

## **“JAPAN AND THE TWO KOREAS; THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CONFIDENCE-BUILDING”**

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### INTRODUCTION

There is the tendency to view the situation in the Korean Peninsula in the context of an emerging triangle involving relations between Korea, the United States and China, as if to say that Japan's interest in the triangle is subsumed by the American interest. Yet, the relationship between Japan and Korea dates back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century when emigrants from the peninsula went to Japan with their cultural heritage. The geographical proximity of the peninsula to Japan is a natural factor which is supposed to be promotive of intimate relations between the two nations. Having once colonized Korea, Japan succeeded in impacting greatly on the socio-economic and political history of the whole Korea, to such an extent that the contemporary policies of the two Koreas are phrased in reaction to Japan's interest. Although Koreans are often hysterical when they reflect on Japan's colonial rule over them, it is however incontestable that the historical record of their colonial tutelage under Japan can neither be re-written nor wished away; it was a period and an experience, which has continued to influence the tempo, tenor, stress and strains of Japan-Korea reactions.

The post-Second World War politics and Cold War politics in Asia-Pacific strengthened Japan-U.S. relations at the expense of Japan's autonomous relations with the Koreans. Although, Japan may not welcome the short term effects of Korean unification, it would in the long-run. What then, would happen to the U.S.-Japan security treaty after the reunification of Korea? What confidence-building measures should Japan put in place in periods preceding Korean reunification, since many Korean people believe that Japan would dislike a strong and unified Korea?

The first section of this article gives a brief history of Japan-Korea relations. The second section focuses on Japan-South Korean relations after the partitioning of the Korean Peninsula into two countries, and identifies some stumbling blocks in the relationship between the Republic Of South-Korea (ROK) and Japan. The third section analyzes Japan-North Korean relations. The fourth discusses the prospects of Korean reunification against the backdrop of its perceived security implications for the hegemonic interests of the major powers in Asia-Pacific.

### I. THE HISTORY OF JAPAN-KOREAN RELATIONS

The rendition of the historical record of the relationship between Japan and Korea has always evoked strong passion and emotive feelings among the Koreans over the agonies and tragedies of their country's political tutelage under Japan between 1905 and 1945. The designation of 2005 as the “Year of Korea-Japan Friendship” had the unanticipated coincidence with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the

normalization of ties between Japan and South Korea (ROK). That year also marked the centennial of the national humiliation experienced by Korea when it was forced by Japan to sign the protectorate treaty in 1905, a treaty which stripped Korea of its statehood and diplomatic rights. It is on record that Korea experienced harsh Japanese colonial rule, a historical circumstance the Koreans have continued to remember with indignation, pain and anguish.

Preceding Japanese colonial rule, the Koreans had always considered themselves superior to the Japanese, a mindset that was totally obliterated by the Japanese domineering colonial onslaught against the Korean nation. The eventual defeat of Japan in the Pacific War in 1945 automatically effected the liberation of Korea and brought to an abrupt end, Japanese forty years' rule over Korea. According to Professor Okonogi, the subsequent partitioning of Korean Peninsula along the 38 parallel between the United States and the Soviet Union, coupled with the resultant polarization of Korea into two countries with different and conflicting ideologies patterned after the two diametrically opposed superpowers, created the basis for the outbreak of war between the two Koreas-Democratic people's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 1950<sup>1</sup>.

Although, the United States and the Soviet Union had been variously blamed for the division of the Korean Peninsula, the Koreans believe that the Japanese colonial rule underdeveloped the Korean State by destroying the historical course of Korea's political development while paralyzing their country's socio-economic and political institutions, a situation which they claim, created the predisposing conditions that warranted the disintegration of Korea<sup>2</sup>.

## II. ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

As expected, the relationship between ROK and Japan in the early period of the post-war years was full of acrimony and hostility. Japan's quest for self-preservation, maintenance of its security, and advancement of its economy resulted in its signing of military pact with the United States. In a similar sense, the ROK entered into military alliance with the United States, an action borne out of its interest in preserving its newly evolved statehood and to put in check the threats posed by Japan and North Korea to its security. The separate military alignment of both South Korea and Japan with the United States, gave rise to the normalization of diplomatic relations between the hitherto hostile countries in 1965.<sup>3</sup>

It is noteworthy that the United States facilitated the reconciliation between the ROK and Japan, a relationship Washington considered as a vital step for the consolidation of its strategic security control in the region. The calculus of power distribution in East Asia where Japan and South Korea had willingly identified themselves as allies of the United States and spheres of its influence, is favorable to the post-war and Cold War agenda of the United States, which essentially was to rid the region of communist threats of invasion. To be sure, the Cold War relationship between the ROK and Japan was predicated on the ideological, security and economic underpinnings of the Cold War years. During that historical epoch, the United States wielded tremendous influence over the bilateral diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In both countries, the Cold War era influenced socio-economic and political changes. The transition from military dictatorship to democratic governance in South Korea further helped to expand the growth of its economy to a point of global reckoning. In fact, one good aspect of the ROK-Japan relations during the Cold War years was the positive developmental influence of the Japanese mode of industrialization on South Korea. Japan also attained a high level of technological development, as a result of its implementation of political, social and economic reforms, especially since the enactment of the new liberal constitution in 1947. The two countries were accorded membership rights of the various international organizations through the influence and support of the United States, a development that facilitated their participation in multilateral institutions, global commerce and politics.

However, since the emergence of the post-cold War era, following the demise of the Soviet Union, relations between the ROK and Japan have been vacillating between two extremes—one of mutual animosity, and the other, of mutual amity, a reflection of changes in both the external and domestic environments of the two countries. Different groups began to champion the evolution of a new regime of ROK-Japan-U.S. relations, which they felt would accord with the new realities in the global setting where communist threats seemed to have fizzled out. In South Korea, opposition groups clamored for the termination of their country's military pact with the United States, and the withdrawal of about 50,000 U.S. troops from Seoul.<sup>4</sup> Of course, similar agitations and tendencies exist in Japan which harbor-United States' military bases in Okinawa and elsewhere with about 46,000 troops<sup>5</sup>. It is however reasonable that the dominant perspective of the foreign policy elites of the two countries favors the sustenance of their alliances with the United States, a viewpoint anchored on the realization that the United States was the bulwark behind the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

There have been some records of Korea-Japan security cooperation and mutually beneficial relations between the two countries in several areas. Mention could be made of the ROK Navy's participation in the 1990 RIMPAC exercise, trilateral defense consultation meetings among Korea, the U.S., and Japan since 1997, trilateral burden-sharing for the execution of light water reactor project in North Korea through the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), Korea-Japan Defense Ministers' dialogue track-2 dialogue among RAND and CSIS of the U.S., Korea Institute of Defense Academy (KIDA) and NIDS (National Institute for Defense Studies) and RIPS of Japan<sup>6</sup>. The creation of KEDO which was instigated by the United States (and comprise the U.S., South Korea and Japan) has succeeded in deepening mutual understanding between ROK and Japan on the one hand, and fostering close ties between these allies and the United States on the other.<sup>7</sup> No doubt, through the instrumentality of KEDO, the three countries could coordinate their dealings with North Korea. South Korea remains Japan's third largest trade partner following closely after the United States and China<sup>8</sup>. Despite all these visible cooperation between ROK and Japan, there exists some constraints, which have deep-rooted historical underpinnings, and would require genuine and far-reaching palliatives. It is not surprising that history continues to be a serious issue between the two countries. What is unclear, is how atonement could be made for past wrongs in order to effect requisite reconciliation. What indeed are the historical wrongs which have been serving as stumbling blocks in ROK-Japan relations?

#### A> STUMBLING BLOCKS IN ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

It is significant to point out that, the contemporary Koreans' distrust of Japan is rooted in the perception that Japan has not taken any serious steps to address the following past wrongs:

- i) The abduction or conscription of an estimated 100,000-200,000 Korean women by the Japanese soldiers for sexual service during the World War II. This issue is laden with strong emotion among Koreans, particularly so, as they feel that Japan does not want to take official responsibility for the atrocities of its soldiers during the Second World War. Japan's establishment of Asia Women Foundation in 1995, which was charged with the responsibility of sourcing funds from the private sector, for the payment of compensation to the Korean victims, was rejected by the Seoul government and most Korean victims, on grounds that Japan should first tender official apology and provide government-level compensation<sup>9</sup>. The Koreans view the procrastination by the Tokyo government as a deliberate ploy to allow the Korean victims who were already in their 70s and 80s to pass on. This issue is being used by the Koreans as the gauge for assessing the readiness of Japan to make penance for its past wrongs<sup>10</sup>.
- ii) Japan's interest in establishing sole control over the East Sea; This is another sore point in ROK-Japan relations. The Seoul government believes that the recent aggressive adventures of Japan, evident in its 1996 declaration of 200-mile exclusive economic zone, the 1997 unilateral expansion of 12-mile territorial water with new baseline from the coastline, and the subsequent seizure of Korean fishing boats by the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency under the new baseline, coupled with the 1999 unilateral abrogation of the 1965 fishery treaty, are clear signs of Japan's renewed aggression against the ROK<sup>11</sup>.
- iii) Competing claims over the Islands of Tokdo or Takeshima: Both countries have been claiming ownership of the Islands of Tokdo or Takeshima for decades. While Japan argues that Takeshima Islands were incorporated into Shimane Prefecture through a resolution by the Japanese government in 1905, South Korea has continually been insisting that the Islands had been Korean territory since the Shilla dynasty took them in the fifth century (512) and that they were the territory of the Subsequent Korean Kingdoms (Koryo and Yi). The Koreans added that, in 1952 its president-Syngnan Rhee declared sovereignty over the waters around the country including Tokdo Islands<sup>12</sup>.
- iv) Japan's expanded security role in the region; the qualitative superiority of Japan's navy and air force coupled with its technological advancement in the atomic industry as well as its military potential have been heightening South Korea's fears about Japan. ROK believes that Japan has the potentials of becoming a nuclear power in the light of its advanced capability in the enrichment, reprocessing and production of plutonium and fast breeder reactors-a possibility that it feared may be actualized with

the expanded security role of a nuclear capable Japan in the region. It could be noted that South Korea's fears are the product of its distrust of, and misgivings for Japan<sup>13</sup>.

- v) Distortion of War History; Koreans are angered by "Japan's distortion of war history in Japanese school textbooks". Japanese textbooks, according to Koreans, do not contain Japan's war time crimes, an omission, they described as Japan's chronic inability to face up to its own wrong doings and an act of "hypocritical ostrichism"<sup>14</sup>.

#### B> JAPAN'S PERCEPTION OF ROK-JAPAN'S RIFT

Reflecting on some of the above issues in the ROK-Japan relations, Professor Okonogi, a renowned Japanese expert on Korean Affairs, affirmed that, historically, the Japanese never had a good perception of Koreans, even though they considered Korea as a strategically significant country to the security calculations of Japan in the Asia-Pacific region. He, however, noted that the relationship between South Korea and Japan had since the advent of the post-war era improved tremendously<sup>15</sup>. The visit of President Kim Dae Jung to Japan in 1998, he opined, was an epoch-making event, which gave the two countries' leaders the opportunity of ironing out their differences as a first necessary step for fostering better relationship, adding that the Japanese leadership utilized that occasion to apologize to the Koreans for Japan's past colonial administration in Korea<sup>16</sup>. For Yutaka Kawashima, the problem of Japan with her neighbors had nothing much to do with Japan's contemporary policy toward them, but rather their fear of the resurgence of Japanese militarism on account of its history. He expatiated that:

*Whenever Japan's neighbors begin to suspect that Japan's prewar history is going to be officially glorified, for example, in the process of certifying a history textbook or when a prime minister makes an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine, a memorial to Japan's war dead, they express their strong resentment<sup>17</sup>.*

In the same vein, Okonogi disclosed that the recent visit of Prime Minister Koizumi to Yasukuni Shrine angered the South Korean President-Roh Moo Hyun Who, since that event has not hidden his displeasure with Koizumi. However, most Japanese scholars are of the belief that beyond bouts of emotional distress on either side, there are positive and remarkable signs of a growing cordial relationship between Japan and South Korea. As of 2001 record, 697 Japanese are studying in South Korea<sup>18</sup>. And about 4 million people from both countries have cross-exchange visits yearly<sup>19</sup>. In addition to that, Korean movies are the delight of Japanese, and they are aired on some channels of Japanese television stations, just as notable Korean actors' photographs adorn the inner walls of video shops in Tokyo. With the growing appreciation and acceptance of the South Koreans by the Japanese, the prospects of further improvement in the already warm relations between the two countries exist.

### III. JAPAN AND NORTH KOREA

Although there is still no diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea, the Tokyo government had since the end of the Cold War been under the pressure of South Korean government to normalize relations with Pyongyang. True, since the division of the Korean Peninsula, Japan is yet to enter into any diplomatic ties with the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK). The ideological rivalry between the two superpowers with their on their sides, only succeeded in pitching countries against one another on ideological grounds. Thus, South Korea and Japan being allies of the United States continued with their long-established free market economic model, while North Korea, an ally of Soviet Union and China, patterned its “Juche ideology” after the socialist ideals being propagated during that era by its two benefactors.

Aside from the fact that the DPRK still retains its quasi-socialist system despite the abandonment of socialism by Eastern European Countries including Soviet Union in the 1990s, it is also the ‘black sheep’ in East Asia with its practice of brinkmanship diplomacy, a policy spurred by Pyongyang’s frustration, borne out of desperation for economic concessions to augment its depreciating economic state, since economic assistance from Soviet Union (now Russia) and China is no longer available.

Since the commencement of discussions between Japan and North Korea in the 1990s, for the normalization of relations, no concrete achievement has been recorded. It is argued that it was Japan that had been refusing to normalize diplomatic ties with North Korea<sup>20</sup>. Yet, others noted that North Korea had never expressed any serious desire to normalize relations with Japan, since Pyongyang believes that what Japan would offer could be better obtained from the United States<sup>21</sup>. In the explanation of Kawashima, Soviet Union’s decision to normalize relations with South Korea prompted North Korea to propose normalizing relations with Japan in the autumn of 1990<sup>22</sup>. He added that, because of the refusal of North Korea to address squarely the issue of its abduction of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 80s, Japan has been unwilling to normalize relations with Pyongyang<sup>23</sup>.

The predictions that the regime in North Korea would collapse and pave the way for the reunification of Korea on South Korea’s terms have fallen flat on the ground like a pack of cards. The death of North Korea’s revered leader-Kim-il sung, the years of famine and food shortages, the ascension of Kim Jong-il whose health has been described as frail, all being factors that had been noted would catalyze the process of decay and eventual collapse of the DPRK, a prediction that is far from being actualized<sup>24</sup>. Rather than fizzle out of contention in Northeast Asia on account of its decaying economy, and uncertainty of its political future, North Korea re-launched itself into relevance by default, when it admitted to having begun its nuclear program, which initially was believed to have been frozen in exchange for United States’ assistance. Pyongyang also confessed that it abducted a number of Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s<sup>25</sup>. These disclosures changed the political atmospherics of diplomatic intercourse among the six parties in the Korean reunification talks (the United States, China, Russia, Japan and the two Koreas), and set the stage for a renewed international offensive against North Korea. In his reaction, President George W. Bush Jr. described North Korea as a “rogue state”, belonging to the “axis of evil” comprising such countries as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. It is on record that Pyongyang’s export of its Rodong missiles to the Middle East and South Asia was responsible for the rising tension in those regions<sup>26</sup>.

It should be recalled that in August 1998, North Korea tested its Taepodong missile over Japan. And in March 1999, the DPRK's Spy Ships invaded Japanese sea lanes, an action that was deterred by the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) which fired warning shots. It is however, noteworthy that some years before these hostilities, precisely in 1995, following North Korea's request for Japan's assistance to overcome the food shortages it was experiencing, the Japanese government supplied 200,000 tons of rice as humanitarian assistance to Pyongyang. And in 2000, Japan extended 500,000 tons of rice to North Korea despite the ever-growing anti-DPRK sentiment in Japan.<sup>27</sup> However, the South Korean government was dissatisfied with Japan's unilateral assistance to Pyongyang without due reference to Seoul. But, as Akiko Fukushima pointed out, Japan has always been willing to carry out its foreign policy objectives in Asia-Pacific, in particular, within multilateral mechanisms such as KEDO, ASEAN, Trilateral coordination and oversight Group (TCOG), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Council for Regional Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, etc, especially in its quest to influence the resolution of the problem on Korean Peninsula among other issues in the region<sup>28</sup>. In cooperation with the United States and South Korea, Japan has been lending support in the implementation of KEDO's agenda of building two new light water nuclear reactors in addition to the provision of heavy fuel oil to North Korea. Toward the actualization of that agenda, Japan agreed to provide \$1 billion to complement South Korea's expressed readiness to foot 3/4 of the project's bill. The project was to provide an alternative source of energy to Pyongyang in order to keep it off the nuclear program<sup>29</sup>. But, consequent upon the 1998 missile test by North Korea, the Japanese government denounced North Korea's action and announced its refusal to sign the KEDO documents for the assigned financial aid of \$1 billion for the construction of light water reactors in Pyongyang<sup>30</sup>.

However, as a result of pressures by the ROK and the United States on Japan, on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1998, the Japanese government formally signed the agreement on its assigned financial aid of \$1 billion to support the light water reactor project of KEDO<sup>31</sup>. In its relations with DPRK, Japan could be said to have a flexible and responsive foreign policy which accommodates good behavior and rejects bad behavior. In all, Japan has been playing the "big brother role" toward North Korea despite the latter's negative attitude. Japan is the second largest exporter to Pyongyang after China. Without Japanese market, the North Korean economy would lay prostrate, and incapable of carrying out requisite reforms to avert its orchestrated imminent collapse<sup>32</sup>.

It is evident from the foregoing that, even though Japan recognizes its responsibility to assist North Korea in overcoming the long-drawn and seemingly endless economic crisis that has engulfed that country since the 1990s, it feels handicapped and discouraged by Pyongyang's Nuclear program and its abduction of innocent Japanese. According to Okonogi, the two issues constitute major obstacle to the evolution of warm and cordial relations between Japan and DPRK, and by implication, would prevent Japan from normalizing relations with that country<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, North Korea's image in Japan currently evokes strong repulsion and general opprobrium among the Japanese. As it stands today, Japan will not normalize relations with Pyongyang unless that country is ready to work for peace in the peninsula, and ceases to be a threat to Japan's security and regional stability.

#### IV. KOREAN UNIFICATION AND JAPAN'S SECURITY

It is apparent from the foregoing sections that Japan's extensive involvement in multilateral institutions in Asia-Pacific accords with its foreign policy objective of promoting conditions that are favorable to peace in the Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific in general. Japan's active participation in KEDO which has as one of its agendas, the provision of alternative source of energy to North Korea in order to divert Pyongyang from pursuing its Nuclear program as well as assist it to focus on programs that have bearing on economic development, is an indirect policy aimed at preventing the collapse of that country, thereby forestalling Korean unification by absorption. In fact, all the six parties involved in Korean unification talks (the United States, China, Russia Japan and the two Koreas) are working for the maintenance of the status quo in the peninsula, because of the security implications of North Korea's collapse. Thus, Japan and the other three major powers – U.S., China and Russia are supportive of the “two Koreas’ policy with the aim of keeping Pyongyang afloat<sup>34</sup>”.

Although Japan may not welcome the short term effects of Korean unification ,but if it had become an irreversible course, it would prefer that the unification is achieved peacefully on South Korea's terms, since the ROK appears a better ally with a relatively warmer disposition to Japan than Pyongyang. On the contrary, Toshimitsu Shigemura argues that Japan has no official policy towards Korean unification; Japan has only adopted a “following diplomacy”, preferring instead to accept the decision of the Koreans on the issue<sup>35</sup>. But whether it is officially expressed or not, Japan worries that a unified Korea might prefer to identify more with China than Tokyo, and that given such scenario, Beijing's Foreign Policy which is aimed at establishing China's hegemony in Northeast Asia would then appear to have been actualized<sup>36</sup>. Some scholars have speculated that Japan in its preemption of the possibility of a unified Korea aligning with China, is already embarking on constitutional amendment that would strengthen its military considerably, including its possession of offensive capabilities<sup>37</sup>. In some other quarters, it is believed that Japan was overdue for its transformation into “a normal state” with the full complement of military power corresponding to its economic power, a transformation which the proponents reasoned would enable Japan to assist in the creation of international peace<sup>38</sup>.

It should however be noted that the proposed constitutional amendment that would empower Japan's military with offensive capabilities has its opponents. Some are of the view that a nuclear Japan would complicate the security situation in Northeast Asia and the Pacific, and would defeat Tokyo's current effort at moderating nuclear proliferation in the region<sup>39</sup>. In a similar vein, Okonogi debunked the thesis and speculation of the realists (the hawks) who feel that Japan's global pacifism has outlived its usefulness. He affirmed that Japan's economic prosperity resulted from the single-minded focus of its foreign policy on the promotion of peaceful coexistence among countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and the world. He explained that Japan had a peace-oriented constitution which had survived several regimes and had become institutionalized, adding that the speculation of an impending constitutional revision which would make Japan to acquire offensive capabilities was conjectural and untrue<sup>40</sup>. Lending credence to Okonogi's explanation, Renato Cruz De Castro notes that:

*Japan's new security doctrine emphasizes the social, economic*



*and political aspects of National security without seeking ways to maximize war – fighting capabilities<sup>41</sup>.*

He further noted that although the realists' pressure on the Japanese government to increase its expenditure on Defense was strong and loud, Japan's confidence in its military pact with the United States remained strong, and that the Japanese government was averse to any drastic action that would undermine its relations with the United States<sup>42</sup>.

None of the major powers in the Asia-Pacific has any expansionary or imperialistic tendencies; all they seek is hegemony in the region. The established regime of globalization in the world state-system neither encourages territorial adventurism, annexation, nor colonization of weaker states<sup>43</sup>. The major interest of the four powers including Japan in the region, is to forestall any untoward development which could have security implications for regional stability. The real obstacle to Korean unification is the lack of Determination of the two Korean States to re-unify. Even the U.S. alliance with the ROK can't stand in the way of Korean unification, if the Koreans on both sides of the divide are genuinely interested in the unification of their bifurcated land. If the trade-off is between a U.S. alliance and reunification, it is hoped that the South Koreans would opt for reunification<sup>44</sup>. But, without a detailed implementation guidebook and roadmap, which both sides of the Korean divide subscribe to, and which would derive from the concerted efforts of the leaderships of the ROK and DPRK, the quest for reunification would be devoid of direction. In addition to the six party mechanism, South Korea with its open and democratic institutions coupled with a vibrant economy, could muster strong political will to extensively and constructively engage North Korea, as a way of opening up Pyongyang. North Korea will not collapse, contrary to the popular belief in South Korea. The earlier the two Koreas realized the resultant benefits of the harmonization of their economies, the edification of their common identity, and historical antecedents, the more they will work towards the actualization of their reunification. But, for so long as each of the Koreas feels it could exist as an independent and autonomous politico-economic system, the lesser their commitment to unification. This is not an exculpatory statement aimed at absolving the major powers of blame for the palpable uncertainty of Korean unification. The major powers have a role to play in ensuring that the six party mechanism works. For that to happen, the festering misunderstanding and competition between the United States and China over Korea and Asia-Pacific affairs would have to be resolved. Overall, the path to Korean unification would have to be excavated by the Koreans, whose first responsibility it is, to carry out the spade works on which the major powers could construct, in agreement with them, a solid road infrastructure leading to the unification of Korea.

Japanese Foreign Policy is currently anchored on its peace-oriented constitution, which seeks to create and sustain conditions that are favorable to peaceful coexistence among the states in Asia-Pacific. Japan's "following diplomacy", which respects the Koreans' right to a unified homeland is not in any way an inhibition to the realization of Korean reunification. If anything, Japan's "following diplomacy" is the projection of its commitment to multilateralism, as a means of forging a sense of collective responsibility among all the stakeholders in the region. Japan is satisfied with the six party framework for the evolution of Korean unification strategies, which would be promotive of peace in the entire Asia-Pacific region.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Japan like every other country faces tremendous pressure from both domestic and external sources which impact on the formulation and implementation of its Foreign Policy. In its pursuit of peaceful coexistence with its neighbors, Japan would also need to strengthen its defense infrastructure against the hawkish tendencies of nuclear North Korea. While seeking ways to further strengthen the six party framework for the peaceful resolution of the Korean dilemma, Japan should sustain its military alliance with the United States, and warm itself to China. In fact, Japan could play the role of a mediator between the United States and China, a role that would be result-oriented, because the Korean issue which is the subject of the six party framework centers around the interests of the allies of both countries. In this regard, Japan will do well to recall the immortal statement of late Masataka Kosaka, who warned: "Be friendly with the United States, and do not quarrel with China"<sup>45</sup>.

Finally, the Japanese government should cash-in on the current wave of positive sentiments of the Japanese people towards the South Koreans, as a veritable basis for confidence-building between Japan and South Korea—a requisite action for the healing of past scars of mutual animosities. The Japanese government could invite cultural troupes and theatre groups among others from South Korea, to perform in Japan on regular basis. Several other means of promoting mutual understanding and confidence-building in the relations between the two countries should be explored by Japan. It is certain that, if the Japanese government engages ROK at extra-security levels continually, such platforms have the prospects of attaining value and stability overtime, and the tendency exists that the ROK would reciprocate. The initiative and the driving force for expanding the horizon of the relations between the two countries should be taken by Japan, being a senior partner in the relationship.

END NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> This brief account of the historical relationship between Japan and Korea benefited from the perspective of Professor Masao Okonogi of Keio University, Tokyo, Japan, who, in an interview conducted by the author on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2006, fielded several questions.
- <sup>2</sup> Yutaka Kawashima, *Japanese Foreign Policy At The Crossroads: Challenges And Options For The Twenty-First Century* (Washington. D.C., Brookings Institution press, 2003) p. 76
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* It is noteworthy that president Park Chung Hee of the ROK disregarded the anti-Japanese sentiment among the Koreans.
- <sup>4</sup> See Yoichiro Sato, "Conclusion: Japan in Asia and the Pacific" in Akitoshi Miyashita and Yoichiro Sato, eds., *Japanese Foreign Policy in Asia and The Pacific: Domestic Interests, American Pressure, and Regional Integration* (New York, Palgrave, 2001) p. 197 -203
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>6</sup> Choonkun Lee and Jungho Bae, "Security Cooperation between Japan and Korea in the Post-Cold War". A paper presented at the first joint conference co-hosted by the Korean Association of International Studies and the Japanese Association of International Relations on August, 19-20, 1998, see also Tewoo Kim, "Japan's New Security Roles and ROK-Japan Relations", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Summer 1999.
- <sup>7</sup> Noboru Yamaguchi, "Trilateral Security Cooperation; Opportunities, Challenges and Tasks" in Ralph Cossa, ed., *U.S.-Korean-Japan Relations: Building Toward a "Virtual Alliance"*, (Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press 1999) p. 9
- <sup>8</sup> Japan Almanac 2005 (Tokyo, The Asahi Shinbun, 2005) p. 98
- <sup>9</sup> Taewoo Kim, "Japan's New Security Roles and ROK – Japan Relations", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XI, No.1, Summer 1999, p. 161
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Yutaka Kawashima argues that the issue between Japan and its Asian neighbors is not about apology. Japan, he noted had apologized amply and therefore should not have to repeat the apology whenever its Asian neighbors or others demand it. See Yutaka Kawashima, *Japanese Foreign Policy at the Crossroads: Challenges and options for the twenty-first century*, op. cit., pp. 14-15
- <sup>11</sup> Tewoo Kim, "Japan's New Security Roles and ROK-Japan Relations" *op. cit.*, p. 161
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 162
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 162
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* p. 167
- <sup>15</sup> Masao Okonogi, *op. cit.*
- <sup>16</sup> Yutaka Kawashima, *op. cit.*, P. 93
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 15
- <sup>18</sup> See Japan Almanac, *op. cit.*, p. 227
- <sup>19</sup> Masao Okonogi, *op. cit.*
- <sup>20</sup> See Masao Okonogi, "How Will Japan – North Korean Relations Proceed in 2005?" (Internet source).
- <sup>21</sup> Toshimitsu Shigemura, "Reunification of the Korean Peninsula and Japanese Foreign Policy" in Tae-Hwan Kwak, ed., *The Four Powers and Korean Unification Strategies* (Seoul, Kyungnam University Press, 1997) p. 49-58
- <sup>22</sup> Yutaka Kawashima, *op. cit.*, p. 80
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 81
- <sup>24</sup> Marcus Noland, Sherman Robinson, and Tao Wang, *Rigorous Speculation : The Collapse and Revival of the North Korean Economy (working paper series No. 99-1)* (Washington, D.C., Institute for International Economics, 1999)

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- <sup>25</sup> Yutaka Kawashima, *op. cit.*
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>28</sup> Akiko Fukushima, *Japanese Foreign Policy: The Emerging Logic of Multilateralism* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999), Chapter 5 (pp. 112-130)
- <sup>29</sup> Hidekazu Sakai, "Continuity and Discontinuity of Japanese Foreign Policy Toward North Korea; Freezing the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO) in 1998" in Akitoshi Miyashita and Yoichiro, eds., *Japanese Foreign Policy in Asia and the Pacific* (New York, Palgrave, 2001) p. 56
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 57
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 61-62
- <sup>32</sup> Marcus Noland argues that the global community in its efforts to feed hungry North Koreans should not do so in a manner that strengthens Pyongyang's totalitarian regime. See his article; "North Korea in Transition", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XXII, No. 1, Spring 2005, p. 32
- <sup>33</sup> Masao Okonogi, "Interview with the Author"
- <sup>34</sup> Michael McDevitt, "Security Challenges and Options in Northeast Asia", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Autumn 2001, p. 35
- <sup>35</sup> Toshimitsu Shigemura, "Reunification of the Korean Peninsula and Japanese Foreign Policy", *op.cit.*, pp. 58
- <sup>36</sup> Denny Roy, "The China Threat: Major Arguments", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 36, No. 8, August 1996, pp. 758-71
- Michael Finnegan argues that it would not serve the Unified Korea's interest to align with China. See his article. "The Security Strategy of Unified Korea and the Security Relations of Northeast Asia", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XI, No. 2, Winter 1999, p. 135
- <sup>37</sup> Jangho Kim, "Prospects for A Northeast Asian Multilateral Security Order and the United States", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XV II, No. 3, Winter 2005, p. 92
- <sup>38</sup> Takashi Susumu, "The Global Meaning of Japan; The State's Persistently Precarious Position in The World Order" in Glenn D. Hook and Hasegawa Harukiyo, eds., *The Political Economy of Japanese Globalization* (London, Routledge, 2001) pp. 19-39
- <sup>39</sup> Byungki Kim, "Japan -U.S. - China: A New Strategic Traiangle?: The Impact on Korea" *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Summer 1999, pp. 187-188
- <sup>40</sup> Masao Okonogi, *Op.cit.*, He added that Japan's defense strategy was defensive and that the country would remain so.
- <sup>41</sup> Renato Cruz De Castro, "The Realist's Puzzle: Japan's Post-Cold War Defense Policy" *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1999, p. 33
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* P.52; See also Jitsuo Tsuchiyama, "The Role of Alliance in Post-Cold War East Asia; The Case of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance" in Tae-Hwan Kwak and Thomas L'Wilborn, eds., *The U.S.-ROK Alliance in Transition* (Seoul, Kyungnam University Press, 1996)
- <sup>43</sup> On the contrary, Aaron Friedberg argues that the contemporary trend in world politics is toward regionalization rather than globalization. See his article: "Ripe for rivalry: Prospects for peace in a multipolar Asia", in Michael Brown and Stephen Miller, eds., *East Asian Security*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996) p. 3
- <sup>44</sup> Michael McDevitt, *op. cit.*, p. 41
- <sup>45</sup> Tomoyuki Ishizu, "The Japanese Way in Warfare: Japan's Grand Strategy for the Twenty-First Century", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 11, No. 1,

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