaller regional powers.\textsuperscript{38}

Two years later in July 1993, ASEAN PMC in Singapore did agree to create the ARF along the lines that Nakayama proposed. By this time the United States had shifted its position in regard to a multilateral security dialogue. This shift was reflected in James Baker’s comment, “Asian security increasingly is derived from a flexible, \textit{ad hoc} set of political and defense interactions. Multilateral approaches to security are emerging.”\textsuperscript{39} Since then, the ARF has embraced members from the Asia-Pacific and has functioned as a framework for confidence building measures.

\textit{Shifting to East Asian cooperation}

While the institutional framework of the Asia-Pacific—so called mega regionalism—flourished in the 1990s, it started to stall after a decade. Both APEC and the ARF were perceived as not achieving tangible results. Japan, which had been promoting Asia-Pacific institutions since the


\textsuperscript{38} Fukushi, \textit{Japanese Foreign Policy}, 143-144.

1960s, reduced its efforts due to the domestic economic recession of the 1990s. Other members also lost their high hopes. Some labeled APEC and ARF “talk shops.”

The region shifted its focus from the Asia-Pacific to East Asia. This change was triggered by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad’s proposal to create the East Asia Economic Group (EAEG) in December 1990. His idea was not accepted by ASEAN member states, except for Singapore. Watching the negative reactions in the region, the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in October 1991 renamed the proposal the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC), which was an ASEAN way to say no politely to Malaysia. The idea was shelved.

However, the idea started to simmer in the minds of countries in East Asia and was realized in a different format through initiatives by ASEAN, first by Singapore and then by Malaysia. In October 1994, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore visited France and proposed the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). This led to a first meeting of ASEM in March 1996. In preparing for this meeting, while Europe decided to make EU member states participants, it was decided that “Asia,” lacking a comparable regional institution, would include Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea, in addition to ASEAN. This happened to include exactly the same members as the earlier EAEG proposal.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Mahathir proposed to invite Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea to an informal ASEAN Summit in 1997, which was intended to be a one-time event. However, due to the unexpected Asian monetary crisis in the summer of 1997, this group decided to meet annually, and would be called ASEAN+3.

At the time of the financial crisis, Thailand, which was hard-hit, asked for International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance. However, the IMF did not offer major assistance, nor did the United States, to Thailand’s disappointment. Instead, Japan and other Asian countries and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) came to Thailand’s aid.

Witnessing the turn of events after the crisis, the Japanese Ministry of Finance proposed the creation of an Asian Monetary Fund (AMF) to assist countries hit by the crisis and to prepare for future crises. However, the United States opposed the AMF because the draft proposal was not clear in terms of AMF’s relations with IMF, and because the United States was not included as a member. The United States was also concerned about possible moral hazard problems if Asia created its own financial institution, undermining the Washington consensus. On the other hand, ASEAN wholeheartedly endorsed the AMF. When the IMF/World Bank annual meeting was held in Hong Kong, the United States expressed its opposition very strongly. Australia joined the United States in opposing the AMF. China was also not forthcoming. As a result, the AMF failed.

Japan then offered a new Miyazawa plan of $30 billion to assist regional states. Furthermore, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi introduced the concept of human security to assist countries hit by the Asian financial crisis and announced a new special yen loan of $60 billion in 1998 at the time of the second ASEAN+3 summit in Vietnam.

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The Asian financial crisis reminded members at the ASEAN+3 Summit meeting of the need to have their own grouping to respond to crises as well as to prevent crises from recurring. They agreed to have a regular annual summit meeting as ASEAN+3. Meanwhile, the United States, which strongly opposed the EAEG, did not oppose ASEAN+3. The United States did not see ASEAN+3 as undermining U.S. interests.41

After the ASEAN+3 summit had been regularized and fortified by ministerial meetings (and after the Chiang Mai initiative was established to prepare for crises), an effort to expand and to strengthen the institution started. The initiative this time around was taken by the Republic of Korea. Korean president Kim Dae-Jung proposed to establish an East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) of eminent persons to consider the future of ASEAN+3, including the possible creation of an East Asia Community. ASEAN+3 leaders accepted the proposal, and the group announced its recommendations in 2001. The EAVG report proposed a community for prosperity and sustainable development as well as stability and peace in East Asia. The group recommended including not only the economy but also politics, security, and social issues. It also called for embracing a common identity.42

Although the intergovernmental group discussed the report, community building in East Asia was perceived as something in the distant future. Thus, when Malaysia proposed to host a first East Asia Summit, opinions were divided about whether such a summit should be organized. Some were in favor while others were either reluctant or opposed. Witnessing the confusion over EAS and the concept of an East Asia community, the Japanese government took its own initiative to sort out the issues by preparing an issue paper on the East Asia community. The paper was submitted to ASEAN+3 Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM) and the ASEAN+3 SOM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in the summer of 2004. Although this was titled an issue paper, it included the Japanese vision of an East Asia community, regional cooperation, and an East Asia summit. The paper noted the momentum for East Asian cooperation since the 1997 Asian financial crisis, and the growing needs for regional cooperation that included both economic and security issues. The issue paper also recognized the key role played by ASEAN in East Asian cooperation. As an approach for East Asian regional cooperation, the paper recommended functional cooperation, future architecture building, and development of a community identity. As for the membership of EAS, it suggested inclusion of Australia, New Zealand, and India.43 Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi had already proposed this expansion of the framework of East Asia in his speeches in Singapore on January 14, 2002, which proposed an Initiative for Development (IDEA)44 and Australia on May 1 2002,45 which expanded the community to include Australia and New Zealand. In these speeches, Japanese prime minister made an unequivocal call for democratic

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41 Ibid., 130.
norms, departing from the emphasis on Asian values struck in the region. Prime Minister Koizumi emphasized regional cooperation so much that some were concerned whether he intended to substitute international cooperation with regionalism. Singapore also suggested including India, Australia, and New Zealand to balance the influence of China and Japan. Indonesia agreed. However, Malaysia and China insisted on keeping participants to ASEAN+3 members only.

Furthermore, Japan proposed to include the United States as an observer. Some ASEAN members and China did not agree to this proposal. ASEAN, instead of negating the proposal, gave a condition that participants to EAS must sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which the United States was reluctant to sign. ASEAN thus strove to take a leading role in regionalism. Meanwhile, the United States expressed that it would not participate in EAS as an observer.

The first EAS meeting was held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur with ASEAN, Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, India, Australia, and New Zealand. The distinction between ASEAN+3 and EAS was an issue. While the EAVG recommended developing ASEAN+3 into the EAS in order to create an East Asian community, Malaysia proposed to host EAS alongside ASEAN+3. This confused the situation. China wanted to promote ASEAN+3 so that it could keep its strong influence in a smaller group, while Japan was promoting EAS as a wider group including other like-minded countries and to discuss a whole array of issues. In the respective declarations of the summit meetings, the functions of the two were described as the following: the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit stated that EAS should play “a significant role in building a community in the region,” and also positioned EAS as “a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in East Asia.” On the other hand, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the ASEAN+3 Summit stated that the “process will continue to be the main vehicle in achieving the maintenance of regional and global peace and security, prosperity, and progress.” It also acknowledged that the ASEAN+3 process contributed to community building in East Asia. The difference between “significant role” and “the main vehicle” was left open to interpretation.

These Japanese institution-building efforts in East Asia stemmed from the observation of Chinese aggressive diplomacy in liaising with ASEAN. This was demonstrated by their swift conclusion of an FTA in November 2001 and China’s efforts to be a leader in East Asia and beyond, as demonstrated by the launch of the Shanghai Five in 1997 and by its extension into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001. Japan, mindful of China’s emergence on multilateralism, sought to take its own initiative, as exemplified in its issue paper for EAS. Due to its two decades long recession, Japan was gradually losing economic weight in the region and was making efforts to remain on the radar screen of other countries. Japan was concerned that it might be marginalized in the geopolitical game. These efforts, however, led to a perceived


competition between Japan and China in regionalism, as illustrated by the aforementioned tug-of-war between ASEAN+3 and EAS. Perceiving a competition between China and Japan in regional institution building, ASEAN complained that it did not want to be placed in a position to choose one of the two proposals.

ASEAN also did not want to lose its leadership in Asian regionalism and started to appeal to centrality in regionalism. ASEAN used the phrase “ASEAN in a driver’s seat of regionalism” to describe its leadership role, but switched it to “ASEAN centrality” or an “ASEAN-centered approach.” This was demonstrated in their decision to host the East Asia Summit only in ASEAN countries and to not allow other members to host the summit. This was also included in the declaration of EAS, denying the wishes of China to host the second EAS. ASEAN created the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) in 2006, and later the ADMM Plus, which includes defense ministers of ASEAN as well as Japan, China, New Zealand, the United States, Australia, the Republic of Korea, and India. This includes Asia-Pacific members in addition to East Asian ones. This is the only defense ministers’ meeting in the region at the intergovernmental level to exchange views on security issues and to explore security cooperation. Its joint exercises on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) have given more substance to the institution, beyond the ARF. While the ARF gathers foreign ministers, ADMM plus gathers defense ministers and is the only venue for defense ministers in the region to participate, except the track two Shangri-La Dialogue.

Japan cherishes its relations with ASEAN. This was clearly demonstrated in the importance the joint statement commemorating the 40th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN relations placed on ASEAN’s centrality in regional architecture on December 14, 2013, expressing the commitment to work “hand in hand.” Japan opted to allow ASEAN to take the lead in institution building in the region. It was more acceptable for smaller countries. Japan felt comfortable in generating ideas and leading from behind rather than running upfront. Otherwise it worked with like-minded countries in the region to lead institution building.

**Back to the regional framework of the Asia-Pacific?**

One should also note that the United States is back in Asia with its own rebalancing or pivot to Asia policy. The Asian side decided to enlarge the scope of East Asia and to include the United States in the EAS in 2011. The United States also participates in ADMM Plus. These changes gave a facelift to the institutional footprint of the Asia-Pacific. This was further fortified by the United States participating in and leading the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. Japan did not join in its initial phase but has participated since 2013 and played an important leading role, both working with and balancing the United States. With the signing of TPP in February 2016, a new regional architecture may unfold. TPP does not include all regional states at this point, but members are required to be from Asia-Pacific countries. Some ASEAN members are not participants. It seems the framework of regional cooperation evolved from Pan Pacific, Asia-Pacific, East Asia, and now back to Asia-Pacific. However this time around, various institutions

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with differing frameworks coexist without losing relevance and also are further fortified with smaller footprints of trilaterals or quadrilaterals. Japan is a member of almost all of these regional institutions and is trying to let each to have their respective roles and to lead and to participate for peace, security, and prosperity of the region. Japan certainly has its DNA in engaging in Asia and explores its future course of navigating these multi-layered architectures in addition to its traditional bilateral diplomacy. However, at the regional level the scene seems to be complicated with leaders with a whole spectrum of issues to be dealt with. Since it is so complicated with competing leaders and agendas, some question whether the current regionalism can sustain its utility.

**Multilateralism recalibrated**

*Liberal institutionalism to recede?*

As an international order undergoes changes, it is asked whether liberal institutionalism can sustain itself or is at the verge of extinction. G. John Ikenberry, however, observes that the system of liberal institutionalism still holds sway and argues that “states continue to have deep—and indeed growing—interests in an international order that is open and at least loosely rule-based, i.e., a system of multilateral governance.” He analyzes that the future of multilateralism hinges on “the ability of states rising and falling, advanced and developing, Northern and Southern in redistributing authority, negotiate new bargains and generate collective leadership.” He concludes by asserting that the “alternative is disorder.”

In the 21st century institutions certainly seem to matter more than ever. Simply put, due to the advent of globalization, national agendas today demand transnational cooperation more than before. There is no denying that global interdependence across the economic and security domains is deeper than ever. In addition we are witnessing an increase of trans-boundary issues such as international terrorism, pandemics, large-scale natural disasters, and climate change. These challenges cannot be effectively managed by a single country but only by transnational cooperation under an institutional framework of some sort. Instituting cooperation in face of a hazard is always difficult and it is wiser to have a framework for cooperation in place. Furthermore these threats may develop into combined hazards rather than an eruption of isolated single crises. This was amply illustrated by Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, which combined a tsunami with a nuclear meltdown. Thus, accordingly measures we need to employ in meeting these hazards must not be fragmented but be comprehensive. These challenges demand that countries do more to cooperate. This reality has given birth to the term “global governance,” which did not exist 70 years ago. The term global governance was coined when globalization surged as a phenomenon and suggests the need to use the whole spectrum of institutional tools.

In the past 70 years, the United States has been the major driving force of global governance and liberal internationalism. Will it remain a leader? The United States promoted a liberal internationalist vision of world order, democracy, capitalism, openness, the rule of law,

and human rights.\textsuperscript{50} Has it given up? It seems not. President Obama in his interview with Jeffrey Goldberg in \textit{The Atlantic} identified himself as an internationalist, among four paradigms of foreign policy including isolationism, realism, and liberal interventionism. Goldberg observes that President Obama is devoted to strengthening multilateral organizations and international norms.\textsuperscript{51} Judging from his remarks, it seems that the United States is prepared to lead in the years to come.

\textit{Multilateralism recalibrated}

Bearing in mind the geopolitical changes underway, should liberal institutionalism not to recede and remain relevant, institutions that were created at the end of World War II may need to be recalibrated. As described in the introduction, the history of liberal institutionalism dates back to the 19\textsuperscript{th} century when the Geneva and Hague conventions, or the concert of Europe were agreed upon. This was led initially by the European powers, and then subsequently by the United States in collaboration with the other advanced industrialized countries in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Over the past two centuries, the order created by liberal institutionalism has been challenged by wars and economic upheavals but has persevered. Now standing in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, it seems it is again challenged not by wars, but by changes in the distribution of power with the rise of new powers such as China, India, and Brazil. At the time of the creation of existing institutions, these countries were at the margins of the international society. Today they seem to be renegotiating their positions for more authority, weight, and voice.

Amongst emerging countries, most prominent is China, which has risen to become the second largest economic power after the United States with significant military strength as well being built up at rapid pace. As it has gained power, it has sought greater weight internationally, commensurate with its comprehensive national power. At the global level, China, for example, has sought reforms from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which have been led by Americans and Europeans since their creation. Upon strong urgings by China in the aftermath of the world financial crisis, the IMF approved reforms to the increase of voting rights of emerging countries. However, the U.S. Congress was concerned with the diluting the influence of the United States at the Bretton Woods institutions and rejected the IMF reforms. Emerging countries were disappointed. After the announcement of the creation of AIIB, however, the U.S. Congress approved the reforms in December 2015. This has revised the United States’ share of voting rights down from 16.7 percent to 16.5 percent and Chinese voting rights up to 6 percent from 3.6 percent, making it the third largest in the IMF. India’s share of voting rights also increased. The United States still retains its veto. IMF also approved the inclusion of the Chinese renminbi in the Special Drawing Right (SDR) basket in November 2015.\textsuperscript{52} Although the reforms have taken longer than China hoped, the IMF reforms were realized with enhanced positions for emerging countries.

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\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 408.
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Also at the United Nations, China’s assessed contribution has risen as shown in Figure 2. Its voice and weight may increase accordingly, although the UN votes are not weighted because of its “one country, one vote” principle. Meanwhile China has responded to UN requests for the dispatch of peacekeepers and has played its role as the permanent member of the Security Council, such as hammering out the resolution on North Korea’s test launch of missiles in March 2016. Thus at the global level, emerging powers have renegotiated their standing and influence in existing institutions but have not taken initiatives to launch new institutions that replace existing ones.

In contrast, at the regional level China has taken more assertive actions. China has taken initiatives to create new institutions and is keen to lead and expand their sphere of influence. In the early 1990s China was not involved in launching APEC nor ARF. Other countries in the region were anxious to engage China in these multilateral institutions. As described in the preceding section, China has since turned out to be more aggressive in engaging East Asian institutions. This was first manifested in their swift conclusion of the ASEAN+1 FTA ahead of others. As described in the preceding section, China favors ASEAN+3 over EAS and opposes the inclusion of security agenda in EAS because it believes it can exercise more influence with a smaller group than a wider one. China is willing to discuss economic issues in a wider group but security only among Asian members, excluding the United States.

Recently China has also taken leadership in launching new institutions where it was not content with existing institutions. As a first-tier citizen of the international community, China is no longer an object to engage but is instead leading to engage others in institutions it creates. One such illustration is the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). China has long been dissatisfied with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which was founded in 1966 by the initiative of Japan to reduce poverty in Asia through economic cooperation including loans, grants, and technical cooperation. Witnessing the creation of development banks in other regions such as the Americas, Takeshi Watanabe of Ministry of Finance organized his private study group and conceived a plan to create a development bank in Asia in 1963. It was a time when Japan hosted Olympic Games in Tokyo for the first time in Asia and its economy became the second largest in the world four years later. Although Watanabe hesitated to make the proposal himself as he wrote in his memoirs, the Japanese government eventually proposed the idea and gathered 67 member states including those advanced industrialized countries outside of the region to make the funding base more stable. Although it expected to place the headquarters in Tokyo, Manila won the seat in the election by the 18 member committee. Moreover Japan did not lead ADB alone but with the United States. The equity contribution of Japan was 15.7 percent versus 12.7 percent from the United States; respective voting rights were 12.8 percent for Japan and 12.7 percent for the United States. Since its founding, the presidents of the ADB have all been Japanese. China was not satisfied and tried to send Chinese after Kuroda left office to become President of Bank of Japan but failed. Other members are not necessarily satisfied with consecutive Japanese presidents either but did not object, as the Japanese contribution to the Asia Development Fund has been significant. China has attempted to have more influence including voting rights at the ADB but has not seen much success.

Thus came Xi Jinping’s proposal to create the AIIB, which was inaugurated in January 2016 with its headquarter in Beijing. The AIIB is headed by a Chinese official with 56 other members, including European members. Since there are several trillion dollars of demand for
infrastructure development fund in Asia, a China-led AIIB is very enticing for countries in Asia. China emphasizes connectivity in its lending policy, reflecting its recent foreign policy to engage surrounding countries. Meanwhile the United States and Japan decided not to join the AIIB on the ground that it lacks transparency in its management. Nevertheless the United States has decided to send an American to AIIB management. Takehiko Nakao, president of the ADB expressed his intention to co-finance with AIIB and promote cooperation with ADB field offices. Prime Minister Abe expressed that Japan would invest $110 billion over the following five years to finance infrastructure projects in Asia to respond to such needs. Some observe that since the ADB and AIIB are redundant in their missions, there are concerns that competition between the two may loosen lending conditions on human rights, the environment, and labor protections.53

China has taken other initiatives, such as the “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR) Initiative and the Silk Road Fund to enhance connectivity in Greater Asia. As a matter of fact, Japan has taken a similar path to engage with countries in the region. With Central Asia, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced his Silk Road Diplomacy in 1997, through which Japan would strengthen its ties with these countries through ODA and other means.54 In 2005, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi followed up this initiative by launching the “Central Asia plus Japan Dialogue” which was further supported by the track two Tokyo Dialogue used since 2007 to strengthen cooperative relations with Central Asian countries. These dialogues have promoted cooperation in agriculture, border control, water resources management, distribution system, and drag control, among others.

With Central Asia, Xi Jinping in his keynote speech at the Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in May 2014 in Shanghai proposed to create a “new regional security cooperation architecture” and develop CICA into “a security dialogue and cooperation platform” for all of Asia. He proposed China’s new regional security concept, accusing U.S. military alliances woven of being outdated. His proposal was to create a regional security architecture of Asia by Asians, excluding external actors such as United States so that security in Asia should be maintained “by Asians themselves.”55

Because of these Chinese initiatives, the United States has been seen as more keen to engage in Asian multilateralism, as exemplified by its signing of TAC, its participation in EAS, and its summit meetings with ASEAN. This is reflected in the U.S. “pivot” or rebalancing to Asia and its efforts to garner support of like-minded countries in the region.56 At the regional level, one observes multi-layered architectures as shown in Figure 4. There are inclusive large institutions such as APEC and ARF, more exclusive plurilateral institutions such as the Six-Party Talks; =trilateral institutions such as Japan-China-ROK, Japan-Australia-U.S.; bilateral

53 “Chugoku shudo no AIIB to Nihon shudou no ADB wo kurabete wakarukoto,” Newsweek Nihon ban, October 23, 2015.
56 Author’s interview in March 2016.
institutions such as alliances; topic focused institutions either for economic, financial, environmental or security such as ADMM+, TPP; and comprehensive multilateralism, where for example EAS is moving forward to include both economic and security issues. In recalibrating multilateralism in the region, members ought to ask how they want to develop architectures for what purposes.

Meanwhile, there is an observation that powers are competing over institution building, rather than cooperating. On the other hand institutions once built are difficult if not impossible to kill. Having ample layers of institutions, the region may wish to devise ways to refit, reconcile, and utilize existing institutions not for immediate reciprocity but for diffused reciprocity. As an illustration, how TPP will develop hinges on the ratification process and on the willingness of non-participants to join the process. The region must also consider how it wishes to develop the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which includes ASEAN+3 members as well as Australia, New Zealand, and India. Rather than excluding certain countries, the prize would be for TPP to include countries in the wider region in order for all the economies to share a common set of rules. Another challenge is how to reconcile with other institutions proposed such as RCEP, FTAAP, and others.

Another leader or convener of regional institutions has been ASEAN. While ASEAN has sat in “the driver’s seat” to promote regionalism and now sits in the center of regional architectures shown in Figure 4, its future role lacks clarity. ASEAN despite their move towards community building suffers from a rift among member states. Over their relations with China, positions differ. Moreover, with Chinese active leadership in regionalism, ASEAN may need to devise a new way to keep their centrality. As illustrated in the making of ASEAN+3 and EAS, China and Japan have been portrayed as competing over leadership and initiatives. A region that once lamented a lack of leadership may now suffer from a competition for leadership, in terms of the inclusion or exclusion of the United States and topics to be covered (in particular security) with which framework. For the multilateralism to be recalibrated, the global theater need not be profoundly affected by emerging powers but can adapt. However, the regional theater is crowded with leaders and requires an enlightened approach with a thorough understanding of mutual interests, motives, and diffused benefits.

Conclusion

In conclusion, given such that such a recalibration is already underway, how ought Japan engage in institution building in the 21st century in cooperation with the United States and other like-minded countries? Its traditional reactive approach has allowed Japan to wait and see how the international order is shaped. However, in order to make proactive contribution in shaping the international order, Japan has to design its approach to pay its dues.

Japanese universalism vis-à-vis Pan-Asianism

In considering a way forward, one needs to go back to the question posed in the introduction of the paper, namely how Japan reconciles its two DNAs. Japan has oscillated between
universalism and Pan-Asianism since the Meiji Restoration. Yet as Inazo Nitobe, who served as an under-secretary general of the League of Nations, once put it, this may be partly because Japan has long aspired to be “a bridge over the Pacific”—a bridge between East and West. This spirit lives on in Japanese multilateral diplomacy. After World War II, Japan’s universalism DNA came to the forefront in its pursuit of regaining a legitimate seat in the international community through its engagement in the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions. Japanese Pan-Asianism DNA was not visible in the post-war decades because the region did not witness the construction of a host of regional institutions comparable to Europe. Nevertheless, Japanese Asianism DNA did work in building track two and three processes such as PBEC and PECC. As Dr. Michael J. Green in his book Japan’s Reluctant Realism observed, in the early 1990s the growing security threat from North Korea and economic recession at home led to a greater expression of the Japanese DNA for Pan-Asianism. With the rise of China, “Japan needs ties in the region to constrain China from moving in unfavorable direction and to sustain Japanese economic growth.”57 This prompted Japan to put more emphasis on Asia in making its strategy and policies as illustrated in its efforts to create APEC, ARF, and AMF. However, as APEC has become driven more by the United States and Australia as it failed to lead ARF, Japan turned to universal institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and IMF in defining Japan’s trade and financial agenda. This has placed Japan’s DNA for universalism up front over the last decade.58

Also in the 1990s, Japan’s universalism DNA can be found in its pursuit of common/universal values in its diplomacy, as depicted in the 1996 US-Japan Joint Security Declaration. The preamble of the declaration emphasizes the common values that bond the United States and Japan as allies.59 Liberal democracy became the key term in Japan’s foreign policy from 2006 and 2007. This led to the speech by then Foreign Minister Taro Aso on an “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity.”60 In his speech in 2006 under the first Abe government, Aso stated that Japan must go beyond its U.S. ally and neighbors and add a new pillar to its foreign policy, one that engages “the successfully budding democracies that line the outer rim of the Eurasian Continent from an arc.” Aso also called for Japan to work with the United States, Australia, India, the European Union (EU), and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to expand this zone of rule of law and good governance. This was Japan’s new orientation in its foreign policy to advance liberal democracy, human rights, and the rule of law from the Baltics to Southeast Asia. Although the “Arc” concept was not promoted by the successor governments of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the concept to promote liberal democracy and emphasize values in diplomacy still survives in the second Abe administration, even if the phrase is no longer used. The National Security Strategy specifically mentions that “Japan will strengthen cooperative relations with countries with which it shares universal values and strategic interests.”

57 Green, Reluctant Realism, 26, as well as based on Dr. Green’s comments to the earlier draft of this paper in March 2016.
58 Ibid., 27.
60 Taro Aso, “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan’s Expanding Diplomatic Horizons” (speech, Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, November 30, 2006).
On the other hand, the WTO, which was expected to govern international rules on trade and investment, has long failed to garner consensus in the negotiations after the Uruguay Round. Countries have set their sights on bilateral and regional FTAs or EPAs. Japan, too, has concluded EPAs with countries in Asia and beyond and has participated in the TPP for the regional FTA.

It has also been observed that the unresolved legacy of history has held back Japan from its engagement in Asia, despite the official apologies it has offered. While this historical legacy question remains, Japan has made efforts to solve history issues. As an illustration, on August 14, 2015 Prime Minister Shinzo Abe apologized by stating, “On the 70th anniversary of the end of the war, I bow my head deeply before the souls of all those who perished both at home and abroad. I express my feelings of profound grief and my eternal sincere condolences.” He expressed “deep repentance for the war” and “deep remorse and heartfelt apology” for Japan’s actions during the war and pledged to work for peace.61 On perennial problem of comfort women that has plagued relations, Japan and South Korea agreed to resolve the issue in December 2015. Japan issued a sincere apology and agreed to pay $1 billion to a fund to be created in Korea for the surviving victims. The Republic of Korea has reciprocally promised to “finally and irreversibly” end the dispute. The agreement might not have satisfied all the parties concerned, but it has allowed the two governments to move toward “future-oriented ties.” These events will not resolve the historical legacies from which the region suffers but will at least allow Japan to work for the future with countries in Asia.

Thus this time around, Japanese Pan-Asianism DNA is not receding. Rather Japan is seeking ways to contribute more in terms of regional cooperation. As mentioned in the preceding section, Japan has led and taken initiatives in promoting institutions in the Asia-Pacific with varying footprints. It is observed that “Japanese diplomacy since 2010 has sought to strengthen ASEAN’s integrity as a bulwark of regional stability, to promote political reform... [and] advance ASEAN’s own ambition to strengthen its regional role.”62 Prime Minister Abe in his second administration visited all ten ASEAN members within in his first year in office and pledged some $19 billion in aid and loans. As mentioned above, he announced his Asia policy and hosted the ten leaders of ASEAN at a December 2013 summit in Tokyo. Standing within the 21st century, as reflected in its National Security Strategy, Japan seeks both universalism and Pan-Asianism for its own national interests as well as for regional and international peace, stability, and prosperity. Japan tries to balance both DNAs in its diplomacy.

**Japan and multilateralism in the 21st century**

How will Japan reconcile the two identities and embrace its multilateralism in the years to come? The National Security Strategy describes its policy in terms of how “Japan will continue to... contribute to ensuring [the] peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community more proactively than before, as a major player in world politics and the global economy, while

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achieving its own security as well as peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.”63 The NSS describes its policy as cooperating with the United Nations and other institutions at the global level and to cooperate with individual countries as well as multilateral institutions in the Asia-Pacific. The strategy paper, acknowledging that multinational and multilayered structures contribute to the development of mutual understanding and enhancement of joint response capabilities, specifically mentions that it is important to further promote and develop these multilateral initiatives for regional stability.64 In promoting global and regional cooperation through institutions, Japan needs to join hands with its ally the United States and also with like-minded countries. The venue for the cooperation will not be limited to Asia or the Asia-Pacific but may span to Africa where we have common interest in their peace, stability, and prosperity.

Collaborating on UN Peacekeeping operations

Beyond UN Security Council reform, there is room for Japan-U.S. cooperation at the United Nations. One such example is peacekeeping/peace-building operations. While the United States has not been active in sending UN peacekeepers, this position seems to have changed. This was demonstrated at the first Leaders’ Summit on Peacekeeping at the United Nations hosted by Vice President Biden in 2014. Michael O’Hanlon observed that President Obama chose to highlight the future of United Nations peacekeeping. President Obama, who chaired the second summit in 2015, mentioned that he had issued “new presidential guidance—the first in more than 20 years—to expand our support for the UN peace operations. We’ll work to double the number of U.S. military officers serving in peacekeeping operations. We will offer logistical support; including our unrivaled network of air- and sealift… we’ll undertake engineering projects like building airfields and base camps for new missions. And we’ll step up our efforts to help build the U.N.’s capacity, from identifying state-of-the-art technology to offering training to protection against IEDs.”65

Prime Minister Abe has co-hosted the summit with the United States since 2014 and in the second summit mentioned that “Japan has enacted a series of Peace and Security legislations where International Peace Cooperation Act was revised to allow Japanese Peace Cooperation personnel to adapt to diversifying UN PKOs.” Secondly, he referred to support for the UN Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities, a pioneering effort along the lines of the triangular partnership model. Japan has contributed approximately $40 million to the UN Secretariat. Engineering personnel from East African Troop Contributing Countries and the JGSDF are working in Nairobi, Kenya, conducting a trial training on the operation and maintenance of heavy engineering equipment. Japan plans to develop this project into a full-scale training mission. He mentioned that Japan supports the U.S. African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership and seeks to develop coordination further.66 Japan is also supporting

64 Ibid.
training programs to build the capacity of peacekeepers. Japan therefore showed its commitment to the U.S. initiative of reforming and enhancing UNPKO. The engineering aspect of PKO is what Japan has been best at and has a good track record in its contribution.

Moreover the United States did not mention sending combat troops to UNPKO. If these developments imply a fundamental shift of U.S. policy on U.N. peacekeeping operations, combined with Japan’s perennial interest in its cooperation on UNPKO, this may open another area of cooperation between the two. Furthermore Japan as well as the United States provides capacity building to future peacekeepers in Asia separately. These trained Asian peacekeepers can assist in capacity building effort elsewhere including Africa. This combination can generate an amplifying effect.

**Promoting human security together**

While Japan has been promoting the concept and practice of human security since 1998, the United States has been negative on the concept, calling it a “muddled notion.” However, such ambiguity has been resolved by the adoption of UN resolution A/RES/66/290 on common understanding of the notion. The resolution states that “human security is an approach to assist member states in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people.” More specifically, the resolution explains that human security includes the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. The National Security Strategy also describes human security as in its global issues. In the 2015 Development Cooperation Charter, human security “is the guiding principle that lies at the foundation of Japan’s development cooperation.” As Akihiko Tanaka observes in his paper,

> Threats to human security, if broadly defined, appear so numerous that a simple theory of deterrence and mutual deterrence, which dominated security studies during the Cold War, would not be sufficient. Not only are threats diverse and numerous: possible measures to cope with them seemingly encompass almost all social measures. If threats to human security include sudden financial market fluctuation, earthquakes, epidemics, civil wars, and so on, measures of human security may include all of the policy tools that the entire government bureaucracy disposes of.

Noting the views by many security studies specialists who are critical of such a broad definition and argue for a narrower definition on freedom from fear, Tanaka argues that “human security cannot be reduced to a subset of traditional security studies” and suggests putting the concept in a truly interdisciplinary perspective by creating a new theoretical framework.

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The UN resolution gave the international community a common understanding of the concept, which has come to be used by development aid practitioners in the U.S.-Japan Development Dialogue. In fact, the term human security was included in the U.S.-Japan Joint Statement on “Shaping the Future of the Asia-Pacific and beyond,” announced on April 25, 2014 during President Obama’s visit to Japan. The statement reads,

The United States and Japan are committed to promoting peace, stability, and economic growth throughout the world, including in Africa. Through our recently launched senior-level U.S.-Japan Development Dialogue, we are expanding our development cooperation in these areas. Furthermore, the United States and Japan are continuing bilateral policy coordination to address other global challenges and promote our common agenda, such as women’s empowerment [and] human security.\(^70\)

If this joint statement suggests a policy change on human security by the United States, this opens another avenue for Japan and the United States to cooperate for international peace, security, and prosperity. Such cooperation can take place at the United Nations as well as in the region. Asia-Pacific countries have embraced the notion to varying degrees. The concept would allow regional states to cooperate on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peace building, and development assistance. Japan’s experience in assisting the Philippines after Typhoon Hainan along with the United States and other countries provides lessons for the future. There are also other cases in Asia and in Africa that Japan and like-minded countries can integrate their efforts into the human security framework.

**Engaging in regional institutions in the Asia-Pacific region**

Turning to the Asia-Pacific, how can Japan navigate regional institutions? The region abounds with shared concerns ranging from cyber security to refugees to terrorism (especially with the possible return of radicals from training with the Islamic State), which threaten to undermine political and physical security in the region. Combined efforts are essential. The question is how. Given emerging countries in the region, Japan’s strategy should be tailored to fit to the changing geopolitical situation and multilateralism under recalibration. Emerging powers are neither comfortable nor satisfied with institutions built when they were smaller powers. In the 1990s, a cliché in the region was that emerging countries could be encouraged to integrate into the existing order through a multilateral process of engagement. This is no longer realistic. These states ask for reform or change of the existing institutions, which were built some time ago. When their requests are not heard, they do not hesitate to create gridlock in the process, such as the Doha Round, and to create new institutions that may overlap with the existing ones. It is still not clear whether they are ultimately aiming to duplicate the existing system or to replace the system with new institutions of their own making.

Such a move may destabilize the region, forcing countries to choose. This would place smaller powers in a difficult spot in having to choose among options with uncertain

consequences. The cases of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the BRICS Bank, and the Silk Road Fund come to mind. Behind these moves are appetites to take a leading position and for expanding influence in the region.

At the same time, one should note that some of the initiatives taken by emerging countries meet Asian needs for infrastructure capital. The need is said to be 90 trillion yen, which cannot be met by bilateral ODA, the World Bank, or the ADB alone. When many countries join such an initiative, the new institution gains legitimacy and adds authority to the country that sponsored it. This in turn may reduce the authority of the existing institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank, which Japan and the United States have led.

Previously, in the case of the EAEG or the AMF, countries in Asia followed the policy of the United States and did not endorse the initiatives. This time around, in the case of AIIB, for example, the United States made overture to countries not to join. Although Japan opted not to join, many others did join. Japan should consider how it wants to act under these circumstances; its policy needs to be consistent.

Meanwhile, the region has multi-layered regional institutions with varying footprints. The task of managing these institutions is daunting. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd of Australia attempted to integrate all these architectures into a single body—the Asia-Pacific community (APc)—in 2008, but failed due to lack of support from countries in the region, except the Republic of Korea.71 This episode demonstrates how difficult it is to synthesize regional architectures. Rather than scrapping existing bodies and building new institutions, Japan has to promote institutions that can function as platforms for cooperation. This demands informed "idea leadership." In other words, if Japan wants to stay relevant, it has to seek more enlightened approach to multilateralism.

Second, in contributing to regional institutions, Japan has to join not only with like-minded countries, but to devise a way to get disagreeing countries, including emerging states, on board as well. In promoting regional cooperation for regional public goods, Japan needs to find a key common denominator with the United States and like-minded countries and yet that is still palatable to disagreeing countries. Such a phrase might be “liberal democracy” or “human security.” Such an idea may be difficult to translate into reality, but ought to be embraced sooner rather than later so that it is hijacked and used for other motives.

Third, the United States has been implementing its rebalancing to Asia. This offers further opportunity for Japan to collaborate in the region. For example, in February 2016 the United States hosted the U.S.-ASEAN Summit meeting for the first time, which ASEAN member states requested. President Obama stressed, “the United States has increased our maritime security assistance to our allies and partners in the region, improving our mutual capabilities to protect lawful commerce and to respond to humanitarian crisis.”72 All states face


imminent maritime threats in the region. This issue has to be solved for regional peace and security. Again, this requires diplomatic skill, knowledge, and innovative ideas. A more enlightened approach to multilateralism is in order.

Challenges for Japan in engaging in recalibrated multilateralism are daunting. Seeking to be a navigator and responsible rider of multilateralism, Japan ought to weave ways to collaborate with its peers both in the West and the East to provide international and regional public goods. This will certainly benefit Japan at a time of ever deepening global interdependence. The path ahead for Japan is the pursuit of enlightened approach to multilateralism.