

Japan: A stabilizer in East Asia

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Introduction

(1) I am very happy to have this opportunity to speak at York University, which plays an important part in the intellectual dialogue between Japan and Canada. Dr. Lorna Marsden, the President, is an active member of the Canada-Japan Forum, a group of eminent persons compiling a set of recommendations for our two prime ministers. Dr. David Dewitt has been responsible for the Canadian academic side of the ongoing Canada-Japan Peace and Security Cooperation Symposium, which held its fourth meeting last June in Tokyo.

(2) For my part, I am a practicing diplomat. It has been said that a diplomat is someone who finds himself between two countries for people to wipe their feet on, like a doormat. I am happy to say that this does not apply to me here in Canada. I feel comfortable about the state of our relationship. At the same time, we should learn more about each other, and we can do a lot more together not just bilaterally but also regionally and globally.

(3) In Canada, there may be nostalgia for the golden age of Canada's role in world affairs, such as in the drafting of the United Nations Charter, the Suez crisis, UN peace-keeping and the Colombo Plan. The International Policy Statement of last April gives expression to Canada's desire to make a difference to the world. Japan, for its part, strove to rebuild itself from the debris of World War II, and, with its return to the international fold, has been seeking to play a more proactive role as a responsible member of the international community.

Economic issues such as trade and investment tend to dominate the Japan-Canada agenda. Since Prime Minister Paul Martin's visit to Japan last January, attention has been focused on the progress of the work under way between our two governments to develop an innovative economic framework comprising cooperation in 15 priority areas and the launching of a joint study on the benefits and costs of further promotion

of trade and investment and other cooperative issues. Equally important is the 2005 Canada-Japan Agenda for Peace and Security Cooperation, which our two governments also agreed on when Prime Minister Martin visited Japan. We should be making conscious efforts to put this agenda into practice as well.

2. Mutual images

(1) Canada today is a truly multicultural society, where the heritages of the many ethnic communities are respected and preserved, and newcomers are welcomed warmly. The Governor General, Mme Michaëlle Jean, said in an interview with *L'actualité* in the November 1st issue: « Le Canada est un pays qui contient le monde, qui se réinvente au fur et à mesure de l'arrivée d'immigrants qui s'y installent, y mettent de leur couleur, de leur savoir-faire, de leur sensibilité, de leurs préoccupations. » (“Canada is a country that contains the world, that reinvents itself as new immigrants settle in, add their own colors, know-how, sensibility and preoccupations.”) The Japanese should develop a better understanding of this aspect of Canada, which manifests itself in Canada’s strong commitment to human rights, humanitarianism and egalitarianism in its external policy.

(2) In the meantime, there have been changes taking place in Japan, which may not be immediately visible to the Canadian eye.

(a) Through a host of structural reforms, the negative legacy of the collapse of the bubble in the early 1990’s, such as the bad loans problem, has been cleared away. The economic recovery has been going on for three and a half years since 2002 without relying on additional public spending, and moderate recovery continues now, centered on private demand. A real growth of 2.2 – 2.5% is forecast by a majority of the Bank of Japan Policy Council for 2005.

(b) Faced with an even more serious demographic challenge than Canada is (the ratio of people over 65 years of age within the total population is now about 20% as compared to 13% in Canada), the Japanese people have, for some time, felt uncertain about the future. Like Canada, Japan’s democracy is predicated on the existence of a well-educated middle class who are guaranteed fundamental human rights, such as the right of free expression. In the House of Representatives election on September 11th, the voters were given a clear choice of policies between the Liberal Democratic Party that advocated the privatization of the postal service, and the Democratic Party of Japan that argued that there were other more important matters to deal with.

(c) The choice of the people was to give the LDP and its coalition partner, the New

Komeito Party, more than a two thirds majority, so as to continue the move toward a smaller government and accelerate reform. Thus, Japan has a vibrant democracy where people are given the choice to effect change.

3. Asia-Pacific region: Economic dimension

(1) What is notable in East Asia today is the rapidly intensifying interdependence and regional cooperation among the countries of the region. Japan, China, the Republic of Korea and ASEAN are home to approximately one third of the world's population and account for about one fifth of both the world's nominal GDP and total trade volume. The dependence on intra-regional trade in East Asia (Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, ASEAN 10 plus Hong Kong and Taiwan) is 53.3% in 2003, greater than 45% within NAFTA and comparable to 60% within EU. In 2004, Japan's trade with China, including Hong Kong, reached US\$205 billion, surpassing its trade with its traditional No.1 trade partner, the U.S., which was US\$ 189 billion. Japan's direct investment in China in 2003 was US\$57.5 billion, and as many as one or two million Chinese are estimated to be working at Japanese affiliated firms in China.

(2) In recognition of such economic inter-linkage in East Asia, the Canadian government's International Trade Policy Statement last April stated: "No lasting success can be achieved in China and other dynamic Asian economies without involving Japan." These days, the buzz word in Canada is the rise of China and India. Let me note that, in terms of the present sizes of the economy, Japan's GDP is three times that of China, five times that of Canada, and seven times that of India. It is not just to China alone or to Japan alone that Canadian businesses should reach out, but to Asia as a whole. Japan should be seen as a pivot in the East Asian economic linkages and a stepping stone to Asia.

4. Asia-Pacific region: Political and strategic dimensions

(1) For Canada to benefit fully from the great economic potential and dynamism of Asia, peace and security must be maintained there. Japan and Canada have a shared interest in this, and I would like to see Canada actively interested and engaged in the region as one of our partners.

(2) Given the diversity in stages of development, political systems, and cultural and religious heritages, political and security institution-building in East Asia has not kept pace with the intensifying economic interdependence and regional cooperation. There

exist elements of instability, including the situations on the Korean Peninsula and in the Taiwan Strait, and transnational issues, such as terrorism, piracy and organized crime in Southeast Asia. Vulnerability to natural disasters presents stark challenges, as tragically demonstrated by the earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and the Tsunami Disaster in the Indian Ocean in December last year as well as the earthquake in Pakistan and the surrounding areas last month.

(3) For the stable development of the countries in the region, it is important to foster further regional cooperation that is open to the outside world, as well as to strengthen the ties based on shared values such as democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. As the most mature industrialized democracy in East Asia, Japan has an important role to play in this regard, and can work together with Canada.

5. Japan: A stabilizer in East Asia

(1) In East Asia, the strategic balance has been kept since WWII between continental powers like China and Russia on the one hand and, on the other, the United States, a global maritime power who has maintained the forward deployment of its forces through its alliances with Japan and the Republic of Korea. For its part, Japan firmly resolved never again to take the path to war, and has steadfastly maintained its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means and not by force. Its Self-Defense Forces have never engaged in combat anywhere. Thus, foreswearing the option of going it alone for its own defense, Japan has carefully forged its alliance with the United States. Today, as a reliable ally of the United States, Japan is a mature, moderate stabilizing power in East Asia. There is no turning back the clock to its military past.

(2) During the Cold War period, the division of labor under the Japan-US alliance was such that Japan was to provide the shield (its limited self-defense capability) against a possible Soviet invasion and the United States was to provide the spear (tactical strike force of the US Forces). With end of the Cold War, the Soviet threat was sharply reduced. However, there remain tensions and elements of instability, as the Japanese people felt acutely when North Korea launched its Taepodong missile over Japan in August 1998. The alliance has been going through a process of adjustment.

(a) The common strategic objectives of Japan and the United States in the region today include, among others, seeking peaceful resolution of issues related to North

Korea (nuclear programs, ballistic missile activities, abduction of Japanese nationals), developing a cooperative relationship with China, encouraging the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait through dialogue, and encouraging China to improve transparency of its military affairs. The fight against terrorism, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), assistance to Iraq, and disaster relief following the tsunami and in the Indian Ocean and the earth quake in South Asia are also shared priorities.

(b) The concept of “situations in the areas surrounding Japan” has been introduced, making it possible for the JSDF to provide rear area (logistic) support to the US Forces in the event of contingencies in the areas surrounding Japan, which are short of actual attacks on Japan, but directly affect Japan’s security.

(c) The intensive consultations between the two governments over the past two years have resulted in the report by the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee (comprising the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defense of Japan and the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense of the United States, commonly referred to as the “2+2 meeting”) held on October 29th.

(i) The basic concepts of roles, missions and capabilities include:

- Japan will defend itself and respond to situations in areas surrounding Japan, including addressing new threats and diverse contingencies such as ballistic missile attacks, attacks by guerilla and special forces, and invasion of remote islands. Japan’s defense posture will be strengthened in accordance with the 2004 National Defense Program Guidelines.

- The U.S. will maintain forward-deployed forces, and augment them as needed, for the defense of Japan as well as to deter and respond to situations in areas surrounding Japan. The U.S. will provide all necessary support for the defense of Japan.

- U.S. strike capabilities and the nuclear deterrence provided by the U.S. remain essential complement to Japan’s defense capabilities in ensuring the defense of Japan and contribute to peace and security in the region.

(ii) Both sides stressed the value of closely coordinating improvements in their respective BMD capabilities. The U.S. envisages the deployment of additional complimentary capabilities such as a new U.S. X-Band radar system and Patriot PAC-3 and Standard Missile (SM-3) in and around Japan when appropriate. There will be close coordination between respective BMD command and control systems.

(iii) The largest realignment of the U.S. Forces in Japan in the post-WWII era is envisioned. The major components include: (1) A new command structure for the US Army in Japan at Camp Zama (Kanagawa Prefecture), with the Ground SDF Central

Readiness Force Command also to be located at that same facility; (2) establishment at Yokota Air Base (western Tokyo) of a US-Japan “bilateral joint operations coordination center”; (3) acceleration of the relocation of Futenma Air Station (Okinawa Prefecture); (4) reduction in the number of US marines stationed in Okinawa by 7,000 troops; and (5) relocation of the US carrier air wing at Atsugi Air Facility (Kanagawa Prefecture) to Iwakuni Air Station (Yamaguchi Prefecture).

(d) The difficult challenge in this process of realignment has been to strike a right balance between the need to maintain the deterrence and the need to alleviate the burden on the local communities in which the bases are situated. I can speak from my personal experience that alliance management does involve a lot of nitty-gritty. My job in Okinawa, where 75% of the US bases in Japan and more than 60% of the US military personnel in Japan were concentrated, was to deal with the frictions arising between the people of Okinawa and the US Forces in Okinawa. I felt like a fire department, always telling people to be careful (not to cause fires, i.e., incidents and accidents), and when fires do break out (for example, a rape or a helicopter crash), rushing around to put them out.

One of Japan’s most important policy priorities continues to be to strengthen further its relations with its neighboring countries such as China and the Republic of Korea and to contribute to the peace and stability of East Asia. We see China’s development not as a threat but as an opportunity for Japan. It is clearly in our mutual interest for Japan and China to work together as partners for peace, stability and prosperity in the region. We appreciate China’s active efforts in the Six-Party Talks on the DPRK’s nuclear programs, which pose a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime centering on the NPT, as well as constitute a direct threat to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. We intend to continue our utmost efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through translating into action the Joint Statement adopted on September 20th. At the same time, we would like to see an increasingly democratic China constructively engaged economically, politically and strategically in regional and global affairs.

6. The global agenda

(1) Neither Japan nor Canada is given to throwing its weight, especially military weight, around. We are both well disposed to multilateralism. There is a lot of potential for our cooperation in the global context. The UN Summit in New York last month highlighted some of the key areas in which we can cooperate.

(2) Over the past decade, Japan has been actively involved in the consolidation of peace in strife-ridden regions. As a part of UN peace-keeping activities, its Self-Defense Forces were dispatched to Cambodia, Mozambique, former Zaire, Golan Heights and East Timor. For the past four years, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force ships have been refueling U.S. and other naval vessels, including Canadian vessels, taking part in maritime interdiction operations of the Operation Enduring Freedom in the Indian Ocean. Both Japan and Canada have been actively contributing to the consolidation of peace in Afghanistan: Japan through its assistance amounting to US\$ 10 billion and its support to the DDR, whereby 63,000 former Afghan soldiers have been disarmed, of which 62,000 have been demobilized, and Canada through its command of the ISAF and its recent dispatch of the PRT (provisional reconstruction team) in Kandahar. In Iraq, 600 Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force personnel have been carrying out humanitarian relief and reconstruction activities since January 2004. Canada has a proud record in peace-keeping and peace-building. If we can combine our experiences, we can do more to help others.

(3) It is necessary to achieve a synergy of seamless international efforts that incorporates military operations, mediation, post-conflict reconstruction and nation-building. Both Canada and Japan actively support the establishment of the Peace-building Commission in the UN to this end.

(4) The outcome document of the UN Summit includes a reference to the notion of "human security", which Canada and Japan have respectively advocated. The Canadian approach has focused on the freedom from fear and the relevance of the notion to the responsibility to protect and humanitarian intervention. Japan, for its part, has focused on the freedom from want and the need for capacity-building of the vulnerable. The Trust Fund for Human Security in the U.N. was established in March 1999, with contributions from Japan that have so far amounted to US\$ 260 million. Under the Fund, 136 projects have been implemented in 104 countries, in such areas as poverty, environment, post-conflict situations, refugees, drugs, health, disasters and crime. Japan and Canada do share the same objective of mainstreaming the human-centered approach, namely, stressing the importance of protection and empowerment of individuals against pervasive and critical threats to human life and dignity. We look forward to translating this into concrete actions

together.

(5) Like Canada, Japan is strongly committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and regrets the lack of agreement on substantive issues at the 2005 NPT Review Conference as well as the absence of reference to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the outcome document of the UN Summit. In this 60th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan put forward to the First Committee of the U.N. a resolution entitled “Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons”, calling for an effective NPT review process, deeper reductions in all types of nuclear weapons, early entry into force of the CTBT and maintenance of existing moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions, and immediate commencement of negotiation on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty and its early conclusion. The resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority of 166 votes in favor (including Canada), 2 against, and 7 abstentions.

(6) Both Japan and Canada would like to see the UN Security Council function effectively. Japan believes that the reform of the Security Council, whose basic composition has remained unchanged since 1945, is essential for the overall reform of the UN. Over the past six decades, Japan has come to contribute actively to peace, stability and prosperity of the world. Our contribution to the financing of the UN amounts to some 20% of the UN regular budgets, larger than the combined contributions of Britain, France, Russia and China. We are firmly convinced that Japan can play a constructive role as permanent member in the reformed Security Council. We will continue to make our utmost effort to move the process forward and reach an early decision for Security Council reform within the current session of the UN General Assembly.

7. Conclusion

(1) We have fostered the Japan-Canada partnership since the end of WWII on the basis of the shared values of freedom, democracy, the respect for human rights and the belief in the market economy. As such, we feel comfortable with each other. To borrow a phrase from Anne Shirley of “Anne of Green Gables”, which is very popular in Japan, I would even say that Japan and Canada are “kindred spirits” (*les âmes sœurs*).

(2) My listing of the possible areas for Japan-Canada cooperation is by no means

exhaustive. Development, especially African development, is high on the global agenda. So is the whole question of the environment including climate change. We need fresh ideas and imagination in moving forward with regional and global cooperation for peace and security. I highly appreciate the role played by the Canada-Japan Peace and Security Cooperation Symposium, and welcome the fact that it is being turned into an annual event. I would like to see similar dialogues take place at various other levels, so that we may each develop a better appreciation of Canada's desire to make a difference to the world and Japan's intention to be a stabilizer in East Asia and a proactive and responsible player for international peace and security. I thank Dr. Dewitt and others at York University for providing me with this platform, and look forward to useful inputs from you.

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