



The Security of Japan in the 21st Century And the U.S.-Japan Alliance

The Honorable Yuriko Koike
Minister of Defense

Thursday, August 9, 2007
14:00-14:45
CSIS B1 Conference Center
Washington, DC

It is a great pleasure as well as a great honor for me to be here again and to speak in front of such an esteemed audience. CSIS is one of the most prestigious and well-known think-tanks in the world. Last time I was here as the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for National Security Affairs. Today, I am here as Minister of Defense, a post which I assumed last month.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the people of the United States regarding the earthquake that occurred in Japan last month. On the 16th of July, a major earthquake, of magnitude 6.9 on the Richter scale, hit Niigata-Chuuetsu area, which is to the north west of Tokyo, facing the Sea of Japan. There was serious damage and many casualties. 11 people died, approximately 2,000 more were injured, and 1,000 houses were destroyed. Right after the earthquake, I visited the area and viewed the destruction with my own eyes, directing our SDF units engaged in disaster relief operations. The situation was quite serious, with basic infrastructure including electricity and water temporarily shut down, which brought inconvenience and created anxiety among victims of the earthquake.

In light of this situation, the United States was kind enough to offer about 100 air conditioning units to be fitted to the facilities that accommodate those victims. Ambassador Schieffer and General Wright personally notified of those donations. Such a timely and generous offer by the United States was indeed a source of great encouragement to the people in the disaster area. People in Japan have found it quite reassuring and heartening to know the U.S. stands by us, which has created even greater confidence in our friendship with you. It has strengthened the already solid basis of our alliance. Again, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the people of the United States of America.

I would also like to add that the Iraqi Ambassador to Japan paid a visit to the area and encouraged the SDF units engaged in relief operations, which

had also operated in Samawah, Muthanna Province of Iraq. I think that both the Iraqi people and those Japanese who suffered due to this earthquake share the same wish to live in peace and comfort, free from want.

Let me discuss how I would like to address security challenges in the region as Minister of Defense. First of all, like Prime Minister Abe, I am one of the strong believers in the Japan-US alliance. This alliance constitutes the core of the security of Japan. Maintaining an enduring bond between Japan and the United States is indispensable for our prosperity now and in the future.

It is perhaps unnecessary to say in front of this audience that we have been confronted with diversified and complex security challenges in recent years. Newly emerging threats, including proliferation of ballistic missiles, have become a major concern and, when you focus on the neighborhood of Japan, the regional security situation is characterized by serious challenges, most prominent among them North Korea's launch of ballistic missiles and professed nuclear testing last year.

Against the backdrop of such developments, it is of vital importance to further strengthen the effectiveness, as well as to enhance the credibility, of our alliance in order to effectively respond to those security challenges. Technically speaking, this alliance is embodied in the treaty of mutual cooperation and security, but we have to go beyond words on paper and to realize the spirit of the alliance, so that close ties can be maintained between publics on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, while they make earnest efforts to contribute to mutual security, realizing the inseparable nature of the security of both countries. Close governmental communications have also to be maintained including those at the ministerial level. That is why I was determined to come all the way to Washington, D.C. in spite of the tense political situations in Tokyo. In order to fulfill my responsibilities as Minister of Defense, I would like to tackle a variety of challenges including the implementation of the agreement on the realignment of the U.S. forces as an

important way to further strengthen the alliance, bearing in mind what I have just explained to you.

I would like to turn to the challenges I face as Defense Minister of Japan. There are 5 major ones I have identified since taking up my post.

First, the change in the legal status of the defense agency to defense ministry in January this year clearly indicates the necessity for the Ministry of Defense to become further policy-oriented and to develop a more sophisticated strategic vision for the future, in order to faithfully meet the expectations of the people in Japan and to effectively fulfill the responsibilities that Japan has taken on as a member of the international community. To accomplish this, I have been making efforts to restructure the internal organization and to strengthen the policy planning functions, while expanding the ministry's relationship with the general public to broaden support for defense policies.

Second, I have been making efforts to strengthen this alliance, focusing on the expeditious implementation of the agreement on the initiatives for the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, in particular. This bilateral agreement is essential to maintaining deterrence and capabilities of U.S. forces to respond effectively to evolving security situations as well as to reducing the negative impact and footprint of U.S. forces on local communities including Okinawa Prefecture. This underscores the necessity of implementing the agreement as quickly as possible. I personally have some background regarding Okinawa issues since I once held the longest ministerial post in charge of Okinawa for two full years or I should say only two years, and the post of Minister of the Environment as well, and I would like to make utmost efforts to complete the agreed realignment initiatives, including relocation of the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, relocation of U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, while seeking understanding on the part of the local communities. On the basis of a strengthened bilateral relationship, I would like to expand the network of security relations among like-minded countries in the Asia Pacific region, including such countries as Australia and India, which share common values

and interests with us as democracies and human rights.

Third, I would like to make sure that the Self-Defense Forces can respond effectively to variety of challenges and contingencies. For example, we have to ensure steady development of ballistic missile defense capabilities, and also to establish a posture appropriately attuned to dealing with terrorist incidents, major natural disasters and so on. In 1995, a major earthquake hit the Hanshin area in the western part of the main island of Japan, with approximately 6,400 dead or missing. My former electoral district was also affected -- about 150 citizens died. Right after the earthquake, I ran about the disaster area by bike, and I witnessed an outpouring of support from the locals for the SDF disaster relief efforts. That experience reminds me of the necessity of ensuring that the SDF develops such a posture with which it can meet the expectations, and maintain the confidence, of the Japanese people.

Fourth, as a responsible member of the international community, Japan must make proactive efforts in the area of international peace cooperation activities. I have visited such locations as Iraq, the Golan Heights, Kuwait and East Timor, and saw firsthand the enormous efforts made by the SDF contingents. I note that those efforts were very much appreciated by relevant countries. Greater importance has been attached to international cooperation activities as one of the missions of the SDF, and we at MOD are looking to improve our policies in this area for the future.

Last, but not least, I would like to emphasize our commitment to strengthening policies and procedures regarding information security, and to enhancing our counterintelligence capabilities. I regret to say that we have recently experienced some incidents which involved lax handling of sensitive information, although strict procedures should have been followed. These are truly very unfortunate incidents and I think it is urgently necessary for us to review our information security practices. This is all the more important because we are responsible for the defense of Japan. I have already directed my staff to develop more stringent measures in this area. When I assumed

my current post, I addressed men and women of the Ministry of Defense to improve their “morals” and boost their “morale.” What I tried to convey to them was that those in charge of national security have to improve the morals of their organization, for example, by tightening information security, while boosting their morale.

Let me now turn to my personal interest and involvement in security issues. When I decided to study abroad, I selected the University of Cairo in Egypt, and became the second Japanese graduate from that school. I have been interested in the Middle East situation, especially in a global context, and as you might expect, from the perspective of its relationship to the national security of Japan. I have also paid close attention to the Central Asian countries which have geopolitical importance for Japan, and was one of the founders of the Central Asia and Caucasus Research Institute, in 1999, the first institution of its kind in Japan. One of the areas I have long focused on is “energy security.” This background, together with my experiences as Minister of the Environment, lead me to think about national security issues in a comprehensive manner, not concentrating solely on military aspects. I try to take into account the dynamic correlations among a wide range of factors including geopolitical issues, environmental factors, and food security. For Japan, lack of crude oil resources is an “Inconvenient Truth” but on the other hand, it is a “Convenient Truth” for promoting innovations in the field of energy-saving technology.

Before assuming my current position, I was appointed as special advisor to Prime Minister Abe for national security affairs. Based on my own experience and understanding of developments related to Japan’s national security, I provided recommendations and advice to the Prime Minister. I also devoted myself to establishing a Japanese equivalent to your National Security Council, NSC. Draft legislation to set up such an organization has already been approved by the Cabinet. I discussed this issue when I was here last time. While I was involved in drafting the bill, I got a lot of useful advice from many American friends including Dr. Green, who is chairing today’s

session. I would like to thank my American friends for their support. We will try to pass the J-NSC bill through the Diet in the fall session this year. We are looking forward to a new mechanism for national security, with J-NSC up and running from next April.

As Defense Minister, I focus on detailed defense related issues, which are directly linked with the lives and safety of the people. The Ministry of Defense and the SDF play critical roles at the core of the national security of Japan, which has brought home to me the serious responsibilities that go with this position. The Ministry of the Environment, which I headed for 3 years, has only about 1,100 personnel. When I was special advisor to the prime minister for national security, I was supported by two brilliant staff people. Now, I have two hundred sixty thousand men and women under my direct command. Irrespective of the size of the organization, the ability to set goals and to identify the paths to achieve them will be required; in other words, “management capability.” I believe my past experience and my own expertise in the field of national security should provide substantial leverage when I tackle those challenges and achieve what is expected of me. I have identified these 5 challenges based upon my own past experience, and I intend to make utmost efforts so that you will find the achievements satisfactory from your point of view.

In closing, I would like to touch upon what I believe is of critical importance to the development and implementation of policies at the national level. The good cause behind those policies is obviously quite important, but those policies also must be understood and sympathized by the people. I think this is also true of our bilateral relationship. The United States and Japan, as vital allies, must, first of all, share a good cause, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that each of us can support this relationship. This will only come about through improved understanding of one another.

The most important tenet of Prime Minister Abe’s administration is the departure from old policies and practices from the post-World War II regime.

From such a perspective, this administration has been addressing specific policies including the reform of the Japanese education system, review of legal issues surrounding the exercise of the right of collective self-defense, and the reform of the career system of the civil servants. These measures are not necessarily popular among the public, but all of them are important milestones for Japan in the 21st century, as well as for the region and even for the world, and must be dealt with. In the field of security, we are confronted with considerable challenges in the future, but our paths are not necessarily overshadowed with daunting clouds. I would like to work closely with American friends, contributing, to the best of my ability, to realizing an era filled with blessings for all throughout the 21st century, so that this century can be viewed as one filled with a lot of sunshine.

経 歴 表



1 氏 名 小池 百合子 (こいけ・ゆりこ)

2 現 職 防衛大臣

3 主要学歴 昭和51年10月

エジプト国立カイロ大学文学部社会学科卒業

4 略 歴

昭和54年 ニュースキャスター

平成4年8月 参議院議員当選

平成5年7月 衆議院議員当選(以降5期)

平成5年8月 総務政務次官

平成9年9月 衆議院科学技術常任委員長

平成 1 0 年 1 1 月	衆議院大蔵委員会理事
平成 1 1 年 1 0 月	経済企画総括政務次官
平成 1 2 年 6 月	衆議院経済産業委員、外務委員、安全保障委員、議院運営委員
平成 1 5 年 9 月	環境大臣
平成 1 6 年 9 月	環境大臣 内閣府特命担当大臣〔沖縄及び北方対策〕
平成 1 8 年 9 月	内閣総理大臣補佐官（国家安全保障問題担当）
平成 1 9 年 7 月	現職

Biographical Sketch

Name: KOIKE Yuriko

Present Position: Minister of Defense



Education: Graduated from the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts,
Cairo University in October 1976

Career in Outline:

1979	Anchor for TV News Program
Aug 1992	Elected to the House of Councillors
Jul 1993	Elected to the House of Representatives (H.R. 5 terms)
Aug 1993	Vice-Minister of the Management and Coordination Agency
Sep 1997	Chair of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, H.R.
Nov 1998	Director of the Standing Committee on Finance, H.R.
Oct 1999	Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Planning Coordination
Jun 2000	Member, Committee on Economy, Trade and Industry, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Security, Committee on Rules and Administration, H.R.
Sep 2003	Minister of the Environment
Sep 2004	Minister of the Environment Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs
Sep 2006	Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for National Security Affairs
Jul 2007	Present Assignment