



**Evolution of a Multilateral Security Mechanism
in Northeast Asia: Issues and Prospects**



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Introduction

On August 10-11, 2010, 16 Young Leaders joined senior participants at the Japan-China-US-ROK Dialogue in Tokyo, Japan. Young Leaders usually attend Pacific Forum conferences as observers, but in this case, many had the opportunity to share their next generation views with their senior counterparts during both the main conference and on the sidelines during breaks and the meals. To better understand the dynamic relationship between Japan, China, the US, and the Republic of Korea, Young Leaders held a separate roundtable session after the conference to discuss the prospect and utility of multilateral mechanisms in defining security challenges in Northeast Asia.

Prior to their arrival in Tokyo, Young Leaders were given a short query to stimulate their thinking on the topic of the conference and jumpstart their discussions in conjunction with the conference discussions. They were asked if the Six-Party Talks will serve as the basis of a Northeast Asian security mechanism, and how the US alliances in Asia would be affected. While some believed that the Six-Party Talks would support an institutionalized security mechanism because relations within the group could improve the chance for better cooperation in the region, others were pessimistic about the apparent inefficiencies associated with mechanism and failure of the Six-Party Talks to resolve security issues on the Korean Peninsula. While the Talks focused primarily on the denuclearization of North Korea's, some Young Leaders argued that a fully effective multilateral security mechanism needed to focus more on broader security objectives. The preliminary essays provided useful insights and helped stimulate the post-conference discussion among Young Leaders. These essays provide insights into the minds of the next generation and present their viewpoints on the possible roles of a multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia. The essays are included in this publication in Appendix A.

Although there wasn't enough time to fully discuss all the complexities of the quadrilateral relationship, the group was able to examine several aspects of regional security and debated differing perceptions offered by participants from Japan, China, the US, and the Republic of Korea. Issues discussed that are shaping Northeast Asia's security environment included the effects of the global financial crisis, the changes in security calculations on the Korean Peninsula after the sinking of the *Cheonan*, prospects for improving bilateral relations between countries, the challenge associated with the emergence of China as a regional power, and ongoing nuclear stand-off on the Korean Peninsula. A summary of the discussion is included in this publication in Appendix B.

The primary content of this publication are essays, written by 13 Young Leader participants, on the prospects for the development of a multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia. The essays offer a wide range of views on the relative value of a multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia and the issues that could be addressed in such a forum.

Most are fairly skeptical that the Six-Party Talks could evolve into an effective mechanism due to its narrow focus on security issues on the Korean Peninsula. While some argue that any multilateral mechanism must include the six parties, they are skeptical that any real progress can be made on resolving the primary security issues without a dramatic change in attitude by one or more parties involved.

There is also a range of assessments about the value of the US alliances. Some see the alliances as forming the basis for a future multilateral mechanism. Others suggest that the alliances are compatible with the formation of other multilateral security mechanism. A third group sees the US alliances as part of the problem and a remnant of the Cold War.

Several authors argued that while multilateral cooperation on traditional security issues in Northeast Asia was difficult, prospects for cooperation on economic and nontraditional security issues were much greater. For some, this was seen as a positive development that would ultimately lead to better cooperation on traditional security issues. Others attributed the cooperation in these areas to more functional concerns and remained skeptical about the prospect for traditional security cooperation.

Finally, there was a divergence of opinion over the organizational aspects of multilateral security cooperation. For some, there was no need for more institutionalization in the region. They felt that the existing mechanisms such as the bilateral alliances, various functional cooperative mechanisms and the ASEAN-based multilateral organizations were sufficient if the political will to fully utilize them emerged. Others felt that multilateral organizations were of little use in a region that was characterized as a zero-sum security environment. A variation of this view was that a new multilateral security mechanism could only emerge with a dramatic change of perspective by one or more countries in the region.

What emerges from the exercise is that there is a wide range of attitudes among the younger generation regarding the value of a multilateral security mechanism in the region. Given this range of views, it seems likely that the process of institution building in Northeast Asia will continue at a relatively slow pace for the foreseeable future and will depend on the willingness of the major powers, especially China and the US, to recognize some common interests that would motivate them to more aggressively pursue this type of institutionalized framework to address them.

Is There a Need for a Multilateral Mechanism in Northeast Asia?

By See-Won Byun

Historically, Northeast Asia has lacked a formal mechanism for security cooperation, a trend attributed to deep-rooted bilateral grievances and Cold War rivalries that continue to undermine regionalism amid competing forces of globalization and nationalism.¹ While the existing frameworks for multilateral cooperation are primarily economic, security-based initiatives have failed to advance into a long-term regional forum for managing traditional security challenges despite increased economic integration. Regional institution-building efforts in Northeast Asia reveal ongoing differences regarding the nature of cooperation and scope of issues, membership, and broader vision for the regional security architecture.

Reassessing Multilateral Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia

The March 2010 sinking of the South Korean warship *Cheonan* and its aftermath underlined the basic weaknesses of Northeast Asian security cooperation. Initially an inter-Korean issue, the *Cheonan* incident has evolved into a regional dilemma revealing the limitations of Chinese leverage over North Korea, challenging the US-China relationship, and marking the lowest point in China-ROK relations since normalization in 1992.² Although the international response in the form of a UN Presidential Statement attempted to renew the foundation for the Six-Party Talks, bilateral tensions have resulted in widespread skepticism about the resumption of dialogue. US-ROK naval exercises in response to the *Cheonan* sinking have elicited a strong reaction from Beijing and highlighted the inherent conflict between US alliance cooperation and “strategic partnership” with China. Such regional responses reinforce fundamental questions regarding Northeast Asian regionalism: what is the most effective institutional mechanism for multilateral security cooperation, who should participate, and how should this mechanism be integrated into the broader regional architecture?

Current trends in the post-*Cheonan* regional security environment demand a reassessment of Northeast Asian multilateralism. First, the deadlock in the Six-Party Talks raises the need to move beyond the North Korean nuclear issue. Although DPRK denuclearization remains the primary focus of regional dialogue as the prerequisite for building a long-term security forum, multilateral denuclearization efforts must be coordinated with broader efforts to address existing and emerging challenges, such as territorial disputes, North Korean instability, maritime, and other nontraditional security issues. Second, current bilateral tensions appear to challenge the prospects for Northeast

¹ Gilbert Rozman, *Northeast Asia's Stunted Regionalism: Bilateral Distrust in the Shadow of Globalization*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

² Scott Snyder, “The Cheonan Incident and Its Impact on Regional Security,” *Asia Unbound*, Council on Foreign Relations, Aug. 25, 2010, <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/2010/08/25/the-cheonan-incident-and-its-impact-on-regional-security/>.

Asian institution-building. In addition to bilateral tensions among the United States, China, and the two Koreas, renewed China-Japan territorial disputes highlight the importance of enhancing bilateral ties as the foundation of multilateral dialogue. Third, regional responses to China's rise require a strengthened mechanism for policy coordination to avoid strategic miscalculation. The transformation of US alliances may further reinforce potential conflict in respective approaches to the changing regional security environment.

Multiple Frameworks for Cooperation: What Mechanism?

The core challenge of building a Northeast Asian security mechanism lies in reconciling multilateralism with "multilateralizing" US bilateral alliances in a way that leaves both arrangements effective and relevant. Recent studies suggest that Asian security institutions should be built upon complementary linkages between the US alliance network and multilateral security institutions to form a "multilayered security structure" that deals with traditional and nontraditional security threats.³ The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) has noted that the weakness of Asian security multilateralism is the lack of institutional coordination rather than the lack of security institutions; instead of seeking to establish a single multilateral institution that collectively addresses a variety of security issues, efforts should focus on the coordination of bilateral or multilateral institutions to create *de facto* security multilateralism.⁴ This perspective envisions the six-party framework as evolving into an umbrella organization linking various new and existing institutions that address different security issues among different groups of countries. But as events since North Korea's May 2009 nuclear test show, DPRK denuclearization remains the dominant agenda item in regional talks while renewed efforts to strengthen US alliance-based cooperation continue to raise concern from China.

The ongoing debate on security institution-building in Northeast Asia reveals two dilemmas. First, US alliances will continue to exist in the region as long as the North Korean threat remains, but efforts to expand the alliances into comprehensive partnerships will face opposition from third parties like China. Second, DPRK denuclearization remains the stumbling block in moving forward in multilateral security talks, but any regional dialogue framework should not exclude North Korea as a key participant. China made clear that it has no interest in holding talks among the other five parties as proposed by President Lee at his June 2009 summit with President Obama amid escalating regional tensions.⁵

³ Kim Sung-han, "Searching for A Northeast Asian Peace and Security Mechanism," *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (2008), pp. 127-156; "The Future of Regional Stability and Regional Security Mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific Region," in *Security Issues in the Asia Pacific*, NDS Joint Research Series No. 2, March 2008.

⁴ The CSCAP's Multilateral Security Governance in Northeast Asia/North Pacific: From the Six Party Talks to More Enduring Northeast Asian/North Pacific Security Multilateralism, Report to the CSCAP Steering Committee, Bangkok, Jan. 22, 2009.

⁵ "China again stresses addressing Korean peninsula nuclear issue via six-party talks," *Xinhua*, June 30, 2009.

It is possible to draw several lessons on building an effective security institution in Northeast Asia. First, although US alliances emphasize common values as a major rationale for cooperation, multilateral security cooperation must be driven by common interests rather than values and requires coordination of divergent priorities. Second, multilateralism should be regarded as a process involving trust and confidence-building over time. Active bilateral diplomatic efforts among members of the Six-Party Talks continue to shape the environment for multilateral dialogue in the long run; a results-oriented mechanism may develop based on these mutual security challenges. Third, this mechanism must be based on a clear scope of issues on which multilateral cooperation is most effective, necessary, and feasible.

The Northeast Asian Peace and Security Mechanism (NEAPSM) is an attractive starting point in thinking about an exclusively Northeast Asian security mechanism. It is a product of the Six-Party Talks, which, despite current pessimism regarding its resumption, China has consistently supported as the principal mechanism for dealing with security issues related to the Korean peninsula, the focal point of Northeast Asian security. Established in the February 2007 Action Plan for the Implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement, the NEAPSM Working Group exists alongside and can be separated from other working groups on North Korean denuclearization, US-DPRK and Japan-DPRK normalization, and economic and energy cooperation.⁶ The June 2010 Shangri-La Dialogue specified food and energy security, ethnic conflicts, insurgencies, and rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula as key challenges requiring strengthened regional cooperation.⁷ A Northeast Asian security mechanism could address such sub-regional security challenges as maritime and territorial disputes, including those related to exclusive economic zones, historical issues, ethnic minorities, environmental/public health disputes, and Korean Peninsula issues such as North Korean instability, unification, and peace regime-building.

Multiple Actors: Which Countries?

A Northeast Asian security institution should include the United States, the two Koreas, Japan, China, and Russia as core members. The US, along with Japan and South Korea, has proposed a Northeast Asia Regional Forum that would include the US, Japan, South Korea, China, and Russia as a counterpart to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to institutionalize cooperation on security, energy, health, and economic issues.⁸ But the utility of such an organization without North Korean participation is debatable given the centrality of the DPRK to Northeast Asian security and likely Chinese and Russian opposition. One initiative that attempted to establish a Northeast Asian sub-regional cooperation mechanism was the Tumen River Area Development Program (TRADP),

⁶ “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement,” Beijing, Feb. 13, 2007, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t297463.htm>

⁷ See IISS Asia Security Summit: The Shangri-La Dialogue, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, <http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2010/plenary-session-speeches/>

⁸ Dick K. Nanto, “East Asian Regional Architecture: New Economic and Security Arrangements and US Policy,” CRS Report for Congress, Jan. 4, 2008, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33653.pdf>

which was launched by the UN in 1992 with members initially including China, ROK, DPRK, Russia, and Mongolia (DPRK is no longer a member). The rationale for this initiative is based on the economic benefits of Northeast Asian integration and persistent problems have strained progress, although important efforts remain in the areas of energy and transport infrastructure.

The need for and potential benefits of regional security cooperation remain significant given existing bilateral and multilateral channels of security dialogue among the Northeast Asian powers. Although relatively nascent in their development, efforts such as the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue; +3 initiatives among Japan, South Korea, and China; and high-level bilateral security talks between and among US allies and China present an important institutional foundation for broader Northeast Asian dialogue. Prospects for building a long-term security institution in Northeast Asia will most importantly depend on sustained political will, leadership, and coordination among the key players.

- *United States*: US efforts to reinforce its leadership role in Asia reflect a renewed focus on multilateralism as a driver of security cooperation.⁹ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has outlined a “global architecture” consisting of “a network of alliances and partnerships, regional organizations and global institutions.”¹⁰ In Asia, regional organizations are one of the three pillars of US strategy that also includes its traditional bilateral alliances and partnerships with emerging powers like China and India.¹¹ US engagement in Asia through multilateral institutions also depends critically on US public support; recent polls by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs indicate that Americans would more strongly support a multilateral rather than US unilateral approach to North Korea.¹² While the extent of renewed US involvement in Asian multilateralism as well as the level of Asian support of such US participation remains unclear, the US must balance its bilateral relationships with China and its allies to play an effective role in Northeast Asian multilateralism. The current uncertainty of US-DPRK ties presents limitations for Northeast Asian security dialogue in the near term.
- *Japan*: Japan has shifted its focus from creating a values-based regional community under the “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” promoted by former Foreign Minister Taro Aso in 2006 that appeared to exclude China.¹³ Recently,

⁹ Hillary Clinton, “Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia: Principles and Priorities,” Honolulu, Hawaii, Jan. 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

¹⁰ Hillary Clinton, “Remarks on United States Foreign Policy,” Council on Foreign Relations, Washington DC, Sept. 8, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/09/146917.htm>

¹¹ James B. Steinberg, “Engaging Asia 2009: Strategies for Success,” Remarks at National Bureau of Asian Research, Washington DC, April 1, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/2009/121564.htm>

¹² Victor D. Cha and Katrin Katz, “Report on US Attitudes toward the Republic of Korea,” *Global Views 2010*, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Sept. 2010.

¹³ Speech by Mr. Taro Aso, Minister for Foreign Affairs on the Occasion of the Japan Institute of International Affairs Seminar “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan’s Expanding Diplomatic Horizons,” Nov. 30, 2006, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0611.html>

former Deputy Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka argued that “Japan should work with the United States, China and other partners” to create an “East Asia Security Forum as the core component of a new multilateral security architecture.”¹⁴ Japan increasingly recognizes the importance of cooperation with China, which replaced Japan as the world’s second largest economy in 2010, and sees a rising China rather than a nuclear North Korea as the greatest challenge to Japanese strategic interests in the long term. Although Japan preferred to be an observer in initiatives such as the TRADP, unresolved bilateral political tensions with North Korea and most recently with China underline the significance of Japan’s role in Northeast Asian security dialogue. Japan’s inability to engage in collective self-defense has made alliance cooperation with the US on any realistic contingency planning in the region nearly impossible, but the evolution of Japan’s military role in the region is an important question influencing prospects for security cooperation given recent Japanese contributions to anti-piracy operations and Japan’s significant defense capabilities. Japan’s experience in functional and nontraditional security cooperation in Southeast Asia and its role as a major donor in multilateral missions can also be applied to Northeast Asian contexts, such as potential post-conflict stabilization efforts on the Korean Peninsula.

- *South Korea*: As a middle power, South Korea under the Lee Myung-bak administration has actively sought to advance “Global Korea,” hosting the 2010 G20 and the upcoming 2012 Nuclear Security Summit. The Lee administration’s multilateral approach to the *Cheonan* sinking drew much praise from the US, but strengthened alignment with its US ally has deepened fundamental differences with China and undermined effective regional cooperation. A key problem in South Korea’s approach to Northeast Asian security appears to be the perception of an inherent conflict between bilateral cooperation with the US and China.¹⁵ In addition, while the US and China appear to converge in their preference for a multilateral approach to North Korea, South Korea’s preference in dealing with peninsular and regional security challenges remains uncertain. Seoul is concerned about being bypassed in any multilateral response to North Korea, but it is unclear to what extent South Korea is willing to lead and coordinate a multilateral approach to North Korea as expected by its allies and partners. In light of the *Cheonan* incident, some ROK analysts emphasize “Global Korea” and active participation in multilateralism as a strategy to gain leverage over China. Others point out that the most important long-term lesson for Seoul from the *Cheonan* incident is South Korea’s need to meet international obligations in line with its status as a G20 power and major Asian economic player.¹⁶ From an ROK

¹⁴ Donald Kirk, “North Korea plays on Tokyo’s mind,” *Asia Times*, March 6, 2010, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/LC06Dg01.html>

¹⁵ Taewoo Kim, “Post-Cheonan Regional Stability: A South Korean Perspective,” Paper presented at the symposium on “Post-Cheonan Regional Security,” Center for US-Korea Policy and Asan Institute for Policy Studies, Aug. 13, Seoul.

¹⁶ Lee Chung Min, “Initial Strategic Lessons from the Cheonan Incident: A View from South Korea” Paper presented at the symposium on “Post-Cheonan Regional Security,” Center for US-Korea Policy and Asian Institute for Policy Studies, Aug. 13, Seoul.

perspective, a Northeast Asian security mechanism should supplement the existing system of bilateralism as the US-ROK alliance remains the center of ROK security policy and bilateral security arrangements remain the foundation of Northeast Asian security.¹⁷ But domestic political divisions regarding alignment with China versus the US and South Korea's new global responsibilities will likely continue to constrain South Korea's full participation in regional institution-building efforts.

- *China*: The Chinese approach to Asian regionalism can be characterized as driven by pragmatism, based on short-term national interests according to regional political and economic circumstances, as reflected in its active promotion of economic regionalism, limited support of nontraditional security cooperation, and selective approach to traditional security issues.¹⁸ China's multilateral strategy is significantly shaped by Chinese nationalism, and its emphasis on state sovereignty places limits on its participation in regional security initiatives.¹⁹ The basic concern regarding Chinese perceptions of institutionalized regional security cooperation is its opposition to the US alliance system. In 2008, the PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman clearly stated that "the Cold War mentality of 'military alliance' would not be valid in viewing, measuring and handling the current global or regional security issues,"²⁰ a position that was reiterated by Chinese military leaders in response to the US-ROK naval drills after the *Cheonan* sinking. However, despite Chinese official remarks, Chinese scholars have also recognized that Beijing would accept a strengthened US alliance structure in Asia as long as it does not undermine Chinese national interests and contributes to regional stability.²¹ Furthermore, while China's approach to multilateralism has in the past been largely reactive, Beijing has increasingly embraced multilateral cooperation to promote the perception that is a responsible stakeholder. Actively mediating the Six-Party Talks in particular has been held up as an example. Beijing also has long-term institutional channels of cooperation with North Korea including party-to-party and military-to-military contacts that others do not have and could benefit from in a multilateral context. Although China has promoted "cooperative security" since the mid 1990s, its approach to regional multilateralism remains incoherent given two apparent inconsistencies. First, China has yet to balance its national interests and common interests. China's recent claim of the South China Sea as part of its "core national interests" has reignited debate on Chinese strategic intentions in redefining its national interests. Second, China seeks to enhance its participation in multilateral institutions to

¹⁷ Kim Sung-han, "Northeast Asian Regionalism in Korea," Council on Foreign Relations, December 2009.

¹⁸ Li Mingjiang, "China and Asian Regionalism: Pragmatism Hinders Leadership," S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Working Paper No. 179, May 19, 2009.

¹⁹ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and Approaches toward East Asian Regional Cooperation," Council on Foreign Relations, Dec. 2009.

²⁰ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang's Regular Press Conference on May 27, 2008.

²¹ Wu Xinbo, "US Security Policy in Asia: Implications for US-China Relations," The Brookings Institution, Sept. 2000.

alleviate regional fears of China's rise. Yet, it is concerned that any effort to lead regional integration would draw suspicion from other major powers.

- *Russia*: Russia has received the least attention as a participant in East Asian security institutions. Nevertheless, it has emerged as an increasingly multifaceted regional player, not only economically but also in energy and defense-related issues, moving beyond traditional ties with such partners as North Korea and India to reach out to South Korea and Southeast Asian nations. The Russian Far East (RFE) is an overlooked area of regional strategic interest. Given its border with China and North Korea, vast natural resources, and increasing investment from Japan and South Korea, the RFE's significant transnational and environmental security challenges present potential opportunities for regional multilateral cooperation. Although Russia's role in East Asian security organizations remains modest, its role in the Six-Party Talks and North Korea issues can be central as a permanent member of the UN Security Council along with China. Russia continues to provide important diplomatic support to North Korea. For example, following the *Cheonan* incident, it undertook its own investigation without releasing the results.
- *North Korea*: Although Kim Jong-il reportedly expressed North Korea's interest in returning to the Six-Party Talks at his August 2010 meeting with President Hu Jintao, other parties remain unconvinced about North Korean sincerity absent real declarations of its international denuclearization commitments. A major challenge in reengaging Pyongyang in multilateral denuclearization talks appears to be its growing assertion as a nuclear weapons state at a time when its internal political situation remains volatile. North Korea rejects dialogue based on its perception of the US "hostile policy." But US hostile policy can be regarded as a tool rather than a driver of Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

While the extent of Chinese influence over North Korea, especially through trade and economic ties that appear to directly contradict international and US-led sanctions, remains questionable, it is also important to consider the limitations of North Korea's long-term dependence on China. DPRK interests in regional security institutions can be shaped by not only its "special" relationship with China but also favorable relations with the US and South Korea. North Korea continues to seek Chinese diplomatic and economic support given the pressure of sanctions, political uncertainty, and limited inter-Korean and US-DPRK contacts, but its long-term strategic plans remain unclear and will depend on how its domestic transition unfolds.

Creating An Integrated Northeast Asian Security Architecture

The *Cheonan* incident appeared to reinforce the Cold War legacy in Northeast Asia, widening the gap between China and Russia on the one hand and the US and its allies on the other. Given current regional strains, South Korea's Lee Myung-bak administration continues to step up its alliance-strengthening efforts with the US and

Japan's new leadership is also refocusing efforts on the US-Japan alliance while showing wariness toward China. While regional security tends to be assessed in the context of managing alliance relations, the centrality of the US-China relationship is increasingly apparent. South Korea sees US-China alignment in the form of "G2" leadership as a major threat to its strategic interests, but also sees US-China tensions as a destabilizing factor in regional relations. A Northeast Asian security mechanism should facilitate needed strategic dialogue and policy coordination to avoid misperceptions and unintended conflict.

An exclusively Northeast Asian security mechanism should complement and not undermine existing mechanisms of regional cooperation as it maintains a distinct vision and set of priorities. To emerge as effective collective players in the broader regional community, the Northeast Asian countries must strengthen coordination among each other and with counterpart organizations while focusing on the core issues requiring sub-regional cooperation. Coherent Asian security architecture will also require a clear division of labor among the regional organizations.

As the leading organization for regional security cooperation, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has progressed considerably since its creation in 1994. But after 16 years, it is still perceived as ineffective in addressing the region's serious security challenges as long as ASEAN maintains an "ad hoc" approach to regionalism.²² The ARF has evolved into a more open and transparent organization in recent years, facilitating dialogue on Burmese human rights issues and conducting its first joint humanitarian exercises in 2009. It has in the past successfully engaged China to resolve security concerns over the Spratly Islands. However, the emergence of US-China differences over the South China Sea at the July 2010 Hanoi meeting suggests that the organization plays a limited role in addressing conflicts of "great power" interests as presented on the Korean Peninsula. Managing the dynamics of great power politics will be a central challenge of the Northeast Asian security mechanism.

As a newer initiative, the East Asia Summit (EAS) is the focus of current attention; the United States now supports its development into a "foundational security and political institution" in the region.²³ With the US and Russia becoming members in 2011, the EAS must reassess its approach to identity-building since its initial conception was as an "East Asia-only" organization. Its focus on "broad strategic, political, and economic issues" suggests that its role as a security institution may be limited, but EAS may emerge as a key organization for engaging Northeast Asian countries in such common emerging issues as climate change, energy, disaster relief, and economic integration, with eventual participation of North Korea.

²² Tan See Seng, "ASEAN Regional Forum at 17: The Curse of 'Ad Hoc-ism'?" *Eurasia Review*, Aug. 3, 2010, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/201008036335/asean-regional-forum-at-17-the-curse-of-ad-hoc-ism.html>

²³ Hillary Clinton, "Remarks on United States Foreign Policy," Council on Foreign Relations, Washington DC, Sept. 8, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/09/146917.htm>

A key question emerging from the current trend of Asian multilateralism is the role of the United States. While the multitude of Asian groups has received mixed assessments, Washington recognizes the critical role of multilateral institutions in addressing global challenges in a “new world order.”²⁴ The post-*Cheonan* security environment in Northeast Asia reveals fundamental differences in strategic interests at a time when major domestic transitions in the region will likely drive voices of nationalism, marking an important stage in rethinking effective mechanisms for promoting regional security cooperation.

²⁴ James B. Steinberg, “Rising Powers and Global Institutions: World Order in the 21st Century,” Remarks at The Council on Foreign Relations, Washington DC, May 19, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/2010/142120.htm>

Envisioning East Asia: Between Regionalization and Regionalism

By Eunil Cho

Regionalism plays a pivotal role in shaping East Asian integration. The strategic architecture in Northeast Asia was created during the Cold War.¹ In the West, the US built the so-called hub-and-spokes alliance system, a series of bilateral security alliances maximizing its asymmetrical power across the region. Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan were firmly tied by the US to contain the communist powers.² In the East, a multilateral security system based on communism proved fragile when the Sino-Soviet split caused disintegration of the international communist movement. These structural elements impeded the formation of multilateral forms of security cooperation in Northeast Asia. However, recent history shows that global power balance is shifting with the rise of new regional powers such as the EU and China. Hence, regional integration can now proceed to facilitate regional stability and prosperity in East Asia.

The post-Cold War environment has facilitated the removal of barriers to regional cooperation in Northeast Asia. As Barry Buzan notes, the end of the Cold War opened the way for an external transformation in the security architecture in the region.³ The Soviet-US competition for influence and ideology in Northeast Asia was eliminated. North Korea no longer looked to Russia – which once wielded influence in the region – for aid, trade, and diplomatic support. China's interests evolved into more pragmatic pursuits such as opening up trade and investment, while reacting sensitively to US criticism of its domestic affairs. Japan aimed to build a stable bilateral relationship with China by moderately balancing its rise while strengthening the alliance with the US. South Korea renewed its diplomatic ties with China and remains Japan's close economic partner. Taiwan tried to consolidate its democracy based on its independence from mainland China by applying for membership in the World Trade Organization and bidding for a seat in the UN General Assembly.⁴ These changes seemed to work as favorable conditions for cooperation in Northeast Asia. Certainly, there have been an increasing number of official and unofficial, formal and informal, and bilateral and multilateral dialogues and negotiations to resolve regional security issues, all of which are promising signs for regional peace and stability.⁵ But the effectiveness of these security forums remains unclear. As long as Cold War divisions persist between the

¹ Lowell Dittmer, "The Emerging Northeast Asian Regional Order," in Samuel S. Kim (ed.), *The International Relations of Northeast Asia* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 342-349.

² Barry Buzan, "Security Architecture in Asia: the interplay of regional and global levels," *The Pacific Review* 16:2 (2003), pp. 151-152.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁴ Yun-han Chu, "Taiwan's Unique Challenge," in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), *Democracy in East Asia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), pp. 133-146.

⁵ Vind K. Aggarwal and Min Gyo Koo, "Economic and Security Institution Building in Northeast Asia: An Analytical Overview," in Vind K. Aggarwal, Min Gyo Koo, Seoungjoo Lee and Chung-in Moon (eds.) *Northeast Asia: Ripe for Integration* (Berlin: Springer, 2008), pp. 1-35

major powers, no one can expect any dramatic development in the creation of regional forms to deal with tension, crisis, and conflict.⁶

This article focuses on how East Asia is moving toward creating regionalism vis-à-vis three international relations theories – namely realism, new institutionalism, and constructivism. First, I explain how states shape regionalism through theoretical frameworks and then explain how they facilitate regionalism. Second, I show how international relations theories explain and predict East Asian regionalism. This analysis proceeds in four steps: 1) summarize the definition of regionalism; 2) explain East Asian regionalism with reference to the historical context; 3) offer three theoretical perspectives regarding regional grouping in East Asia; and 4) conclude that East Asia is placed between regionalization and regionalism, defining its ends in three terms – power struggle, economic growth, and regional identity.

What is regionalism?

Regionalism in the 1990s was promoted by decentralization of the international system with the removal of superpower competition, the growth of regional integration, and the emergence of regional identities. Many argue that regionalism starts from two premises: 1) it is a response to globalization; and 2) it emerges from the internal mechanisms of the region and the motivations and strategies of regional members.⁷

Before looking into regionalism in depth, let's trace the etymology of regionalism – namely, what “-ism” means. “-ism” indicates a principle, belief, or movement whereas “-ization” means process or result of doing or making.⁸ When we define globalization or regionalization, it is a process occurring without a certain political principle or belief. Globalization is a process or result of political, economic, and social integration throughout the world while regionalization is a process of increasing exchange, contacts, and coordination within a region. On the other hand, when we define globalism or regionalism, it needs principles or beliefs that an identifiable group of actors are sharing about the world or a region. Hence, forming regionalism requires a principle, belief, or movement among regional actors.

⁶ Ellen L. Frost and David C. Kang, “Security in Northeast Asia: Time for New Architecture?” in Vind K. Aggarwal, Min Gyo Koo, Seungjoo Lee and Chung-in Moon (eds.) *Northeast Asia: Ripe for Integration* (Berlin: Springer, 2008), pp. 216-217.

⁷ Mary Farrell, “The Global Politics of Regionalism: An Introduction,” in *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mary Farrell, Bjorn Hettne and Luk Vam Langenhove (London and Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2005), pp. 1-3.

⁸ See the definition of “-zation” and “-ism”, accessing <www.thefreedictionary.com> and <en.wiktionary.org/wiki/>.

The concept of regionalism is not fixed, and has been subject to multiple interpretations.⁹ Naoko Munakata defines regionalism as institutional frameworks set up by governments in the region to promote regional economic integration.¹⁰ Mary Farrell notes that regionalism is regarded as a multidimensional form of integration embracing economic, cultural, political, and social aspects.¹¹ Louise Fawcett observes that a concept of regionalism is a policy and project whereby states and nonstate actors cooperate and coordinate strategy within a given region.¹² Andrew Hurrell points out that ‘regionalism’ is a blanket term that includes processes of social and economic regionalization to the growth of regional awareness or identity, the formation of interstate regional institutions, and the emergence of politically cohesive regional blocs.¹³ As the definition of regionalism is varied, its practices and processes are different among regions. Yet, one core element needed to form a sense of regionalism is formally institutionalized connections among regional members.

European regional integration is often regarded as a benchmark of regionalism. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) created by six members in 1957 was the foundation of the European Union (EU) today.¹⁴ It has since expanded from the original six members to include Britain, Spain, and Portugal. Currently, Turkey and Croatia are candidate countries.¹⁵ The EU sets up the regional agenda, provides public goods, and confronts global as well as regional challenges such as terrorism, climate change, and energy supply. Hurrell’s concept of regionalism can be applied to the development of the EU. In terms of social and economic regionalization, it has widened its scope of activity through the Single Market Program of 1985 and the Single European Act of 1987. In terms of regional awareness, it established common policies in social affairs and defense and foreign policy with the Maastricht Treaty of 1991. In terms of creating a cohesive regional bloc, it created the European Court of Justice (ECJ), and 25 member countries signed a treaty establishing a European Constitution in 2004.¹⁶ Therefore, European states have promoted a sense of regional awareness by consolidating regional groups and formalized institutional frameworks through interstate arrangements.

⁹ Louise Fawcett, “Regionalism from a Historical Perspective,” in *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mary Farrell, Bjorn Hettne and Luk Vam Langenhove (London and Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2005), p. 23.

¹⁰ Naoko Munakata, “Has Politics Caught Up with Markets? In Search of East Asian Economic Regionalism,” in *Beyond Japan*, ed. Peter Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraiishi (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 130

¹¹ Farrell, “The Global Politics of Regionalism,” p. 8.

¹² Fawcett, “Regionalism from a Historical Perspective,” p. 24.

¹³ Andrew Hurrell, “The Regional Dimension in International Relations Theory,” in *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mary Farrell, Bjorn Hettne and Luk Vam Langenhove (London and Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2005), p. 41.

¹⁴ It was started by six members of France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

¹⁵ For more details, access to the EU homepage, <http://europa.eu/index_en.htm>.

¹⁶ Joseph M. Grieco, “Systemic Sources of Variation in Regional Institutionalization in Western Europe, East Asia, and the Americas,” in *The Political Economy of Regionalism*, ed. Edward D. Mansfield and Helen V. Milner (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 164-187.

East Asian Regionalism

Unlike the experience of Europe, regional grouping or regional integration has a short history in East Asia. The idea of regionalism emerged as a response to the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s. The financial crisis made East Asia more aware and helped develop a sense of its own identity and its own capacity to deal with economic vulnerability.¹⁷ Yet, some regional framework proposals were proposed in the early 1990s. While APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) was launched in 1989 with US leadership, EAEC (East Asia Economic Caucus) was rejected, and thus ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was the only body that identified itself as solely Asian.

Table 1. East Asia’s Multilateral dialogues and forums

Grouping	Membership	Est.
ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)	ASEAN member states	2004
ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)	ASEAN member states	2006
ASEAN+3 (APT)	ASEAN member states, plus China, Japan, and South Korea	1996
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	ASEAN member states plus ASEAN dialogue partners	1994
Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)	ASEAN member states plus Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, China, Russia, Taiwan, and the United States	1989
East Asia Summit (EAS)	APT members plus Australia, India, and New Zealand	2005
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)	China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan	2001
Shangri-La Dialogue	Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanak, Thailand, Timor Leste, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam	2002
Six-Party Talks (SPT)	China, Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States	2003
Trilateral Security Dialogue	Australia, Japan, and the United States	2006
Tripartite Summit	China, Japan, and South Korea	2008

Source: Nick Bisley, *Building Asia’s Security* (New York: Routledge, 2009)

¹⁷ Hurrell, “The Regional Dimension in International Relations Theory,” p. 52.

East Asian regional institutions are informal, process-driven, reliant on consensual decision-making, and largely oriented toward an open regional economy.¹⁸ Most notably, they share preference for export-led growth and require a focus on function over form to achieve more purposeful multilateralism.¹⁹ As shown in Table 1, there is a significant increase in institutional efforts to achieve extensive as well as pragmatic and low-key multilateral cooperation. It includes open-ended intergovernmental groupings, ad hoc functional mechanisms, and non-traditional modes of security cooperation.²⁰ The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the oldest surviving regional institution, has adopted a “conflict-avoidance” approach that emphasizes peaceful means to settle intra-regional differences based on the principle of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.²¹ ASEAN’s efforts in East Asian institutions are distinctive. ASEAN has contributed to maintain regional stability and to facilitate implementation of an export-led economic growth model by opening access to foreign investment and export markets. Of 12 regional groupings, ASEAN has played a pivotal role in six multilateral processes including ASEAN+3 (APT), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and East Asian Summit (EAS). APT manages East Asia’s regional economic development against the forces of globalization and facilitates low-key interaction of APT member states on important security issues over disputed territories. The ARF, the main security organization, which includes non-East Asian states, addresses traditional security issues such as North Korea’s nuclear program and border dispute as well as nontraditional issues such as terrorism, disaster relief, food security, and energy security. But, it is, as Richard Stubbs points out, unable to provide practical solutions to the regional security problems.²² Etel Solingen also notes that as it has no enforcement powers and is not a collective security mechanism, the ARF has achieved no effective steps to resolve the Taiwan Strait issues and North Korea’s nuclear program through its dialogues.²³ The EAS was intended to consolidate East Asian regionalism with an East Asian Free Trade Area as a competitor to Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and to create the formation of an East Asian Community. But it became a site for a Japan-China power struggle. China sought to ensure its leading position in regional economy and business-engaging with ASEAN,

¹⁸ Etel Solingen, “The Genesis, Design and Effects of Regional Institutions: Lessons from East Asia and the Middle East,” *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (2008), pp. 268-269; “East Asian Regional Institutions: Characteristics, Sources, Distinctiveness,” in T.J. Pempel (ed.) *Remapping East Asia: The Construction of a Region* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 31-53; “Pax Asiatica versus Bella Levantina: The Foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East,” *American Political Science Review* 101:4 (November 2007), pp.757-780.

¹⁹ Even A. Feigenbaum and Robert A. Manning, “The United States in the New Asia,” *Council on Foreign Relations Special Report No. 50* (November 2009)
http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Asian_Multilateralism_CSR50.pdf

²⁰ Nick Bisley, *Building Asia’s Security* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.33-76.

²¹ ASEAN, established on 8 August 1967, includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Charter entered into force on 15 December 2008. The 10 ASEAN member states agreed to establish an ASEAN community by 2015. For more details, see <http://www.aseansec.org/>

²² Richard Stubbs, “ASEAN Plus Three: Emerging East Asian Regionalism?” *Asian Survey* 42:3 (May/June 2002), pp.454-455.

²³ Solingen, “The Genesis, Design and Effects of Regional Institutions,” pp. 276-279.

while Japan reaffirmed its interest in community-building in East Asia through ASEAN despite its relatively declining economic strength.²⁴

Why were regional initiatives to form East Asian regionalism so weak before the crisis? It is fundamentally for two reasons: First, the US was binding Japan and South Korea with bilateral security alliances. It offered these two states security protection and access to the US market, and they became a stable partner that provided diplomatic and economic support for US-centered policies against the Soviet bloc.²⁵ Unlike Europe, where Washington preferred to create multilateral institutions with its North Atlantic partners, East Asia was divided by two conflicting ideological platforms – namely, US-backed states and a communist regime. Thus, the region failed to share any imperative motivations to promote regional grouping that moved out of the US hub-and-spoke system to produce multilateral security arrangements within the region.

In terms of economy, East Asian economies had export-oriented structures. Its extra-regional dependence provided a strong incentive to remain open to other regions of the world, especially to the United States.²⁶ Before China opened its market to the world, Japan and South Korea were largely dependent on the American markets as the consumer of their products. In the early 1990s when the Chinese economy began to attract foreign direct investments, East Asia as a whole became a factory for supplying finished products to the world market. The rise of China strengthened Asian production networks that remain open to other regions rather than facilitate an exclusive regional grouping like in Europe or North America. Thus, regional production networks boosted intra-industry trade through a market-driven regionalization process; yet extra-regional dependence and skepticism toward rigid institutions retarded the growth of regionalism.

The financial crisis in 1997-98 was a turning point for East Asian states. In the wave of financial turmoil, they realized how deeply Asian countries were intertwined in terms of trade and finance and lost confidence in restoring the Asian miracle. From the realization, a sense of regional stability and cooperation emerged. Regionalism was redefined to focus on forming an effective mechanism for cooperation among regional actors.

East Asian regionalism and international relations theory

It is interesting that T.J. Pempel describes East Asian regionalism as “an unending steeplechase.”²⁷ Still, East Asia lacks government-driven formal institutions to facilitate political, economic, and social integration. The scope of membership is not fixed and defining common interests is a challenging task for regional actors. Whereas China

²⁴ Takashi Terada, “Forming an East Asian Community: A Site for Japan-China Power Struggles,” *Japanese Studies* 26:1 (May 2006), pp. 6-17.

²⁵ G. John Ikenberry, “America in East Asia: Power, Market, and Grad Strategy,” in *Beyond Bilateralism*, ed. Ellis Krauss and T.J. Pempel (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 39

²⁶ Munakata, “Has Politics Caught Up with Markets?” p. 138.

²⁷ T.J. Pempel, “The Race to Connect East Asia: An Unending Steeplechase,” *Asian Economic Policy Review* 1:1 (June 2006), pp. 236-254.

emerges as a new regional power with its fast-growing market, the US remains in the political-security order of East Asia. Despite these obstacles, the region has become more integrated over the past two decades.

Put another way, prospects for East Asian regional integration are varied. Political scientists and foreign policy analysts look at the present and the future of East Asian regionalism through different causal mechanisms. They are mapping the political economy of regionalism in East Asia by different theoretical explanations: regional power struggle, functional spillovers, and institutional identity.

From the realist perspective, states seek to ensure their survival in the anarchic, decentralized, horizontal, and homogeneous nature of international politics.²⁸ Their goals range from the conquest of territory to increased influence over the behavior of other states to comparative advantages in the international division of labor.²⁹ Regarding survival and power, East Asia is more likely to be a site for Japan-China power struggles. China's power is growing and its aims are expanding from the political stability of its one-party system to engaging in active diplomacy in Asia and becoming a responsible stakeholder in international politics. China promotes the East Asian Free Trade Agreement (that is, APT: ASEAN+3) and it was the first non-ASEAN nation to sign the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.³⁰ It launched the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001 with Russia and four Central Asian states. Beijing is taking formidable steps in the political and security, as well as economic, dimensions.

Japan sees China as both a strategic threat and a critical trade and investment partner. Japan also sees regional integration as an opportunity to increase its influence in the region and advocates the Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (APT plus Australia, New Zealand, and India). By maintaining friendly ties with other countries and regions while relying on the US-Japan alliance, it attempts to increase its leverage. Tokyo is operating under the principle of "open regionalism," which is based on openness in the membership, transparency in the scope of activity, and inclusiveness in the support of the US military presence.³¹ The growing competition between China and Japan is not surprising and their power struggles highlight hostile nationalistic sentiments, historical enmity, and territorial disputes. Thus, the role of the two regional powers in institutional-building is growing, but they disagree on the model to be pursued.³²

²⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of international politics*, reprinted in *Neorealism and Its critics*, ed. Robert Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 27-130.

²⁹ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 23-25

³⁰ The TAC is ASEAN's founding non-aggression pact aimed at promoting regional stability. See, Takashi Terada, "Forming an East Asian Community," *Japanese Studies* 26:1 (May 2006), pp. 6-17

³¹ Takio Yamada, "Toward a Principled Integration of East Asia: Concept of an East Asian Community(4)," *CEAC Commentary* (18 November, 2005)

³² The Stanley Foundation, "Challenges to Effective Multilateralism: Comparing Asian and European Experiences" (8-11 July, 2008). Reach at <<http://reports.stanleyfoundation.org>>

From the liberalist perspective, even in an anarchic system of egoistic governments, cooperation can emerge through the building of norms, regimes, and institutions.³³ The growing volume of trade and investment flowing within East Asia works as a strong incentive to form a regional institutional framework. An expanding network of regional institutions in East Asia includes APEC, ARF, APT, and the EAS. A thickening web of interdependence makes East Asian states cooperate, rather than confront, on various issues from trade liberalization and multilateral business to education, immigration, and natural diseases. The proliferation of bilateral and multilateral Free Trade Agreements also facilitates regional integration. Before 2000, there were fewer than 10 FTAs, but now there are more than 60.³⁴ Once, whether formal or informal, regional institutions are created, they promote stability and prosperity. By linking various issues, the institutions help regional actors define common interests and shared commitments through bargaining. In the same vein, the US prefers bandwagoning with regional powers to balance against China. China is a critical partner for the US because it can help forge the proper security and economic architecture in the region. Thus, economic interdependence and integration mute regional power struggles. And, the region creates shared interests via good relations between states.

From the constructivist perspective, continuing processes of interaction and learning can shape identities and interests.³⁵ Beliefs and ideas of regional actors are important. And a region's shared historical experience makes it more cohesive. The primacy of economic development and good governance has been accepted in East Asia. Also, the principle of conflict prevention through confidence-building in the ARF is an example of norm-building in the region. However, in terms of regional identity, there are conflicting ideas of regional distinctiveness – namely, “we-feeling” or “regional responsibilities.” One possible explanation is that while Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are democracies with civil liberties, China is a socialist regime with an open market. Different types of governing systems have a negative effect on shaping a regional identity. Another possible explanation is that historical enmity makes it difficult to reduce distrust among regional actors. Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula and the issue of comfort women have created strong skepticism about Japanese among Koreans. South Korea and Japan are still fighting for the sovereignty over Dokdo (Takehima). Soaring nationalism, rewriting of history textbooks, and unresolved territorial disputes are in no way negligible in East Asia. Defining a regional identity or “we-feeling” indeed has long presented difficulties for East Asian states. Although regionalization in economic interdependence and integration is in process, consolidating regional networks by inter-state arrangements is slowing down due to lack of regional identity of “East Asian feeling.”

³³ Stephen Krasner, “Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables,” *International Organization* 36, 2 (Spring 1982), pp. 185-205

³⁴ The Stanley Foundation, “Challenges to Effective Multilateralism,” p. 6.

³⁵ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics,” *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992), pp. 391-425

Each of the three arguments reviewed here is limited but useful to understand and explain the present situation and the future of East Asian regional integration. Since each of the schools captures some aspects of reality with comparative strength, these arguments should be used to project the political economy of regionalism in East Asia.

Envisioning East Asia Regionalism

We have witnessed growing intra-regional interdependence in Northeast Asia, which has had a great impact on reducing instability and military confrontation since regional states started becoming important trade partners in the last two decades. At the same time, the region has been fostering ever deeper region-wide networks of cooperation, which reduce long-standing national tensions.³⁶ Regional groupings and regional effects are of growing significance in international politics.³⁷ It is obvious that today there is a growing sense of regional integration in East Asia. The end of the Cold War, 1997-98 financial turmoil, and 9/11 terrorist attacks are influential factors that changed the political climate in the region. East Asian states have begun to take regionalism seriously and recognize that regionalism plays a pivotal role in shaping the East Asian regional order.

Scholars now know that there is a viable opportunity for regional participation in the intra-regional economic structure, functional transactions, and informal regional meetings in East Asia. Recent studies report that regional actors are attempting to formalize institutions to cope with global, as well as regional, challenges such as the 2008 global financial crisis. According to *Dialogue and Research Monitor 2008*, there were 245 Track 1 and 268 Track 2 dialogues between January and December 2008 among East Asian countries. The numbers have increased since the 114 Track 1 and 199 Track 2 dialogues in 2004. Topics discussed at these meetings not only include traditional security issues and economic cooperation but also cover energy security, nuclear energy safety, poverty alleviation, environment, and democracy.³⁸ Region-wide institutions not only promote intra-regional trade but also have a pacific effect should military confrontations arise. Overlapping institutional memberships can be explained as a driving force to connect the Northeast Asian region. While East Asian states prefer cooperation with low levels of interference and share tentativeness to regional institutionalization, the idea of regionalism is building rather than limiting or cutting back the regional integration and regional identity. Thus, East Asia is to be found in between regionalization and regionalism.

³⁶ T. J. Pempel (ed.), "Emerging Webs of Regional Connectedness," in *Remapping East Asia: The Construction of a Region* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 1-28.

³⁷ Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism," *International Organization* 56:3 (Summer 2002), p. 575

³⁸ Japan Center for International Exchange, "Dialogue and Research Monitor 2008: Overview," in *Dialogue and Research Monitor: Inventory of Multilateral Meetings on Asia Pacific Security and Community Building*

http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/2008/2008_DRM_Overview.pdf

Prospects for the Establishment of Regional Security Institution in Northeast Asia

By Sungmin Cho

In spite of its multitude of security problems in Northeast Asia, there are currently no regional institutions or mechanisms to address them in a systematic way. However, that does not mean that there have not been attempts in the past. Most recently, China appears to have expected the Six-Party Talks would develop into a formal regional security institution. Meanwhile, when Yukio Hatoyama recently became prime minister in Japan, he introduced the idea of developing an 'East Asian Community.' Similarly, South Korea's Roh Moo-hyun tried to take the initiative with the idea of South Korea playing a role of 'balancer' in Northeast Asia. All these attempts appear to have failed. Why? What are the limits to these efforts? What should be done more to overcome these obstacles?

1. Conditions and Obstacles: The case of NATO

These questions led me to assess the current status of the problems and offer some recommendation for the future. In this context, it helps to look back at the past experiences in an effort to draw lessons. Also, successful experiences of others provide cases for comparison. Thus, this section will briefly review how Europe was able to develop NATO. In addition to the conditions that made it possible to establish such a robust security institution in Europe, I will examine the obstacles that Northeast Asia has been facing by comparison.

In Europe, there was a common threat that prompted the establishment of a security organization. The formidable threat posed by the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War was the very reason that the nations in Western Europe had to unite in the first place. In Northeast Asia, there is no such common threat. On the contrary, countries in this region tend to perceive each other as a potential threat. The security dilemma is dominant among China, Japan and South Korea because of mutual suspicion among each other. North Korea is a trouble to all, but hardly a common threat because of the complex nature of its relationship with its neighboring countries.

Second, European countries share many similarities, especially in cultural and historical aspects. According to Samuel Huntington, European cultures share their heritage through the Greek-Roman culture. Catholicism and Christianity have been influential throughout the region. Rule of law and individualism also characterize the European civilization. At a glance, European similarities seem to be applicable to the relationship among China, Korea and Japan. However, geographical and cultural differences create the basis for significantly different perspectives among them. Simply, one can see more diversity than similarity, especially when compared to the countries in Europe.

Third, the issue of identity certainly matters. There are two primary criteria that countries use to identify themselves and others: culture and regime type. After all, according to Samuel Huntington, the US inherited its cultural root from Europe and has been a representative member of the Western culture. In addition, America's promotion of liberal democracy and a free market as core values of governance has been generally well-accepted in Western Europe. However, it is a different story if the US wants to share cultural identity with Asian countries. China is probably in a better position to do so. On the criterion of regime type, however, South Korea and Japan tend to view themselves as modernized countries and therefore as being close to the "West." In this sense, they can share identity with the US but not with China as China is still seen as an authoritative and non-democratic state. Identification of 'us' is too complex in Northeast Asia.

Fourth, multilateralism in Europe and bilateralism in Asia flowed naturally from this construction of US collective identity. During World War II, the US fought shoulder to shoulder with allies in Europe whereas it basically fought alone against Japan in Asia. Practices of multilateral cooperation have already been in place in Europe. Therefore, it can be said that multilateral security arrangement was more readily available in Europe than in Asia. Meanwhile, it is bilateral alliances that have been defining the relationships among nations in Northeast Asia. The China-North Korea alliance as well as the US-South Korea and the US-Japan alliances survived the Cold War. It is challenging for these nations to transcend the boundary of bilateral alliance and move on to integration into a multilateral security regime.

Fifth, great power politics mattered in Europe while Asian states remained relatively weak after World War II. In order to rebuild Europe and unite against the Communist bloc, it was crucial for the US to cooperate with Britain and France. These two European powers enjoyed greater leverage over US policy than did any Asian state. Thus, multilateralism among Western countries was not a matter of choice for US. Rather, it was the only option available. On the other hand, the US was the sole occupier of Japan after the war and thus enjoyed total control over the administration of the occupation. Also, the US was a life-saver for South Korea during the Korean War. Unequal positions among the three countries made it hard to establish multilateral security regime as the US, Britain, and France did in Europe.

Sixth, Germany and Japan matter. These countries share many similarities in their histories. Both invaded neighboring countries, waged a war against the US, lost, and were occupied. Soon, both countries fully recovered quickly, regaining the status as a leading country in Europe and Asia respectively. But they have behaved differently when dealing with historical issues. What matters is, for these reasons, that West Germany's eagerness to develop a security regime in Western Europe was accepted by neighboring countries. But if Japan tried to do the same, it would have failed because of deeply rooted antagonism by neighboring countries.

Seventh, geography matters. Close distance among the countries in Europe has greatly influenced the gravity of the threat from the East. It also contributes to shaping

collective identity in Western Europe. Likewise, as long as there is a common threat, close proximity helps develop a concept of collective security. On the other hand, Northeast Asia's geography works in an opposite direction. For Japan, threats from North Korea or China have been less dire than the threats that the Soviet Union posed to West Germany. Because the threat from North Korea has to go through South Korea first and then cross the sea, Japan can always earn some time to mobilize, thus reducing the urgency of relying on collective security.

2. Example: The Case of ASEAN

The limitations faced in Northeast Asia are also applicable to Southeast Asia. The region hardly had a common threat when ASEAN was formally established in 1967. By most criteria, Southeast Asia is much more diverse than Northeast Asia, let alone Europe. However, there is a growing consensus that ASEAN is the second most successful regional institution following the EU at present. Investigating the experiences of Europe, one can study the necessary conditions for and obstacles to establishing a regional security mechanism in Northeast Asia. Similarly, reviewing the lessons from ASEAN's experiences will help further reflect on the conditions and obstacles in Northeast Asia.

First, the spread of certain norms and consensus among member nations about promoting those norms contributed to the creation of ASEAN as an organization. Despite extreme diversity, the countries of ASEAN have one thing in common: similar historical experiences of being colonized by great powers since the mid-19th century caused the countries to develop strong nationalism and a strong sense of sovereignty. Thus, mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and non-intervention were the basis to build up ASEAN. In addition, the values of self-restraint, mutual respect, and responsibility were adapted as three basic principles of the ASEAN cooperation. All these norms helped ASEAN embrace such great diversity among member states. Ironically, the ASEAN countries were able to overcome the lack of similarity and collective identity by acknowledging their differences as they are.

Second, the ASEAN way is characterized as 'organizational minimalism.' Unlike the systemic feature of the EU with its emphasis on official commitments and institutional devices, which impose legally-binding responsibilities upon member states, the countries under the framework of ASEAN have been cooperating with each other through unofficial negotiations without legal responsibilities. The norm of self-restraint was embraced within ASEAN in order to avoid mutual conflict and this compensated for the lack of strict institutional procedure. The minimalism of ASEAN as an organization allows the member states to 'agree to disagree'. Thus, they can seek cooperation based on common grounds while avoiding direct conflicts, which are usually caused by hasty impulses to resolve sensitive issues once and for all.

Third, 'gradualism' appears to be agreed upon as a way to move cooperation forward. For all the characteristics described above, gradual expansion was the only strategy available for the development of ASEAN in practice. This way, ASEAN could

gain some time to practice multilateralism. In addition, the ASEAN member states did not rush to discuss and solve difficult security issues at first. It should be noted that they were seeking common ground in the potential benefits from cooperation in the economic area before they gradually expanded the scope of discussion to include security issues. In this sense, the ASEAN way refers to the approach to take economic cooperation as a positive driving force before developing a multifaceted regional institution.

3. From NATO and ASEAN to Northeast Asia: Implications

As mentioned briefly at the beginning of this essay, there have been trials in this region. Chinese discourse often revealed the expectation that the Six-Party Talks as an institution would remain even after resolving North Korea's nuclear issue. But it has been failing to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue in the first place because North Korea's behavior is not regulated by the Six-Party Talks. It is primarily a forum for negotiation with the provision of compensation for North Korea's compliance. But it does not have a measure of punishment. Also, for lack of regularity, the Six Party Talks have been hardly functioning as an institution.

Japan's suggestion of an 'East Asian Community' may sound ideal and desirable but fails to be persuasive and feasible to neighboring countries given the lack of collective identity. In this sense, Japan's suggestion of regional cooperation still becomes hostage to its history debate with China and Korea. Moreover, Japan has been tilting heavily towards the US and China cannot dispel suspicion on Japan's intention.

South Korea's ambition to play a role of 'balancer' was unrealistic. South Korea was humble when explaining it. It referred to the case of the 'Netherlands' playing a role of 'soft balancer' by promoting regional cooperation in Europe unlike Britain as a 'balancer' of 'power'. But South Korea should have realized that the initial momentum for such a direction was the result of great power politics between Britain and France in Europe before Netherland had a chance to make a contribution. Once China and Japan are determined to move forward in such a direction, South Korea probably will have the capability as a middle power to facilitate regional cooperation through dialogue. But it is not capable of influencing China and Japan to change their thoughts and policies.

Under these circumstances, comparison with the experience of Europe reinforces the conviction that it is almost impossible to have a regional security institution in Northeast Asia for the time being. Nonetheless, the ASEAN way suggests that there is still a possibility to take a detour strategy with patience until reaching the final goal. Detour in this context means to start from economic cooperation and gradually expand the scope of the discussion to include security issues. It also encourages each nation to expand bilateral cooperation to trilateral cooperation and continue to do so until it is able to integrate each trilateral talk into a single multilateral institution.

According to John Ikenberry, perhaps the most dynamic agent of regional integration that will set the stage for greater multilateral security cooperation is the "new

economy” that is emerging. South Korea, Japan, China, the US, and others in the region are embracing, in varying degrees, the technology and information revolutions that are washing over the globe. The common embrace of internet capitalism may eventually pave the way for a more ambitious sense of security community. Trilateral cooperation to form an Asian Monetary Fund or to explore a regional free trade agreement (FTA) among China, Japan and South Korea might be seen in a more positive light.

Second, along with the failed trials in pursuing multilateral security cooperation, there were also efforts to go beyond the boundary of bilateralism. The Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group represents trilateral cooperation among the US, Japan and South Korea. China, Japan and South Korea started convening on occasions in the format of ASEAN+3. Also, the three countries have engaged in trilateral summits since 2007. The US, China, and Japan strategic dialogue has been pursued at the 1.5 track level and has a chance to evolve into a governmental-level talk. The fourth party excluded from a trilateral talk will probably have suspicions on the intention of the other three nations. However, the overlap among different trilateral talks will contribute to dispelling such doubts and worries of the remaining country. For example, South Korea will be able to share some information from TCOG with China. Also, Japan may want to share some information from the trilateral summit among China, Japan, and South Korea with the US. In this way, it is possible that the information flow between each trilateral talk will help countries to practice the habit of multilateral cooperation. Thus, more trilateral cooperation should be encouraged as a bridge en route from bilateral to multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia.

Multilateralism in Northeast Asia: Prospects and Utility?

By Guibourg Delamotte

Whether more cooperation is needed in Northeast Asia is not self-evident. Many Chinese leaders would argue that China abides by its own rules and has no reason to adopt rules that are set by others and benefit others. To some Japanese, Japan should take the Dokdo/Takeshima islands forcibly and should build up its defense capabilities to deter or repel a Chinese aggression on Japan's remote isles. The actual policy pursued at present in Japan is dual – foreign affairs officials advocate cooperation; defense officials pursue dialogue whilst conceiving conflict scenarios. Japan and South Korea struggle to sign free-trade agreements that would open up their economies (agriculture in particular) or to relax their visa policies to allow more Asian workers.

However, cooperation – whether bilateral or multilateral – would be the preferred option of most observers and policy-makers, particularly for defense issues. In a seminal article, Robert Jervis summed up the debate between Neoliberals and Neorealists on cooperation¹. Though they differ in their assessment of the extent to which cooperation is possible, both groups embrace the apparent paradox that actors are well advised to take reduce their vulnerability and take advantage of others now and in the future. For Neoliberals, cooperation is always possible and institutions increase cooperation. For Neorealists, cooperation is not possible in a conflict situation but is possible in a security dilemma situation. To Neorealists, Northeast Asia would appear to be in a security dilemma situation – of a particular kind – a situation characterized by mutual distrust particularly between China and Japan or the US.

Distrust of China in Japan (on the part of Japanese realists) stems from China's increasing military expenditures in the past 20 years, albeit at a slower pace in 2010. Repeated incursions into Japanese territory have led them to doubt China's self-proclaimed peaceful intentions.

Distrust of Japan in China stems from the fact that in spite of, or within the limits permitted (depending on which viewpoint one adheres to) by Article 9 of the Constitution, Japan's defense policy has been evolving in an incremental way. Japanese defense budgets have been steadily decreasing in the past ten years. The evolution of Japan's defense posture has been slow due to opposition from Japan's public opinion. In relations with neighboring countries, history remains an issue.

China's distrust of the US originates from the US commitment to Taiwan and its regional presence in Japan, South Korea, and Guam, along with its implicit involvement on the side of the ASEAN states in the South China Sea maritime disputes.

¹ R. Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate", *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42-63.

Liberals and Constructivists² would emphasize other dimensions of security – its economic, environmental, energy dimensions – that also call for attention. To Liberal academics or politicians in Japan, for instance, lack of political or social stability in China would bear tremendous repercussions on the region or the world and is potentially more worrisome than its military rise.

Liberals also draw attention to China's economic interdependence with the world and to an increased commitment to world stability, albeit in a mildly cooperative form (like Russia, China's anti-piracy operation in the Gulf of Aden for instance is independent of the ones conducted either by the EU, by NATO, or by the US with its allies; Japanese operation also is with respect to its command but fully shares information with its Western allies).

Most policy-makers would agree that more cooperation is desirable and achievable in the security field. What has been done to this day? Some bilateral cooperation mechanisms already are in place, particularly between South Korea and Japan, and China and Japan. South Korea and Japan have had a long ongoing dialogue in the field of defense at lower levels. Defense cooperation between China and Japan has improved since 2007 with the first port calls of Chinese vessels to Japan, and vice-versa, and the decision to establish a hotline (though its establishment between Defense Ministers proved difficult and the hotline is now to be set up between heads of state). Seemingly minor incidents always have important political repercussions, which probably show that bilateral cooperation is not deep enough.

There are few multilateral forms of cooperation. As far as economic integration goes, APEC and the WTO have been the preferred multilateral alternatives to bilateral agreements in Northeast Asia so far. The prospect of a South Korea-China-Japan free trade area is still remote. As for military security, cooperation under the ASEAN Regional Forum involves many parties, including a majority of states which are not from Northeast Asia. Likewise, the East Asian Summit meetings are large gatherings. The Six-Party Talks are a narrow framework addressing one specific source of tension in the area. They might serve to avoid conflict and preserve dialogue, but it now clearly appears that they will not convince North Korea to return the NPT and abide by its rules.

South Korea-China-Japan summits have taken place independently of ASEAN-related summits for the past three years and for the first time on May 29 2010, after the sinking of the *Cheonan*, defense issues were addressed. Trilateral cooperation between South Korea, Japan, and the US has also developed under the TCOG process which does not cover defense issues yet.

Enough frameworks probably exist today. Increasing multilateral cooperation is now more a matter of consolidation, aptly using and deepening existing mechanisms. What kind of cooperation is needed and under what framework? For economic issues and

² Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, L. Rienner Publishers, 1991 (1983), 393p.

defense cooperation, an increase in bilateral cooperation may be desirable as a first step and may facilitate the development of trilateral cooperation. An agreement to form an economic partnership between South Korea and Japan would boost growth in both countries (as Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for instance, has been arguing). In the field of defense, bilateral cooperation is easier than multilateral cooperation for Japan to develop in consideration of its current ban on the exercise of collective self-defense. Japan participates in multilateral exercises as an observer and has no security treaty, strictly speaking, with another country other than the US.

How can Northeast Asian states achieve better cooperation? As for institutional mechanisms, Japan is seeking to build a network of allies. Having signed a cross-servicing agreement with Australia, it aims to sign a similar agreement with South Korea and India. So far, Japan has made sure to keep up its dialogue with China in parallel so that China would not consider those arrangements to be directed against it. Those bilateral agreements are unlikely to turn into a multilateral arrangement given Japan's defense posture.

Another way to improve bilateral or multilateral cooperation is for each country in the region could take steps to reduce what causes other states' misinterpretation of their policies. Perceptions of Japan would improve if it could improve its treatment of history.³ A recent opinion poll showed that 35 percent of Japanese had never heard of Korea's annexation. At the level of leaders, prime ministers should refrain from making statements that harm Japan's international image (such as Abe's statement in 2007).

Solving territorial disputes would reduce threat perceptions. Disputes should be brought to the International Court of Justice. Japan is prepared to do so with respect to Takeshima/Dokdo, but South Korea is not. China should adopt International Maritime Law norms to ease its relations with other countries' navies. Perception of the US by China would improve if Taiwan followed the Hong-Kong path.

Conversely, each state should stop using history for internal purposes. The Chinese and South Koreans have refrained from using history as a diplomatic card in their relations with Japan to strengthen their power bases. Japanese prime ministers should adopt a new attitude to apologies and refrain from statements which harm Japan's image in the world.

The Democrats in Japan have been pictured as pro-Asians, yet their policy has not differed from the LDP's. The 100th anniversary of the annexation of Korea should have been considered as a welcome opportunity for a new Joint Statement, but the internal political situation was deemed too unstable by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As far as economic multilateralism (or bilateralism) goes, Minshutô receives the support of Rengô, a major trade union federation which opposes an increase in the number of migrant workers.

³ Jennifer Lind, "Sorry States: Apologies in International Politics", Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington D.C., Sep.1-4, 2005.

Creating a Multilateral Mechanism in Northeast Asia

By Kei Koga

The answer to the question of whether there is a need for establishing multilateral mechanism in Northeast Asia is necessary depends on what kind of objectives such a framework would pursue. In terms of potential power transition in East Asia in the future, creating such a mechanism is a favorable option for all regional players.

The fundamental objective of Northeast Asian states, which include China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, and Russia, has been the same since the end of the Cold War: maintaining stability in the region. In order to achieve this objective, all Northeast Asian states consider the US as the pivotal player, at least in the foreseeable future, due to its relatively solid alliance system offering deterrence effects in the region on the basis of its preponderant military and economic capabilities. Thus, a Northeast Asian multilateral mechanism needs to include all six countries.

At the same time, the question of what kind of “stability” each country is willing to pursue must be raised. From the perspective of power-transition theory, there are mainly two kinds of stability: short-term stability that can be achieved by strengthening the predominant state’s deterrence capabilities and long-term stability, which is created by rising states that are satisfied with existing international order including regional order to ensure peaceful power transition (e.g. changes in distribution of power). To achieve each type of “stability” in Northeast Asia there are two conventional methods. Within them, two basic policy options stand out: strengthening US allies or establishing and enhancing multilateral frameworks in Northeast Asia.

The first option is strengthening the US bilateral security alliance system in East Asia, which aims at enhancing deterrence against precarious regional elements, including rising China’s military capabilities with little transparency and North Korea’s potential aggressive move on the Korean Peninsula. This system has been crucial in maintaining regional stability since the end of World War II, and by strengthening and creating trilateral networks with both Japan and South Korea, the two most advanced economies in the region, the system can gain more capabilities for deterrence. However, if only this policy is pursued, political reactions from China and North Korea would become predictable. From the traditional balance of power perspective, they would argue that the US and its allies are attempting to contain China and North Korea. Admittedly, the current US efforts to create networks among US allies are not aimed at any specific state. Rather, the US emphasis is on further enhancement of cooperation on non-traditional security issues that include humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Nonetheless, from the offensive realist perspective, the objective of these security frameworks can be changed and utilized to aim at a particular state because of uncertainty about one’s intention. Therefore, while the policy could achieve regional “stability” in the short term, it could heighten political and military frictions in the long term. This might have a negative political and military consequence and even lead to a military conflict if or when China achieves military and economic parity with the United States and its allies.

The second option is establishing and/or enhancing multilateral frameworks in the region, such as the Six-Party Talks, the Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperative framework, and the US-Japan-China and the US-Japan-ROK trilateral frameworks. There are two sets of requirements to further enhance these frameworks. First, rather than focusing on one particular issue, these frameworks need to be multipurpose-based and focus on regional governance, including traditional and non-traditional security issues, and economic and trade cooperation, which will expand the institutional ground where member states' interests could converge. Second, membership needs to include China and the United States, which are the existing and preponderant powers in East Asia. They could monitor consistency between the other's intentions and behavior, which benefits other regional powers as well as both of them. Also, this helps reduce unnecessary political antagonism between them since exclusive trilateral frameworks can be seen as potential adversarial frameworks from non-member states' perspectives. For example, while the US-Japan-ROK trilateral framework can be seen as a tool for the containment of China, the Japan-China-ROK can be regarded as one to reduce US influence in Northeast Asia. In this sense, existing and potential trilateral frameworks need to either be connected with larger multilateral frameworks, including ASEAN-led frameworks, or expand their membership in the future. In so doing, by aiming at fostering political and military transparency and trade and financial interdependence among member states, it buttresses confidence-building and creates the restraining structure for state behavior in the region.

These trilateral frameworks also hold inherent political dilemma. On the one hand, confidence-building measures may help foster cooperation among Northeast Asian states, yet it would take time and be unlikely to resolve traditional security issues. On the other hand, by aiming at creating more pragmatic frameworks, it is likely that not all Northeast Asian states would enter the framework, which is demonstrated by the delayed creation of the US-Japan-China frameworks.

Six-Party Talks (SPT) is one potential framework that we could utilize for establishing a multilateral mechanism in Northeast Asia. However, it suffers from its own weak institutional setup, especially since the effectiveness of the SPT is increasingly in doubt. Since its inception in 2003, the forum has focused on North Korea's nuclear development. Yet in 2007, it established a working group called Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism and attempted to utilize the framework to expand its function. US Secretary of State Rice was eager to promote this movement by pointing out that such a framework would be useful for parties involved to nurture habits of cooperation, which have never existed before. Admittedly, such a movement is politically welcome by them. However, considering the facts that (1) the SPT primarily aim at denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and no participant is willing to expand its function at the expense of such objectives, (2) the SPT failed to prevent North Korea from undertaking nuclear and missile tests in 2006 and 2009, and (3) the SPT has been stalled since 2007, the probability for the SPT to become "the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism" is extremely low and highly conditional (i.e. stabilizing the Korean

Peninsula through changes in situation, such as North Korea becoming willing to denuclearize or North Korea's peaceful regime change to a more democratic society).

Additionally, even if the SPT has the potential to transform itself into a Northeast Asian security mechanism, it would be difficult to maintain its institutional form as it is, and it becomes necessary to transform it into a different form. The current motivation for cooperation among the five parties except for North Korea seems to be prevention of the situation in the Korean Peninsula from becoming unstable. If the situation deteriorates, the five parties might consider creating an ad-hoc consultation mechanism for crisis and consequence management for the Korean Peninsula. However, it is difficult to achieve such a movement because it would likely provoke North Korea since it may view the movement as containment of North Korea, which China and Russia are unwilling to accept. In this sense, unless the situation changes and all five parties' immediate interests meet, the SPT is not likely to maintain its institutional form but it could become a primitive base for creating a Northeast Asian security mechanism.

Against this backdrop, the US bilateral alliances would be the core of such a mechanism. If a Northeast Asian security mechanism is established, the evolution will be depend on its compatibility with the US alliances. If participants consider the mechanism as a tool to increase their political leverage and set one framework as the core of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism, it would create political tension among the mechanism and the alliances framework, as shown in the US reluctance during the creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 and the rivalry between China and Japan in establishing East Asian Summit in 2005. Yet, seeing how all Northeast Asian states except for North Korea consider the US alliances as vital for regional stability and the evolution of the bilateral alliances into more networked alliances like the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, the multilateral forum is highly unlikely to replace the US alliances, and at best, the forum may ask the alliances to provide more regional public goods. Thus, while establishing and/or enhancing multilateral frameworks in Northeast Asia would help confidence-building and regional stability in the long-term, it would fall short of achieving short-term stability without support from the alliance framework.

The two frameworks have both costs and benefits for enhancing and establishing a sustainable multilateral mechanism in Northeast Asia. Thus, it is necessary to have hybrid frameworks that can achieve both short-term and long-term stability in the region. To this end, the key framework to date is the Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperative initiative. In 2008, the Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperation was independently established on the basis of "+3" cooperation in the ASEAN+3 framework. The *Trilateral Cooperation Vision 2020*, produced by the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit in May 2010, attempts to encompass such issues as economic cooperation, sustainable development and environmental protection, promotion of human and cultural exchange among the three, and enhancing regional and international peace and stability. In this sense, rather than using the SPT with its focus on the Korean Peninsula, this framework has a broader perspective on regional security governance. Also, despite its institutional

nascence, this framework is more effective than the SPT for nurturing habits of cooperation and habits of compliance with international laws and norms. Currently, there is institutional linkage with the US alliance system. But, in the future, the “plus 3” framework should include the US and Russia, which hold several institutional advantages.

First, inclusion of the US would bring more institutional relevance and capabilities into the framework while monitoring China’s intentions in the Japan-China-ROK trilateral framework. Second, inclusion of Russia is beneficial because, in the long-term, an isolated Russia might ally with China in order to counterbalance US influence in the region, which would create a quasi-Cold War situation in East Asia. Third, China, as a founding member of the trilateral framework, can exercise its political power to shape the regional dynamic. Although it cannot fully exercise its power due to other major powers’ participation, it can create a positive image of China as a peaceful rising state by indicating its cooperative posture in this framework. In other words, building on the trilateral framework, China could create an institutional layer to include the US and Russia. Fourth, Japan and South Korea can benefit from information gathering and sharing, especially regarding the Korean Peninsula, and confidence-building since the framework would include all the important states in the region

Meanwhile, the formation of a US-Japan-ROK trilateral framework could help this process by using Japan and South Korea as a diplomatic hub for the US and China in a Northeast Asian multilateral framework. Moreover, it could create common purposes for Japan and South Korea to play a security role in East Asia, which would nurture a habit of consultation and more future-oriented relations between them despite the existing historical antagonism.

Yet, the question still remains: whether this framework can utilize to maintain short-term stability in Northeast Asia, namely stability on the Korean Peninsula. The establishment of the expanded trilateral framework cannot guarantee short-term stability in Northeast Asia because explicit military cooperation could provoke North Korea. Nonetheless, this framework gives an opportunity for member states to discuss broader issues, which would include the potential resolution of security issues on the Korean Peninsula. Thus, each state could utilize this framework to share information and possibly discuss contingency plans, which would be beneficial because each member state could then better evaluate how other states would behave in times of contingency.

Relations with other security mechanisms, such as ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus, are also important. Since ASEAN has been at the center of East Asian multilateral frameworks, it will likely be concerned about the establishment of an expanded trilateral framework in Northeast Asia that may diminish its role. Nonetheless, confidence-building, on which ASEAN puts its institutional emphasis, is not a political elixir that can diffuse tensions in Northeast Asia. Traditionally, ASEAN has been silent on the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan Strait issues, so Northeast Asian states have all the more reason to create such a framework.

Moreover, the expanded trilateral framework would not aim at diminishing ASEAN's role in East Asia. Security coordination among Northeast Asian states could enhance their capability to effectively respond to regional issues, including in Southeast Asia, in such areas as disaster relief, capacity-building, and economic cooperation. In addition, ASEAN has established larger multilateral frameworks that encompasses East Asia and beyond, such as the East Asian Summit and the ADMM Plus, whose membership include ten ASEAN states, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and the United States. Therefore, the relative advantages of the ASEAN frameworks and the expanded trilateral framework would differ: while ASEAN-led frameworks could encourage a broader perspective on regional security (especially non-traditional security) and focus on confidence-building measures, the expanded trilateral framework in Northeast Asia could offer a more functional capability that would respond better to the tension in the Korean Peninsula and the rise of China. In short, these frameworks can be complementary like the current US-led security system and ASEAN-led frameworks.

Creating and utilizing trilateral frameworks in Northeast Asia with institutional linkages to existing multilateral frameworks is one method to smoothly coordinate member states' policies, increase functional cooperation, and prepare for various regional contingencies in traditional and non-traditional security realms. Although it would require political patience to discuss the potential development and establishment of such a framework among potential member states, if established, the framework would ensure the short-term and long-term stability not only in Northeast Asia but in the entire East Asia region.

Future Security Challenges in Northeast Asia and the Role of Security Architecture

By Tetsuo Kotani

Is there a need for multilateral mechanism in Northeast Asia? If there is, what should be the applied mechanism? Which countries should be involved? And how should that mechanism relate to other organizations, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum? These are questions many experts are trying to answer.

To answer those questions, it is necessary to recognize that Northeast Asia is a unique sub-region where traditional security issues are still dominant, while non-traditional security issues clearly exist. It is also necessary to understand there are at least three layers of security architecture. The first layer is the traditional power-based mechanism such as US alliances with Japan and South Korea. The second layer is the ad-hoc functional mechanism such as the Six-Party Talks. The third layer is the comprehensive and overall mechanism such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). This paper provides an overview of the security environment in Northeast Asia to reveal that there is a need for a regional multilateral mechanism. It then reviews existing security mechanisms in Northeast Asia and concludes with a discussion on the most desirable security architecture in Northeast Asia.

Security Environment in Northeast Asia

In “The US-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia Right Through 2020,” Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye wrote, “With half the world’s population, one-third of the global economy, and growing economic, financial, technological, and political weight in the international system, Asia is key to a stable, prosperous world order that best advances American interests.” Indeed, the Asia-Pacific region has every potential to reach an unprecedented level of prosperity, freedom, and stability in the next half-century. In recent decades, the emergence of vibrant democracies in Taiwan and South Korea, rapid economic rise of China and India, and Japan’s leadership on issues ranging from technology to international development have helped Asia reach new levels of global engagement and improve living standards for millions.

But the region faces uncertainties as well. Fluctuating economies, a deepening divide between the urban wealthy and rural poor, climate change and worsening environmental threats, shifting military capacities, and specter of terrorism are among the factors that could influence regional stability in the near future. Those challenges are often interlinked and influence one another. For example, poverty can lead young people to organized crime and terrorism, and sea level rise can cause massive migration. Energy shortage can bring about interstate armed conflict.

The Asia-Pacific region is not a unified entity. There are at least four sub-regions of Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania. Each sub-region faces

security challenges in different ways, and each state that constitutes those sub-regions has a different threat perception, security narrative, priorities, capacities and capabilities. Northeast Asia is a unique sub-region where the traditional security challenge dominates because of North Korean nuclear and missile programs and China's rapid military modernization.

For decades, US's alliances with Japan and South Korea have provided the basic security structure in Northeast Asia (the hub and spoke system). The alliances have deterred North Korean invasions of South Korea and have been the key to stability on the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Straits, and beyond Northeast Asia by securing US military presence. The sinking of the South Korean patrol ship, *Cheonan*, by North Korea showed that Northeast Asia is still a dangerous region. Although the tension across the Taiwan Strait has been dramatically reduced, China responded harshly to US arms sale to Taiwan that aimed at maintaining cross-strait military balance. In addition, growing Chinese maritime ambitions in the East China Sea led to the recent dispute between Japan and China over the detention of a Chinese fishing boat that entered Japanese territorial waters around the Senkakus. Under such a security environment, the hub and spokes system is still effective.

However, the hub and spokes system is not enough to meet today's security challenges. For example, it is inadequate for the reconstruction of North Korea when a North Korean implosion is a more likely scenario than a North Korean invasion of the South. The system also is not appropriate for dealing with non-traditional security issues such as pandemics, environmental destruction, and energy shortage. In today's world, we face challenges that have no respect for borders, but they offer us new arenas for global cooperation. But a state-centric mindset cannot seize these opportunities. That is why there has been a call for a more robust Northeast Asian security architecture to complement the traditional power-based hub and spokes system.

Existing Security Architecture in Northeast Asia

As already mentioned, the first-layer mechanism dominates the security architecture in Northeast Asia. The US alliances with Japan and South Korea were derived from the Cold War and both alliances continued after the end of the Cold War partly because the Cold War never ended in Northeast Asia. In the 1990s, a series of crises in the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait led to the reaffirmation of the two alliances, and the linkage between them was reinforced through the 1997 US-Japan Defense Guidelines, which calls for greater roles for Japan in a "situation in areas surrounding Japan." This led to the creation of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) among the United States, Japan and South Korea and, to a limited degree, Japan-South Korea military exchanges. A second-layer mechanism, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), was also derived from this development. But the hub and spokes system largely remained and there was no development into a full-fledged trilateral security mechanism partly because of weak Japan-South Korea ties.

After 9.11, both alliances became more global as US security priority had shifted to the Middle East. On the other hand, the North Korean nuclear program continued even under the KEDO framework, which eventually led to the formation of another second-layer mechanism, the Six-Party Talks, involving key regional players in Northeast Asia. Although the objective of the Six-Party Talks is denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, North Korea conducted nuclear tests twice in October 2006 and May 2009 in addition to several missile tests. The sinking of the *Cheonan* was a reminder for regional countries that North Korea is a threat with conventional as well as nuclear weapons. The participation of Japan Self-Defense Force staff as observers in the US-South Korea joint exercise “Invincible Spirit” in July 2010 was an important step for the US-Japan-South Korea trilateral security cooperation.

The rise of China is an opportunity and a concern for the region. Although there has been progress in regional security architecture to deal with the North Korean threat, there has been less progress in building to a mechanism to manage the rise of China. The US-Japan alliance is the sole mechanism in Northeast Asia, although the naive alliance policy of the Democratic Party of Japan has damaged the alliance. Nevertheless, Japan has strengthened its security ties with Australia and India. For example, both countries’ navies joined US-Japan naval exercises near Okinawa, which sent a strong message to China. So although Japan-South Korea security tie is still developing, there is an effort to involve like-minded nations outside Northeast Asia. In other words, there is an ongoing networking among US friends and allies beyond traditional hub and spokes to respond to China’s military modernization.

Meanwhile, there is a potential first-layer mechanism emerging—the Japan-China-South Korea Summit, which was first held in 2008. Since then, the heads of the three countries have continued to meet and have issued statements regarding trilateral cooperation in nontraditional security issues such as disaster relief, energy, environment, and economic cooperation. The Summit also has discussed security issues such as North Korea and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and produced an action plan for search and rescue at sea. It is still unknown whether this will develop into a first-layer mechanism, but it has showed that the three regional powers are interested in functional cooperation.

Second-layer mechanisms in Northeast Asia tend to be derived from the first-layer mechanisms. However, KEDO and the Six-Party Talks have failed to accomplish their original goals. Why? First of all, North Korea is not interested in denuclearization or at least not persuaded to give up its nuclear program by those mechanisms. North Korea’s goal is a security guarantee from the US, and its nuclear program is an essential tool. Second, in the case of the Six-Party Talks, China, which has the most influence on North Korea, has not exercised its influence because Chinese priority is regime stability in North Korea rather than denuclearization. In other words, the second-layer mechanisms were destined to fail because they included members that did not share objectives.

Although there is little progress in building second-layer mechanisms for traditional security issues, there is progress in the nontraditional security arena. An example is the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum, which started in 2000 to deal with maritime crimes, search and rescue, and disaster relief. The Forum consists of Japan, the US, China, South Korea, Russia, and Canada. The Forum holds annual meetings among the heads of coast guards and working groups. This mechanism has showed substantial progress and the member countries conduct joint exercises and operations. As long as the members share basic objectives, it is possible to establish second-layer mechanism in Northeast Asia.

There is no exclusive third-layer mechanism in Northeast Asia. Yukio Hatoyama's East Asia Community concept was an attempt to establish such an overall architecture based on fraternity. His vision was to include Japan-China rivalry in the overall framework just as the European Community embedded France-Germany rivalry in it. But his vision was too naïve to be achieved simply because unlike Germany, China is not a US ally. It is still important for Northeast Asian countries to work with other overall mechanisms such as ARF and East Asian Summit for non-traditional security issues, but the US alliance network is more important for dealing with traditional security issues in Northeast Asia due to its unique security environment.

Building a Security Architecture in Northeast Asia

Northeast Asia needs to develop security architecture beyond the traditional hub and spokes system. But, there are great limitations on establishing functional and overall multilateral mechanisms, especially for traditional security cooperation. Therefore, a realistic step is to transform the hub and spokes mechanism into a more organic framework.

The region faces two primary security challenges: North Korea's nuclear program and the rise of China. The key is to strengthen ties between Japan and South Korea since US-Japan-South Korea trilateral partnership is the most effective way to address these challenges. Historical issues have hindered Japan-South Korea cooperation. But it is necessary to deepen Japan-South Korea military cooperation, and having Japanese observers in the Invincible Spirit exercise was a good first step. The US alliances with Japan and South Korea need to be upgraded from hub and spokes to an organic alliance network. Engagement from Australia, India and other like-minded nations that have interests in Northeast Asia should be welcomed.

A like-minded coalition approach does not aim at excluding North Korea and China, but it is more effective and efficient because members share basic objectives. Japan, the US, and South Korea should cooperate with China, North Korea, Russia, and, to a lesser degree, Mongolia, when possible. In fact, it is essential to promote nontraditional security cooperation with those countries, and regional countries should develop ad hoc functional cooperation in nontraditional security arenas more actively. The Japan-China-South Korea Summit can be a venue for this purpose.

Finally, it is desirable to have an encompassing Northeast Asian architecture in the future. But the key is Japan-South Korea ties rather than Japan-China relations. Any regional architecture in Northeast Asia should incorporate the Japan-South Korea rivalry because both countries are US allies and like-minded countries. It is not an easy task for any Japanese or South Korea leader to resolve the historical issues that have hindered bilateral relations. Therefore, including the bilateral relations in a wider framework might be a good option to manage the difficult relations. Doing so would contribute more to traditional security architecture-building as well.

Conclusion

Northeast Asia is a unique sub-region in the Asia-Pacific. The dominance of traditional security concerns hinders the regional security architecture-building. Another reason for the failure in building security architecture is the membership. Any mechanism is destined to fail if it has members that do not share its basic objectives. So, a desirable regional architecture in Northeast Asia is a coalition of like-minded countries based on the US alliance network in the Asia-Pacific. The key to a more effective mechanism is improved Japan-South Korea relations rather than Japan-China relations.

Multilateral Dialogue in Northeast Asia

By Joon Sung Lee

Multilateralism refers to multiple countries working in concert on a given issue. International organizations, such as the UN and WTO are multilateral organizations. Multilateralism has been tested and the efficiency has been sometimes praised and at other times questioned. In Northeast Asia, the efficiency of multilateralism should be questioned.

The primary multilateral dialogue in Northeast Asia includes Japan, ROK, DPRK, Russia, China and US and is called the Six-Party Talks, which is a specialized form of multilateral talk designed to resolve the issues on the Korean Peninsula. However, the Six-Party Talks as they are today will to solve the current crisis. The current structure of the talks has more negative aspects than positive affects as evidenced by their productivity. With six countries participating in the talks, simply arranging an opportunity for all of them to convene is difficult. Also, because each country has a different purpose, the talks have not yet offered a practical solution to the Northeast Asian crisis. Each country's attitude hinders smooth development in the multilateral dialogue. Although Japan, the US, and ROK seem to stand on the same side and believe that North Korea is the main source of the problems in Northeast Asia, they cannot unite because they are considering only the benefits that will come to their countries.

Japan is participating in the Six-Party Talks because of the North Korean missile threat. But, North Korean provocations have provided the justification that Japan should maintain its military force. The main problem is that Japan does not share the same interest with South Korea, which is peaceful reunification with North Korea.

US first chose South Korea as its ally for the purpose of using it as the last border to protect Asian countries from communism. Nowadays, South Korea is important to US because US can either communicate with or regulate North Korea. South Korea is also a strategic place for the US to observe the rising potential threat of China. The US and South Korea are sharing the strongest bond as are China and North Korea, maintaining the balance of power in Northeast Asia. South Korea and the US share the common goal of reunification as allies in the Korean War, and they are also the most active in the dialogues.

South Korea wants the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas and relief of the tension in the Korean Peninsula. Though there have been many attempts by South Korea to have peaceful relations with North Korea, there have also been incidents that have hindered the progress such as the recent Cheonan incident. Nearly 10 years ago, South Korea government announced the Sunshine Policy towards North Korea, bringing hope for reconciliation to the Korean peninsula. But after the Cheonan incident, President Lee Myung Bak declared a hard line policy towards North Korea. Both South Korea and US did not attend the Six-Party Talks after the Cheonan incident.

Russia has always kept an ambiguous position towards communist countries. Russia supports North Korea for political reasons but also supports South Korea for economic reasons. As a member of the investigation team on Cheonan, Russia first agreed with South Korean statements but the Russian government subsequently announced that the Cheonan investigation was inconclusive. Russia has attempted to maintain a positive relationship with other countries while directly supporting communist countries. Although Russia is relatively weak economically, its military force is well known since its days as the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, Russia engaged the US in an arms race so the two countries share historical political issues.

China is sometimes compared to Russia because of its ambiguous attitude toward North Korea. Both countries are willing to benefit from the Six-Party Talks but they do not have the key relation with the six parties except for being in the region and participants in the Korean War. China and Russia are the countries in Northeast Asia toward which North Korea does not show aggression. With China, North Korea has to maintain a friendly relationship because of the aid that comes from China that is used to sustain the Kim's regime. China is using the Six-Party Talks for not only economic opportunities but also political benefits. The political benefit that China has gained is influence in Northeast Asia.

North Korea is the 'key' to multilateralism in Northeast Asia. To North Korea, the Six-Party Talks are a good opportunity to gain benefits. Most of the UN restrictions have not been effective because of its unique government. A despotic government will not necessarily collapse even if all the civilians are bankrupt and international trade and military actions are restricted. North Korea is using the aid from other countries for its military rather than to feed the civilians. It is also replacing international trade with illegal drugs or weapon trades for profit. The most significant threat that North Korea carries is their inter-continental ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons. The Six-Party Talks have tried to solve this problem but by being hesitant, they have allowed North Korea to further develop its capabilities.

The multilateral dialogue has been a shield protecting the countries involved from a war but it has also been a shield protecting North Korea. North Korea is protected by the delays in the Six-Party Talks and the divisions among Japan, US, and South Korea. There have been no proposals that the Six-Party Talks have submitted that have made North Korea to change its attitude. One of the main problems is that North Korea is making China and Russia its closest allies, thereby creating a divide among the six parties. Despite receiving blame from the international society for the Cheonan incident, North Korea has strengthened its relationship with China, which is a major advantage.

Multilateral talk should be sustained because it can have both practical and symbolic meaning. The new multilateral talk can be in a form that is different from the Six-Party Talks. Although there are already many forms of multilateral talks in Northeast Asia, none of them has yet tackled North Korean issue directly. The goal that Northeast Asian countries should share is removing the threat that comes from North Korea. The

most idealistic and safe solution would be the reunification of the two Koreas. For this purpose, other countries should support, but not interfere with, bilateral talks between South Korea and North Korea. In the bilateral dialogues between North Korea and South Korea, the two Koreas can both argue about the main issues without delaying to appease other countries.

Therefore South Korea should participate more actively in South Korea-China and South Korea-North Korea bilateral dialogues. Bilateral dialogue with North Korea is most ideal but it could be impractical. Therefore, South Korea must also communicate with China to deal with the North Korea issues effectively. In current times, because of the tension between ROK and China, North Korea has not had to change its attitude after the Choenan incident. To accomplish peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula, both South and North Korea have to construct a direct dialogue path. Since the division of the peninsula, direct conversations and meetings, rather than multilateral conferences, have solved the major issues. Former Presidents Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun have shined a positive light on North Korea and changed policies from being anti-North Korea to focusing on reunification and peace. Even though the history of interactions between Seoul and Pyongyang is short, it has brought visible changes. When too many countries are involved, the direction of the multilateral effort becomes muddled and ambiguous.

Northeast Asian Security Mechanism: The Six-Party Talks and US alliances in Northeast Asia

By Liang Baowei

There is possibility for multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia. Robert Jervis states that a cooperative security mechanism should be based on four conditions. First, great powers have to build up the security mechanism. Second, a common belief in a mechanism has to exist. Third, there has to be realization that expansion is not the best way to security. Fourth, common awareness of the high cost of war and individual security has to be present. Major states in Northeast Asia agree to those conditions.

The Potential and Limits of the Six-Party Talks

The Six-Party Talks concerning the DPRK's nuclear program involves the United States, North Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and South Korea. The talks show these nations' competitive concern over this issue and somewhat ensure the interests of all sides are addressed in an open and cooperative manner. Because of long-held rancor and distrust among the countries in the region, it is not possible to take the collective security approach in Northeast Asia. Although the Six-Party Talks are focused on the North Korean nuclear issue, they can expand to include issues of economy, politics, culture, and society after the resolution of the nuclear crisis. In reality, the talks have successfully prevented military conflict. Temporary stagnation cannot deny that achievement.

However, the talks still have problems, such as poor institutionalization, lack of compulsion, and too much dependence on consensus. The dependence on consensus is causing the Six Party Talks to be stagnant. It can be understood from the previous talks that the principle of "action for action" can easily cause disagreement and even confrontation. Failure to carry out the "consensus action" or different understanding of the "consensus action" will delay the talks. Therefore, the Six-Party Talks cannot be the mechanism for security cooperation in Northeast Asia. This reality has made relevant countries seek other solutions.

US Bilateral Alliances and Multilateral Cooperation

Both competition and cooperation exist between bilateral alliance and multilateral cooperation. When multilateral cooperation is an obstacle to bilateral alliance, the leading bilateral powers will contain the development of multilateral cooperation. Also, when divergence emerges between the direction of multilateral cooperation and the preference of certain great powers, the great powers object or boycott. At the same time, the multilateral cooperation and bilateral alliance are compatible to a certain extent. The former is neutral toward the leading powers in the latter. The leading powers' attitude toward multilateral cooperation is determined by weighing the profit and cost.

Currently, bilateral alliance and multilateral cooperation coexist in Northeast Asia. Multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia poses a challenge to the US security

consideration in this region, however, they have a common aim – security and stability in Northeast Asia. In the long-term, the two modes have to find a mutually acceptable aim. This requires efforts from both sides, especially cooperation between China and the US. The US has to stop boycotting multilateral cooperation in East Asia. China should keep this mechanism transparent and try to find ways to connect the two mechanisms.

Multilateralism in Context: The “Reasonable to Realistic” Ratio

By A. Greer Meisels

Introduction: Rose-Colored Glasses not included

Multilateral cooperation on a wide-range of issues is important for the Northeast Asia region. Yet there has been a distinct lack of formal, institutionalized collaboration in this endeavor. Why is there a disconnect between recognition and implementation? Some argue that while the usefulness of promoting multilateralism is understood, its feasibility remains somewhat questionable. The underlying issue could be described as the “reasonable to realistic” ratio. From a conceptual standpoint, awareness by Northeast Asian countries that multilateral cooperation is a reasonable undertaking. However, that does not mean the political will and/or resources needed to make substantial headway are available, making the goal somewhat unrealistic. Couple this challenge with the fact that, by and large, the various actors involved have different perceptions of what is actually meant by the term “multilateralism” and its prospects for realization become mired in a bog of uncertainty.

Despite this rather pessimistic introduction, it should not be forgotten that today, several forms of multilateralism do exist in Asia and that it is Northeast Asia, as a discrete geographic region, that lacks a specific mechanism or grouping (save for the currently defunct Six-Party Talks) to address issues and conflicts in an organized, institutionalized manner. While professing the need for a Northeast Asian multilateral framework seems reasonable, it is equally important to examine those institutions currently in existence. After all, a new multilateral cooperation mechanism should be created to fill a specific need so that the region is not left with a “talk-shop,” which might be considered light on legitimacy and purpose or duplicative in a way that renders it useless.

Are Six-Party Talks the Answer?

Today, one could create a hearty acronym soup out of the regional institutions in Asia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) comprised of six member states (including two from Northeast Asia, China and Russia), four observer States and two dialogue partners primarily tackles what are considered nontraditional security (NTS) threats such as drug-trafficking and the “three evils”: terrorism, separatism and extremism.¹

¹ According to the SCO, its goals are as follows: “strengthening mutual confidence and good-neighborly relations among the member countries; promoting effective cooperation in politics, trade and economy, science and technology, culture as well as education, energy, transportation, tourism, environmental protection and other fields; making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region, moving towards the establishment of a new, democratic, just and rational political and economic international order.”

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN + 3, East Asia Summit (EAS), and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), all largely deal with issues arising from increased economic interdependence and trade. The region's main strategic dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), started in 1994, was designed "to foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern; and to make significant contributions to efforts towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region."² However, from a security standpoint, it has few tangible successes to point to and, as many experts have opined, has proven itself wholly ineffective when it comes to dealing with specific threats to regional stability, such as a nuclear North Korea. As an organization it is not known for its swift response to crises.³ Therefore, though "multilateralism" need not be intrinsically conflated with a "regional security framework," if one were to look through what the region has versus what it may need, the cooperative mechanism that seems to be missing would be a regional security framework.

In fact, it is often noted that Northeast Asia is the only region in the world that does not have its own regional security framework. Given that this region is one of the most important and dynamic regions in the world from an economic, political and geo-strategic perspective – it is where the interests of three of the world's principal nuclear powers (the United States, China and Russia) intersect; it is home to approximately 100,000 US troops; and it contains the world's three largest economies (the United States, China and Japan) – the lack of a multilateral mechanism would seem to be to the detriment of the individual countries concerned, the region, and the world.

"But what about the Six-Party Talks?" some may ask. True, these could be cited as not only the most obvious example of multilateralism in Northeast Asia from a security standpoint, but also the venue that one of the region's major players, China, seems most comfortable with given its role as host nation. Additionally, enshrined in the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement was language attesting to the importance of the six parties in promoting peace and security in Northeast Asia.⁴ Following up on this, one of the five Working Groups established within the parameters of the February 13, 2007 "Beijing Agreement" is responsible for the creation of a "Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism."⁵ While this enthusiasm for multilateralism is welcome, present day realities appear to be increasingly at odds with transforming these words into reality.

² These are the stated objectives of the ARF as outlined on its website, <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/AboutUs/tabid/57/Default.aspx>.

³ The author does not wish to disparage the ARF and sees potential in what it might become. In fact, it was during the meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam in July 2010 that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used the ARF as a platform for articulating the need to resolve the multinational territorial disputes which continue to plague the South China Sea.

⁴ The fourth point reads: "The Six Parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia. The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum. The Six Parties agreed to explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia." <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490.htm>>.

⁵ <<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t297463.htm>>. Russia is to head up this group.

First, today more than ever, the relative merits of the Six-Party Talks are being called into question. Putting aside the fact that the last round of talks was held on December 11, 2008, North Korea's continued intransigence and increasingly hostile provocations, including the March 26, 2010 sinking of the South Korean navy ship *Cheonan*, which resulted in the loss of 46 lives, and the more recent November 23, 2010 shelling of Yeonpyeong island, which also resulted in casualties and injuries to both military personnel as well as civilians, have brought the entire Six-Party process and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula to a grinding halt. Therefore, many have come to question the efficacy of the Six-Party Talks and have burgeoning doubts as to whether it is a mechanism that should be continued. China, of course, as the host of the talks, has been actively trying to jumpstart this process while simultaneously calling for cool heads to prevail in the wake of North Korea's aggressive behavior. However, China remains increasingly unable to "wish" the Six-Party Talks back into existence.

Second, though multilateral efforts like the Six-Party Talks are significant, it remains to be seen whether a security mechanism born of these efforts could address some of the region's other major concerns. Certain topics such as the future of Taiwan or the numerous territorial disputes between nearly all regional players would seem to be strictly taboo. At the same time, other non-traditional security threats that a mechanism such as this one could address, for example, port security, piracy, energy security, etc., extend beyond the region's borders and would call into question the need for this particular grouping of countries to work on them in isolation. This is not meant to imply that cooperation among Northeast Asian countries on these issues is not important, but it might raise the question whether the creation of a specific regional security mechanism is necessary to tackle them. Therefore, rather than trying to augment the scope of a faltering (and some may say failing) process like the Six-Party Talks, if multilateralism is to triumph in Northeast Asia, perhaps it should be built on a fresher foundation.

Other Flies in the Ointment

Some blame the stunted development of Northeast Asian multilateralism on the region's great rising power, China. Michael Yahuda, Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics, outlined a dilemma-set to explain some of the difficulties inherent to the development of cooperative Asian security. First, he questioned whether China, as the region's great economic and military power, would willingly choose to address security interests that did not directly impact the country or which might be somewhat incongruous to what China deems as its principal priorities.⁶ Though over the past fifteen years or so, China has moved slightly beyond its stalwart position of non-intervention into the affairs of other sovereign nations, a shift which is reflected in its increasing engagement in the international system, including in United Nations-led peacekeeping missions, it remains to be seen whether it would ever set aside its own strategic interests for "the greater good." Second, a multilateral security framework could only be effective if all parties communicated openly, accurately and honestly. China's political system

⁶ It is generally considered that China's two primary objectives are the preservation of the Communist Party's control and the country's continued economic and domestic development.

seems averse to transparency in certain matters, particularly regarding the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and China's own military intentions and aspirations. Without confidence-building measures which could lend credibility to its actions in the eyes of China's neighbors, this type of security framework would be hollow, built on a foundation of skepticism. A final brief point which should be noted is that what is in the best interests of China might not be in the region's best interests. Granted, one could argue this would be true of any country involved in this security arrangement. Nevertheless, Japan and South Korea still maintain a healthy dose of unease regarding China's rise and often look towards the United States to play the role of counterpoint. Russia and China have seen their relationship improve as of late, but the mid-century rift that occurred between the two countries is far from forgotten. Therefore, it might be difficult to convince the other parties that China's intentions are genuine; or, if it is pushing a particular agenda, whether it is looking out for more than its own self interest.

Another integral piece of any cohesive regional multilateral framework hinges on the US-China bilateral relationship. Though many have stated that the United States' relationships with its allies in the region are better now than they have been in recent years, due largely and somewhat ironically to North Korea's aggressiveness, and trilateral cooperation among the US, the ROK and Japan has grown stronger, the US-China relationship has not fared as well. Recent Chinese assertiveness and one may dare say aggression, coupled with a US that seems less willing to take a conciliatory approach toward China, is making waves in this most critical of bilateral relationships. Some may argue that the current state of affairs is not surprising given that China as an ascendant power is both tacitly and at times explicitly challenging the United States and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Others attribute it to the fact that US-China relations are still in their maturation phase. As a former high-ranking US diplomat and long-time China-hand said, "When one thinks of US-China relations one must realize there is a ceiling and a floor. In other words, there are limits." This is undoubtedly true. However, if one subscribes to the "glass is half full" school, that ceilings can be raised and perhaps even shattered. Unfortunately it is equally true that a floor can always be lowered, and many houses have basements. Therefore, no matter how well-intentioned any efforts to institutionalize a multilateral framework are, if US-China relations are not on solid ground, multilateralism will not get very far.

One more factor to bear in mind is that the US, as well as other countries, is hoping that China will become a more responsible, involved, and positive contributor not only in Northeast Asia but around the world. Therefore, focusing more on China's Northeast Asian multilateralism might be to the detriment of its engagement on the world stage. Making China an even more connected and participatory global citizen, a role it has gradually, though sometimes begrudgingly been willing to accept, would contribute in profound ways to universal problems such as climate change and security challenges in other regions such as the Middle East. In other words, a focus on multilateralism need not be confined to a single geographic region, like Northeast Asia, but should be a larger, more expansive diplomatic objective.

Finally, Northeast Asian multilateralism, in whatever guise, should not replace or usurp the very important bilateral alliances that currently exist in Northeast Asia. In fact, any institutionalized multilateral arrangement should be seen as a way of augmenting the current “hub and spoke” model of alliance-building in the region. Such a mechanism could succeed in drawing into the fold important partners, such as China who, though not an ally, is a necessary and critical actor in addressing both traditional and new security threats facing the region and the world. Similarly, no matter if, or how, a security structure in Northeast Asia evolves, it is important to understand that it may not be a panacea. This region is rife with mistrust, is hung up on historical injustices, and is often beleaguered with incongruous political systems, values and ideologies. Many of these deep-seated issues may continue to spoil future multilateral endeavors.

How to Move Forward

If we return to the “reasonable to realistic” ratio, one is left at a crossroads. Is there a way to make Northeast Asian regionalism so reasonable in order to make its outcome more realistic? It is certainly hard to argue against a desire to maintain efforts to defuse and stabilize this potentially volatile region. It is also reasonable to assume that consistent and deeper engagement between all actors will bolster the ties that bind the region together and will hopefully ensure that there is a security climate conducive to addressing some of Northeast Asia’s latent and overt tensions. Moving beyond peninsular issues, which are assuredly plentiful, there are many areas that require the cooperation of the region’s principal actors. Topics like energy security, maritime security, nonproliferation, environmental security, and the like affect every country and could be good agenda items for collaborative debate and discussion. However, does this type of pragmatism automatically translate into a realistic call for a specific institutionalized multilateral forum for the region? – perhaps someday soon, but not immediately.

Ad hoc multilateralism on an “as needed” basis, which may include the continued development of various trilateral groups, such as the US-ROK-Japan and the US-China-Japan formations in concert with improvements in bilateral relationships may be the most useful expenditures of limited financial and human capital resources. Michael Schiffer, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, stated in his recent speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies on January 6, 2011 that there is a “...region-wide commitment to strengthen relations with our [the United States] allies and partners, particularly within a functional problem-solving regional architecture... Along with our allies and partners we see greater cooperation in the region – as it undergoes unprecedented change, and particularly as China emerges – as critical for the stability of the region and indeed the globe.”⁷ While applauding this US “commitment” and agreeing that there are merits to a “functional problem-solving regional architecture,” the spearheading of this endeavor does not seem too readily apparent. So, as one should

⁷ This was taken from his speech titled, “Building Cooperation in the US–China Military-to-Military Relationship.” <http://www.iiss.org/about-us/offices/washington/iiss-us-events/iiss-us-address-building-cooperation-in-the-us-china-military-to-military-relationship/>

strive to live by the axiom “never put off until tomorrow what you can do today,” many of today’s issues cannot wait for tomorrow’s architects to develop blueprints.

Limits of Multilateralism for Security in Northeast Asia

By Daniel Michaeli

The very challenges that have led many to call for the development of a new multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia suggest why such a mechanism is unlikely to emerge. In this article, I explore three of the most problematic areas that could destabilize Northeast Asia: the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, and maritime disputes. I argue that sweeping new multilateral arrangements are unrealistic because of the nature of these problems, but in some cases more limited multilateral responses might be capable of reducing the risk of conflict, particularly in the maritime space and if Beijing develops more flexible policies in key areas. But, as long as territorial disputes continue to rankle Asians and two civil wars from the twentieth century remain unresolved, there will not be an overarching Northeast Asian security mechanism. The region is left instead with a host of difficult problems and band-aid solutions.

The Korean Peninsula

The Korean Peninsula is a good starting point for discussion. North Korean aggressive behavior poses the most imminent threat to regional security in Northeast Asia, and North Korean proliferation activity – from missiles to nuclear technology – is a *global* threat.¹ At any given moment over the past several decades, however, the Soviet Union, South Korea, or China has provided the North Korean regime with a lifeline that helped it cling to power despite international isolation. In this environment, the regime has consistently demonstrated that most levers of international pressure are at best marginally useful in affecting its behavior.

The George W. Bush administration supported the Six-Party Talks beginning in August 2003 in an effort to bridge differences among the regional states most affected by North Korea's actions, and to present a united front when negotiating with the North. In the words of a senior administration official at the time, "It's much better if North Korea negotiates with people on whom it depends for help."² The stated goal of the talks was North Korea's denuclearization, and in September 2005 an agreement was reached under which the six parties – the United States, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, and North Korea – "unanimously reaffirmed that the goal of the Six-Party Talks is the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner."³

¹ See for instance Colum Lynch, "North Korea Accused of Violating Sanctions on Nuclear Weapons Trade," 9 November 2010, [Foreignpolicy.com](http://foreignpolicy.com), 21 January 2011 <http://turtlebay.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/11/09/north_korea_accused_of_violating_un_sanctions_on_nuclear_weapons_trade> and the referenced report, United Nations, [Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Resolution 1874 \(2009\)](#), Final Report (New York: United Nations, 2010).

² Steven R. Weisman, "North Korea Seen as Ready to Agree to Wider Meetings," [New York Times](#) 1 August 2003.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks," 19 September 2005, [US Department of State](#), 21 January 2011 <<http://www.state.gov/p/eap/regional/c15455.htm>>.

The Six-Party Talks included a seed of broader multilateral security cooperation. The joint statement produced in February 2007 called for a working group to discuss a “Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism,” which would include all six parties.⁴ If North Korea were to become truly interested in coming to an accommodation with South Korea, Japan, and the United States, such a mechanism would provide an atmosphere in which issues of mutual concern could be discussed. But the goal of denuclearizing North Korea has obviously not been met. Developing a truly meaningful mechanism presupposes that North Korean behavior has changed or been forced to change.

The talks *could* perhaps have contributed to the development of a regional security mechanism had a less demanding goal of the talks been achieved: coordinating security policies vis-à-vis North Korea among the other five parties. Yet the security policies of the five parties remain badly misaligned. China is still deeply reluctant to talk with South Korea and the United States in any detail about contingency scenarios for a North Korean regime collapse – the kind of longer-term security coordination that could substantially reduce the chances of miscommunication and conflict down the road. And in recent years, Chinese actions have suggested that – though denuclearization of North Korea is a desirable objective – the risk of instability from exerting too much pressure on the regime is of greater concern to Beijing. China’s responses to the *Cheonan* attack in March 2010 and the shelling of the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong in November 2010 suggest that China will tolerate destabilizing actions by North Korea because it sees no other choice. China is not alone in this approach. Moscow also glossed over the *Cheonan* attack. The UN Security Council responded only with a presidential statement, which came over three months after the attack and did not endorse the South Korean investigation or blame North Korea for the incident, although it acknowledged that the *Cheonan* had been attacked.⁵

China has not only watered down Security Council actions but also circumvented and delayed their implementation. Last summer and fall, China blocked publication of a May 2010 UN-mandated report on North Korean proliferation, which highlighted violations with Iran, Syria, and Myanmar, for some six months.⁶ Also, Chinese noncompliance with the UN Security Council resolutions that it supported is a constant source of trouble. The Congressional Research Service reported in October 2010 that “North Korea continues to use air and land routes through China with little risk of inspection...[and it] uses front companies in China to procure items under sanction.”⁷

⁴ “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement,” 13 February 2007, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t297463.htm>>.

⁵ UN Department of Public Information, “Security Council Condemns Attack on Republic of Korea Naval Ship ‘Cheonan’, Stresses Need to Prevent Further Attacks, Other Hostilities in Region; It Also Takes Note of Neighbour’s Response Denying Responsibility for Sinking,” 9 July 2010, United Nations, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc9975.doc.htm>>.

⁶ Louis Charbonneau, “China Stops Blocking Harsh North Korea Report: U.N. Envoys,” 9 November 2010, Reuters, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6A80SM20101109>>.

⁷ Mary Beth Nikitin, et al., Implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874, Congressional Research Service Memorandum (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2010).

The Six-Party Talks were structured to show North Korea that a “divide and conquer” strategy with its neighbors would not be effective. But in recent years, North Korea has demonstrated that even with incredibly provocative behavior, from selling nuclear technology to attacking South Korea, Northeast Asian countries are unable to coordinate security policies. The successes of the Six-Party Talks are in the UN Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874, which sanction North Korea. Passage of the resolutions depended on Chinese frustration with North Korea, which may not have manifested without a direct Chinese role in the negotiations. But gaining Chinese buy-in for a UN Security Council resolution was a tactical solution to a tactical question; China’s fundamental approach to North Korea remains an impediment to true security cooperation among the five parties, and therefore among the six parties.

As it considers restarting the Six-Party Talks in 2011, the Obama administration hopes that China will be frustrated enough with the lack of progress to force some meaningful concessions from the North Koreans. And, indeed, the six-party format remains the best way of coordinating policies toward North Korea in Asia – even if the talks produce few results. In the end, however, widely differing perceptions of security challenges resulting from the unresolved Korean civil war must be reconciled before the talks could turn into a more permanent regional security arrangement.

The Taiwan Strait

Taiwan is a source of tremendous worry in Asia and beyond. Under the Taiwan Relations Act, the US is obligated to “maintain the capacity ... to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.”⁸ Japan and the US incorporated an oblique reference to the defense of Taiwan in the alliance’s defense cooperation guidelines as early as 1997, when the scope of cooperation was expanded to include “areas surrounding Japan.”⁹ Those guidelines were specifically written *not* to exclude the Taiwan Strait.¹⁰ And over twenty years after the European Union imposed an arms embargo on China in response to the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, the prospect of a Sino-American war over Taiwan is now a primary justification for maintaining the embargo.¹¹

While the past several years since the election of Ma Ying-jeou have seen a substantial reduction in tensions across the Taiwan Strait, only six years ago China passed an anti-secession law calling for the use of force to unify the mainland and Taiwan under several scenarios open to broad interpretation, such as when “possibilities

⁸ Kerry Dumbaugh, Taiwan: Texts of the Taiwan Relations Act, the US-China Communiqués, and the ‘Six Assurances’, Congressional Research Service (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1998).

⁹ Andrew Mack, “Japan: So, How Much Military Cooperation With America?,” International Herald Tribune 20 June 1997.

¹⁰ Koji Murata, “Japan’s Security Policy and US–Japan–China Relations,” An Alliance For Engagement: Building Cooperation In Security Relations With China, ed. Benjamin L. Self and Jeffrey W. Thompson (Washington: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2002) 129–141, 135.

¹¹ Trefor Moss, “China’s Lucre Won’t End EU Arms Embargo,” 11 January 2011, Asia Times Online, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/MA11Ad01.html>>.

for a peaceful re-unification should be completely exhausted.”¹² And China’s military build-up is still believed to be based in large part on contingency planning for Taiwan. If political pressures on Taiwan produce another independence-minded president like former President Chen Shui-bian, much of the calm that has settled over the Strait since 2008 could wash away instantly. Taiwan thus remains a critical concern for military planners from Tokyo to Canberra to Washington, as they are forced to consider what an attack on Taiwan would mean for the region, and for their countries’ own security interests. Indeed, if China were to attack, the stability of the region could be threatened regardless of the outcome: key trading relationships could be disrupted, an arms race between Japan and China could break out, and the position of the United States could be jeopardized.

That Taiwan is generally excluded from discussions of potential regional security architectures reflects the awkward reality of an unfinished civil war and the fact that none of the security mechanisms under discussion are able to address the very real possibility of a conflict over Taiwan. Unlike North Korea and South Korea, China and Taiwan do not engage each other as states. This makes incorporation of both into multilateral efforts of *any* kind difficult. The general difficulty is that China considers the Taiwan issue to be internal and not “regional” and has been largely unwilling to discuss the issue with other countries. Taiwan, too, is sensitive about uninvited foreign intervention into its relationship with the mainland; in 1982, Taiwan asked the United States to agree to “six assurances,” one of which was that “the United States would not mediate between Taiwan and China.”¹³

This is not to say that greater regional integration, if it includes Taiwan, would not help to reduce security tensions. Over time, if an East Asian community is created that brings greater regional economic or even political integration, then including Taiwan in that arrangement could enable Taiwan to develop simultaneously greater international space and closer ties with the mainland. But this is a concept distinctly different from a security mechanism. It might not even include the United States. And it would require a much greater degree of flexibility from China’s leaders.

In the meantime, ensuring that “military measures are unattractive” to both China and Taiwan is the principle underlying both US arms sales to Taiwan and the US force posture in the Pacific.¹⁴ Opportunities for multilateral engagement in the security realm are quite limited in the absence of political reconciliation. The extent to which China and Taiwan engage in any military-to-military confidence-building – for example, their joint coast guard rescue drill in September 2010 – is the result of bilateral political decisions

¹² Chinese National People’s Congress, “Full Text of Anti-Secession Law,” 14 March 2005, [Third Session - 10th National People’s Congress and Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference](http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005lh/122724.htm), 21 January 2011 <<http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005lh/122724.htm>>.

¹³ Kerry Dumbaugh, [Taiwan: Texts of the Taiwan Relations Act, the US-China Communiques, and the ‘Six Assurances’](#), Congressional Research Service (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1998) 18.

¹⁴ Dennis C. Blair, “Prepared Statement of Admiral Dennis C. Blair,” [Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States: Hearing Before the Select Committee on Intelligence](#) (Washington, DC: US Senate, 2009) 57.

between Beijing and Taipei. Such efforts could open the door for meaningful regional multilateral cooperation over the longer term. In the meantime, the US hub and spokes alliance system, as a deterrent to China and a restraint to Taiwan, will remain the guarantor of Taiwan's security. Any multilateral security arrangements will be severely restricted in their ability to prevent a war from breaking out over the Taiwan Strait.

Maritime Issues: Resources and Freedom of Navigation

In recent years, maritime security issues in Asia have become increasingly conspicuous as Asian nations have sought to stake claims to natural resources within their proclaimed exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and coast guards and fishermen have sparked wars of words, tit-for-tat arrests, and widespread protests with their actions at sea. Over the past year alone, the Yellow Sea was the site of an unprovoked attack by North Korea, which disputes the Northern Limit Line, and a Chinese general called US-South Korean exercises there “hegemonic bullying” by the United States.¹⁵ In the East China Sea, Chinese fishermen collided with two Japanese coastguard vessels near the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, setting off a two-week-long diplomatic spat.¹⁶ Tensions over China's bullying in the South China Sea ran high enough that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared at the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in July 2010 that a “leading diplomatic priority” for the US is resolving the territorial disputes there and ensuring that “all abide by the international rules.”¹⁷

The importance of freedom of navigation in the Pacific can hardly be overstated. Even as Asians are building new railroad and road links throughout the continent, trade on the high seas remains dominant in the region. The maritime space is therefore frequently raised as an ideal starting point for multilateral cooperation in Asia. After all, security of sea lanes and access to resources are critical for all Asian nations. Japan and South Korea have been engaged in joint development of hydrocarbons in their area of overlapping continental shelf claims for over 30 years, and Japan and China have agreed in principle to do the same.¹⁸ China's participation in international antipiracy operations off the Gulf of Aden is cited as an indication that China's maritime strategies are “evolving incrementally towards greater convergence with American and Japanese approaches.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Yoichi Funabashi, “Asia's Clouded Horizon – Part II,” 29 September 2010, YaleGlobal Online, 21 January 2011 <<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/asias-clouded-horizon-part-ii>>.

¹⁶ Tania Branigan and Justin McCurry, “Japan Releases Chinese Fishing Boat Captain,” 24 September 2010, The Guardian, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/sep/24/japan-free-chinese-boat-captain>>.

¹⁷ Daniel Ten Kate and Nicole Gauette, “Clinton Signals US Role in China Territorial Disputes After Asean Talks,” 23 July 2010, Bloomberg, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-07-23/u-s-says-settling-south-china-sea-disputes-leading-diplomatic-priority-.html>>.

¹⁸ Mark J. Valencia, “A Maritime Security Regime for Northeast Asia,” Asian Perspective 32.4 (2008): 157–180, 163.

¹⁹ Gaye Christoffersen, “China and Maritime Cooperation: Piracy in the Gulf of Aden,” 8 January 2010, International Relations and Security Network, 21 January 2011 <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?id=111041>>.

Nontraditional security issues might provide the most realistic starting point for multilateral security cooperation in the region, even though piracy has not been a concern in Northeast Asia. Possibilities for multilateral security cooperation include joint exploitation of resources, maritime search and rescue, and a declaration on the conduct of parties in Northeast Asian waters. But differing interpretations of freedom of navigation are a major obstacle: China has become increasingly assertive in rejecting the US military presence in the western Pacific, claiming that Beijing should be able to control and restrict military traffic in the area of its expansive EEZ claims, even though it was not one of the signatories of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).²⁰ Over the course of the past year, China has stridently objected to US military exercises in the Yellow Sea – as though South Korea has no territorial waters of its own – and has declared in private that the South China Sea is a “core national interest.” If China refuses to acknowledge the rights of US warships to navigate in these areas, maritime cooperation will be inherently limited and a conduct agreement might be unattainable.

China’s use of military-to-military relations with the United States as a political tool to discourage US support for Taiwan further suggests that China is much less concerned about miscalculation and the risk of confrontations at sea than are the US and its allies. Still, multilateral efforts in the maritime area need to be encouraged. The ASEAN-China Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea of 2002 is a useful model, though China has thus far been reluctant to negotiate on anything of the sort with the US. China might be willing to engage on this issue in Northeast Asia multilaterally in the future, but – as with nearly all of the other issues raised in this paper – it depends on a change of heart from China. Such a change is necessary for creating a more stable Northeast Asia. The US, meanwhile, must finally ratify UNCLOS if it wishes to be a part of the processes that will determine Asia’s maritime future.

Closing Thoughts

There are two major factors that could – based on historical precedent from elsewhere in the world – considerably expand the room for multilateral security architectures in Asia. Neither factor is currently present in the region or likely to emerge in the foreseeable future. The first would be a major external security threat of the sort posed by the Soviet Union, which is difficult to imagine. The second would be the emergence of a China with capabilities so powerful that no balancing coalition could be formed to prevent it from forcing settlements of regional issues on the parties involved. In that scenario, China might form multilateral arrangements of its own accord if it feels they would suit its interests; other countries would more or less be forced to stay away from Taiwan, eliminating the possibility that a conflict there would have spillover effects.

Despite the lack of these conditions and all the security challenges of the region, other regional arrangements, particularly on the economic front, are emerging. Particularly significant is the “Plus Three” (the ASEAN Plus Three minus ASEAN),

²⁰ Jerome A. Cohen and Jon M. Van Dyke, “China’s EEZ: A US-China Danger Zone,” 7 December 2010, [US-Asia Law Institute](http://www.usasialaw.org/?p=4667), 21 January 2011 <<http://www.usasialaw.org/?p=4667>>.

bringing together three of the Northeast Asian countries with the greatest economic clout, including the world's second- and third-largest economies by GDP.²¹ Fundamentally, economic arrangements are likely to have limited impact in the security realm, however. It is telling that even after Hu Jintao and Lee Myung-bak met during a third trilateral "Plus Three" summit last spring, where they discussed the *Cheonan* incident and Lee reassured Hu that he would not respond with force, Beijing proved no more willing than before to coordinate with Japan and South Korea on Korean peninsula security issues.

Indeed, Beijing is a major factor in most of the region's security challenges, as is clear in each of the major security areas addressed in this paper. No country wants to form a security mechanism to balance explicitly against China. Doing so would encircle China and ultimately create a self-fulfilling prophecy and reduce security in the region. But at the same time, as long as China raises so many security concerns in Northeast Asia, a security mechanism would fail at confidence-building unless China were prepared to drastically alter its approach to a host of territorial disputes, including Taiwan. This is unlikely for quite some time.

In addition, Japan and South Korea will need to address their history and resolve the Takeshima/Dokdo dispute before they can fully invest in any regional security mechanism. Given North Korean and Chinese provocations, Japan and South Korea may well come closer to resolving those issues long before China is likely to resolve its disputes that keep regional security architecture from being effective. In this context, closer defense ties between Tokyo and Seoul are likely to strengthen the US alliance system and possibly even reduce the impetus for creating a new security mechanism.

Yet imagining a multilateral security mechanism that could help ensure security in Asia is not impossible. At the nongovernmental level, Northeast Asians should continue meeting on security issues and seeking to foster greater mutual understanding, which may eventually lay a foundation for the policy changes that could make a mechanism possible. Ultimately, whether any new architecture can be effective will depend largely on whether China can address the disputes that concern so many of its neighbors. In the meantime, even if new security mechanisms can make headway in coordinating responses to nontraditional security threats like transnational crime or natural disasters, they are unlikely to address the core security challenges that would lead regional actors to seek new multilateral forms of cooperation in the first place.

²¹ Evan A. Feigenbaum and Robert A. Manning, The United States in the New Asia (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2009).

Prospects for Multilateralism in Northeast Asia

By Taku Otsuka

In 2003, after the withdrawal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Six-Party Talks was established as the first serious attempt at security multilateralism in Northeast Asia. With all concerned parties involved, it initially appeared to be a highly efficient system for pursuing a peaceful resolution to the security concerns stemming from the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. However, rounds of negotiation only resulted in repeated provocation by DPRK, with no real gain for any of the parties involved. China was originally expected to play an important role in putting pressure on DPRK, but the plan did not work as expected. On April 14, 2009, DPRK finally declared that it would never again take part in the talks and would resume its nuclear weapons program. Moreover, in the face of the Cheonan incident on March 26, 2010, the Six-Party Talks were unable to play a role as the region's security forum. The attempt at security multilateralism in Northeast Asia was clearly at a turning point.

In this paper, I will first present an overview of Northeast Asia's international relations and discuss the conditions that hinder development of a multilateral security mechanism in the region. I will then analyze the dynamics of the Six-Party Talks and argue that their ineffectiveness stems from structural problems. Finally, I will propose that reshaping the Six-Party Talks into a forum to prepare for future risk scenarios on the Korean Peninsula and strengthening US-Japan-Republic of Korea (ROK) trilateral relations in a more formal setting are two possible examples of effective multilateralism in the region.

Northeast Asia's General Condition Regarding Multilateralism

As Kent E. Calder and Francis Fukuyama pointed out in their book, in comparison with other regions, Northeast Asia has long suffered from a lack of multilateral organization; there is only one example of "soft multilateralism" – the Six-Party Talks.^{1 2} One possible explanation for the belated multilateralism in Northeast Asia is, as the authors described in their book, that the region has been too dependent on the US and its hub and spoke system rather than on multilateralism. This characteristic of the region stems from its historical background.

Faced with the risk of colonization by the Western powers in the late nineteenth century, Japan decided to westernize itself and quickly developed its military forces. This resulted in two regional wars: the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and the Russo-Japanese

¹ Kent E. Calder and Francis Fukuyama. "Introduction." *East Asian Multilateralism: Prospects for Regional Stability*. Washington D.C.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.1-11.Print.

² In the economic realm, Japan, China, and ROK have held a yearly Trilateral Summit since 2008, even though it has not yet been institutionalized. Nevertheless, the Northeast Asian economy has already integrated at almost the same level as that of Europe and North America; however, it is far behind other regions in its institutionalizing effort.

War in 1905. These wars caused geopolitical realignment in the region, planting seeds for future conflicts. After Japan's defeat in World War II, the region became a forefront of the Cold War. This created further complex, intraregional relations. Even after the end of the Cold War, Northeast Asia still suffered from antagonism and disputes among regional countries. A list of existing disputes among regional countries includes the following:

- ROK and DPRK are still in a state of war
- China and Taiwan have disputes over their sovereignty
- China, Russia, and ROK assert that they have territorial disputes with Japan

Furthermore, recent rapid expansion of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) poses a significant threat to the region. While China insists it has a right to develop military capability as its economy grows, the PLA's increasingly offensive posture and opacity in Chinese military spending cultivate a sense of distrust among regional nations.

This complicated situation makes it difficult for multilateralism to function in Northeast Asia, resulting in bilateral relations with the United States – whether of alliance or rivalry – that continue to serve as a basis for international relations in the region.

Under such circumstances, the Six-Party Talks have focused on DPRK's nuclear program – a seemingly obvious “common interest” of the regional powers – as the only example of security multilateralism in the region. Although achievements of the forum have been limited, an examination of the forum dynamics provides substantial insight for policy experts.

Regrettable Results of the Six-Party Talks

As the first attempt at security multilateralism in Northeast Asia, the Six-Party Talks were launched in August 2003 in order for the US to avoid bilateral negotiations with DPRK. Expected effects of the Six-Party Talks were (1) exerting pressure on DPRK to abandon its nuclear programs through the coordinated efforts of the other five parties and (2) sharing the responsibility that stems from negotiations with DPRK, in other words, denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful, inexpensive manner. However, observed throughout the process were DPRK's repeated calls for bilateral talks with the US, military provocations, and withdrawal from the Six-Party Talks. The only results were giveaways to DPRK and further advancement of DPRK's nuclear programs.

Key questions here are the following: First, do the Six-Party Talks really fulfill the required condition for successful multilateral coordination? In other words, are there solid common interests for all member states? Second, are incentives strong enough for each member state to contribute to the six-party process? Particularly, does DPRK really have incentives to keep participating? To answer those questions, the individual interests of each member state of the Six-Party Talks have to be re-examined.

United States

Having tried for years to get the DPRK to give up its nuclear programs, the US had the 1994 Agreed Framework in which it promised to provide fuel oil and two light-water reactors to DPRK in exchange for the abolishment of DPRK's plutonium enrichment program. Later, this deal turned out to be a fraud. This experience strongly suggests that simply employing economic incentives did not work with DPRK.

In August 2003, when the Six-Party Talks were launched, the US wanted to avoid using its military capability because it already had two military fronts: Afghanistan and Iraq. Thus, to concentrate on those two preexisting obligations, the US needed other countries, particularly those that had strong influence on DPRK or capabilities to share the burdens and to participate in the negotiation process. If the negotiations worked, the Six-Party Talks would naturally contribute to the interests of the United States.

Japan

Among the Six-Party Talks members, Japan is under the biggest threat from DPRK's nuclear weapons. In fact, almost the entire territory of Japan is within range of the DPRK's Rodong missiles. Nonetheless, because Japan itself does not have the military means to retaliate, it has little leverage over DPRK. Therefore, Tokyo has expected the US to make DPRK's military threat a top priority. Its domestic politics, At the same time, the abduction issue remains a sensitive domestic issue. These circumstances naturally lead Japan to take a strong position against DPRK. For Japan, the risk of DPRK missiles and domestic pressure on the abduction issue transcend the cost of the collapse of DPRK. The weak-kneed posture of the US and the stop-and-go process of the Six-Party Talks are therefore frustrating to Japan.

Republic of Korea

Nuclear weapons are also a threat to the ROK; however, it is widely believed that the DPRK is unlikely to use nuclear weapons against the ROK because of its close proximity. Rather, the ROK government regards conventional warfare as a more realistic threat. During President Roh Moo Hyun's administration (2003–2008), public sentiment was heavily compassionate toward North Korea, with a growing expectation of the reunification of the Korean Peninsula and less attention given to the potential threat. Incumbent Lee Myung-bak, after coming into office in 2008, directed the ROK to reaffirm its ties with the US and the DPRK as a military threat. However, the ROK is fearful of a sudden collapse of the DPRK and an influx of refugees that would place too much burden on its economy. The ROK's ultimate goal is peaceful unification.

China

Beijing's major security concern comes from the Pacific Ocean, not from the Korean Peninsula. Beijing feels almost no military threat from the DPRK itself because

the DPRK is highly dependent on Beijing's formal and informal support. China's biggest concern regarding DPRK is the huge costs involved in the event of a sudden collapse of the Kim regime. China also regards North Korea as a buffer zone on its border with the US military so sustaining the Kim regime has some merit for China. Consequently, China's position on the DPRK issue is therefore restrained. Naturally, any international efforts that might increase the probability of the DPRK's collapse, including coordinated economic sanctions, are not welcomed by China. It is therefore in China's best interest to make loopholes to bolster the Kim regime even if doing so may irritate other members of the Six-Party Talks. However, because China recognizes that the US depends on China's leverage over DPRK and expects China to play a major role, China has an incentive to act like a responsible contributor to the forum.

Russia

Moscow's basic position is similar to that of Beijing. Although its border with DPRK is much shorter than that of China, Russia is also concerned about a sudden collapse of DPRK and the resulting influx of refugees. It feels no military threat from DPRK. That one of Russia's primary concerns is to regain its presence in the region is a view commonly shared by analysts. Some analysts also point out that Russia is interested in the natural resources in North Korea. Compared with Beijing, Moscow has a relatively remote relationship with (and thus weak leverage over) DPRK. Accordingly, it keeps a relatively low-profile in the Six-Party Talks.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Because DPRK has a long history of oppressing its people under the tyranny of the Kim family dictatorship, it seems difficult for Kim to survive without continuing the oppression. However, in addition to Kim Jong-il's health concern, the DPRK is facing major difficulties – a failed economy, accumulated frustration among its people, and harsh criticism from the international community. The US, particularly, has brought a major threat to the Kim regime by naming it as one of world's three prime dangers. The US often leads economic sanctions that severely harm the stability of his regime; therefore, Kim seeks bilateral talks with the US to assure his regime's survival.

The DPRK has almost no leverage to call such negotiations. Economically, DPRK is small; its military capability is also small and equipment outdated. Therefore, developing nuclear capability is crucial for Kim Jong-il to keep the US on the table. It is not in Kim's best interest to abandon his only life-sustaining apparatus. Not surprisingly, a forum focused on the abolishment of his life-sustainer is likewise not in his interest. However, Kim Jong-il has recognized that threatening to withdraw from the Six-Party Talks works as negotiation leverage. As long as Kim Jong-il believes that the US wants to keep the forum running and avoid military confrontation with DPRK – and that China will continue to support Kim economically – threatening to leave the Six-Party Talks is a convenient dilatory measure for DPRK.

As clearly demonstrated, the interests of the members of the Six-Party Talks often conflict. This contradictory interest structure hinders the forum from achieving its goal of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and, as there are neither duties nor binding powers for member states, it gives room for several parties to maneuver based on their own interests. Even worse, those parties – China, Russia, and DPRK – work together to tone down the UN Security Council sanctions, helping DPRK’s nuclear program to proceed.

It seems that the design of the Six-Party Talks is based on wrong assumptions: (1) all parties’ top priority is denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and (2) the DPRK is willing to stay in the forum. In fact, denuclearization is a matter of cost-benefit balance for member states, and the DPRK is free to leave or return to the forum. Therefore, logically, the Six-Party Talks do not achieve their goal.

Two Possible Answers for Northeast Asian Security Multilateralism

In general, the prospect for Northeast Asian security multilateralism looks bleak. However, multilateralism itself is not a goal but rather a means. Given this perspective, it is necessary to specify issues to be solved through a multilateral framework; the framework could be used in any focal point at which regional players’ interests coincide. Therefore, I explore the applicability of multilateralism for the region’s two biggest concerns: DPRK’s nuclear development and Chinese military expansion. For the former, narrowing the agenda of the Six-Party Talks could revitalize the forum. For the latter, establishing a trilateral alliance among the US, Japan, and ROK could provide a more stable security environment than do two independent bilateral alliances.

The Six-Party Talks is an ineffective arrangement primarily because of mismatched interests. Although succession in the Kim regime might change the game, the forum will not contribute to a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula as long as the current dynamics remain among the six parties. The examination of the individual members’ interests in the previous section reveals that all parties are concerned about the huge potential cost of DPRK’s collapse or unification. If the forum were to concentrate its agenda solely on these common interests, it would be more likely to work. Therefore, redefining the Six-Party Talks as a forum for crisis management and burden-sharing negotiation could be a prescription for re-energizing the forum. This would mean that the US would carry a heavier burden with regard to the denuclearization of North Korea. However, if this is the only way to force Kim to give up nuclear weapons, the US should take a stand.

The second possible form of multilateralism is a trilateral alliance between the US, Japan, and the ROK. Japan and the ROK independently hold alliances with the US to cope with similar objectives – to protect themselves from the potential threat of DPRK and China. These three countries could potentially benefit from building a trilateral alliance as it would decrease the cost of maintaining two separate alliances and increase deterrence capability. Accumulated efforts of military exchanges between Japan and ROK would contribute to a smooth transition. Additionally, from the analysis in the previous

section, it is clear that only those three countries share the common interest of denuclearizing Korean Peninsula. Thus, in dealing with the DPRK threat, the trilateral setting could be more efficient and less complex than the Six-Party Talks.

However, obstacles between Japan and the ROK must be removed to form a trilateral alliance. On the Japanese side, as its constitution is believed to restrict Japan from exercising its right of collective self-defense, Japan needs to amend or, at least, reinterpret its constitution. This effort involves heavy political debates in Japan. On the ROK side, there are historical issues and mixed emotion regarding Japan's colonial occupation. There is also a territorial dispute over the Takeshima (Dokdo) Islands. With the recent improvement in public sentiment on both sides, it becomes less and less difficult to overcome these obstacles. Nonetheless, to realize trilateral security cooperation, there must be strong political leadership on both sides.

Conclusion

In Northeast Asia, the historical context hinders the natural development of multilateralism. Conventional disputes among nations still abound, resulting in a US-based hub-and-spoke system that functions as a key device of international relations in the region. Even the only existing case of multilateralism, the Six-Party Talks, suffers from conflicting interests among member states and is therefore ineffective in achieving the goal of having DPRK abandon its nuclear programs.

In spite of the region's restrictive environment, there are some possibilities for workable multilateral coordination. One such arrangement is a revised version of the Six-Party Talks that narrows down their objectives to crisis management and burden sharing. With this focused agenda, the forum would function better by avoiding conflicts of interest among members. However, with this modified arrangement, the US would need to shoulder greater responsibility with regard to DPRK's nuclear problems. Another possibility for multilateralism is a trilateral alliance among the US, Japan, and ROK to cope more effectively with potential threat from China and DPRK. There are obstacles to overcome between Japan and ROK, however, which calls for strong leadership in both countries.

Multilateralism in Northeast Asia: Prospect and Utility

By Yun Sun

As the region with the most immediate risks of military conflict in the world (on the Korean Peninsula and over Taiwan Strait), Northeast Asia is frequently discussed and promoted by internationalists and multilateralists. The implicit philosophy is that regional security issues need to be dealt with collectively by most, if not all, players on a big platform. Rhetoric on complex interdependence and common interests prevails, leading to high expectations on the role of multilateral mechanisms in addressing regional security threats.

However, the reality is that multilateral security mechanisms for Northeast Asia are more an idealistic construction than what the real world situation affords. Northeast Asia is the ultimate geopolitical arena, where zero-sum calculus and the balance of power prevail. Unlike in Europe, the nation states remain the primary units of international relations of Northeast Asia. The region suffers from fundamental strategic rivalry among major powers and lacks a collective identity, historical trust, and a tradition of multilateral security cooperation. Interactions among states are anchored by geopolitical competition and in many cases hostility. Therefore, regional powers have depended on bilateral security arrangements rather than multilateral security mechanisms to address their security concerns.

The Six-Party Talks is a perfect example of the inability of multilateral mechanisms in solving regional security challenges. Its failure to effectively resolve the North Korea nuclear crisis is deeply embedded in the geopolitical realities of the issue – the competition and conflict of interests between the US and China. Seven years into the talks, the level of threat by North Korea has not diminished. Instead, the severity of tension has been exacerbated by two nuclear tests (in 2006 and 2009), numerous missile tests, and an increasingly unstable North Korean regime. North Korea is now a de facto nuclear power with unpredictable behaviors and the uncertainty in the power transition offers ample grounds for the regime to seek provocations.

China is another factor that actually undermines the utility of multilateral mechanisms on Northeast Asian security issues. China maintains a central role in regional security affairs, but adopts a highly utilitarian approach toward regional mechanisms. While saying that multilateralism is a key part of its foreign policy, China's true intention is to forward its own interests by blocking unfavorable arrangement and balancing US hegemony. China cannot be expected to compromise on important security issues.

There is no denying that multilateralism has great potential in many ways in Northeast Asia. Multilateral mechanisms are great channels to facilitate communications, mitigate misunderstanding, and build confidence. And they have high value in promoting economic cooperation or addressing non-traditional security challenges that are common

interests of all regional players. Nevertheless, the world needs a realistic expectation about what multilateral mechanisms could achieve in the traditional security arena.

Geopolitical Reality of Northeast Asia

Today, more than at any other time in the past twenty years, geopolitical competition dominates the regional politics of Northeast Asia. Two great waves of internationalism – the first in the wake of Soviet Union’s demise, the second in the aftermath of 9/11—have barely affected the increasing strategic rivalry among regional players.

First, from a realist security perspective, Northeast Asia is divided between US-centered security alliances (US-Japan and US-ROK) and China (to a certain extent together with North Korea). The US was once regarded as an offshore balancer among Northeast Asian powers, especially between China and Japan. However, as US concerns over China’s rise and North Korea’s threat to regional stability grew, the US has assumed an increasingly active role in regional security affairs through security cooperation with allies and frequent military exercises. China perceives the US policies as efforts to “contain” or “encircle” China, which creates suspicion, even hostility, against the United States. China is a revisionist power from Washington’s perspective, and the game between the two countries on security issues is nothing but zero-sum.

Besides the US, China and Japan are also engaged in a competition for influence and regional leadership. Japan’s primary means are economic cooperation and foreign aid, while China’s traditional political approach towards regional influence is now strengthened by its massive foreign investment programs. Problems are rampant in the Sino-Japan bilateral relations, including the painful historical memories of the Sino-Japanese war, the disputes over the interpretations of it, and territorial disputes. Japan’s pursuit of becoming a “normal” country and an international political power (such as the permanent membership of UN Security Council) is seen by China as both politically undesirable and emotionally unacceptable. On the other hand, Japan sees China as expanding its influence into Northeast (and even Southeast) Asia. China’s military modernization is seen as a potential destabilizing factor that challenges the existing balance of power.

The rivalry between Japan and South Korea might be less intense, but the agony is by no means so. South Korea’s Japan policy is based on a strong anti-Japan sentiment at home, which is largely a legacy of the Japanese occupation of the Korean Peninsula and is only exacerbated by the controversies over Japanese history textbooks. The territorial disputes over Dokdo/Takeshima strains the already fragile bilateral relations and nationalist internet users make improvement of relations more difficult with radical and heated debates on both sides.

The strategic competition for leadership and influence, the painful historical memories, and the territorial disputes among core members of the Northeast Asia

community are the heavy weight that multilateral security forums have to carry from the very beginning. It is true that a multilateral forum helps to bring different parties together for dialogues, but communications alone do not and cannot erase historical distrust and suspicion. Progress requires countries to compromise, sometimes on the most sensitive and fundamental issues of national security. However, Northeast Asian countries do not have the luxury to take such risky steps.

Six Party Talks

The Six Party Talks is a classic example of the inability of multilateral forums to resolve real-life security dilemmas existing in Northeast Asia, especially between China and the United States. Beijing's strategic judgment that the US represents the greatest threat to China's national security determines its perception and approach toward the Korean Peninsula. North Korea, however provocative or unstable, is a lesser evil compared to a unified, even denuclearized pro-US Korean Peninsula. The competitive and zero-sum nature of the US-China security relations precludes a multilateral solution since there is no super-national or multilateral consensus that could address such key concerns. A comparable case would be the United Nations during the Cold War, which failed to effectively tackle security crises multilaterally precisely because many of them were immediate results of the US-Soviet bilateral clash.

The ability of Six-Party Talks to address the North Korean nuclear issue was stalled and undercut by China's limited vision for the forum. As the host and chair, China has never realistically believed that the Six-Party Talks would necessarily resolve the crisis. Rather, it sees the process as keeping negotiations open and lessening the possibility of crisis escalation. For Beijing, the Six-Party Talks are about prevention of conflicts on its border, not denuclearization or regime change. Pyongyang's lack of security, the root for its nuclear brinkmanship, can only be addressed between the US and North Korea on a bilateral basis. Six-Party Talks, the multilateral approach, therefore, is merely a prequel paving the way for bilateral negotiation.

The Six-Party Talks has done its part – after all, it has helped to prevent conflict from escalating into a full-scale war on the Korean Peninsula. However, this accomplishment perfectly serves the argument of this essay, which is that the world should have realistic expectations about what multilateral forums can achieve in real life. The Six-Party Talks have helped to maintain peace, but it cannot eliminate the North Korean nuclear threat. This explains why most countries (including China and the US) are counting on and hoping for regime change within North Korea to bring an end to the escalation of tension and the eventual denuclearization of Korean Peninsula.

China Factor

As a key player in regional affairs, China's support and willingness to compromise are crucial to the success of multilateral mechanisms. Although China emphasizes multilateralism as a core component of its foreign policy, such commitment

is primarily aimed at protecting its own national interests and projecting China's influence. In particular, when China's interests run into conflict with the solution aspired to by other regional players, China shows no hesitation in disregarding common perspectives and pursuing its own agenda. The fiasco of the Copenhagen conference on climate change serves as a vivid example.

Multilateralism is one of China's main strategies to counter US "hegemony" as unilateralism was gradually unveiled as the cornerstone of US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. While dissatisfied with the idea that the US can unilaterally determine the course and outcome of international affairs, China lacks the means to curb US power. The promotion of multilateralism and the "democratization of international relations" became China's foreign policy slogan. Both lend China the legitimacy and grounds to project influence and build international support. China does not only actively participate in multilateral mechanisms such as the UN, but also seeks to promote multilateral forums of its own, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Six-Party Talks. However, China's interests in multilateral mechanisms go only as far as serving its own interests, such as securing support from Central Asian countries on its war against Uyghur separatism and using Six-Party Talks as a diplomatic alternative to military solutions or sanctions against North Korea proposed by others.

On security issues in Northeast Asia, China prefers bilateralism. On one hand, the reality of Northeast Asia determines that in multilateral discussions on regional security, China easily becomes the isolated minority, cornered and criticized by the well-orchestrated united front of the US, Japan and South Korea. On the other hand, China feels that too many cooks in the kitchen bring too many divergent interests and perspectives to reach any meaningful consensus. (For example, in Beijing's opinion, the North Korean nuclear issue would have had a realistic chance of resolution if North Korea and the US could directly negotiate without the interference of South Korean domestic politics and Japanese obsession with the abductee issues). Therefore, the best way to communicate and negotiate important security issues is through bilateral channels. Such a belief fundamentally weakens the significance, seriousness, and utility that other countries attach to multilateral security mechanisms.

Utility of Multilateralism in Northeast Asia

Despite its inability to address regional security challenges, multilateralism still has abundant utility in Northeast Asia in nontraditional security issues. That is the arena where people can expect the most out of multilateral mechanisms. Many nontraditional security issues, especially transnational crimes, are common challenges for many countries and therefore offer the ground and opportunity for them to collaborate. Transnational challenges in Northeast Asia include terrorism, piracy, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, money laundering, etc. They are easier for governments to discuss, share information, reach consensus, and take actions on. Other multilateral mechanisms may not be as glamorous as multilateral security mechanisms, but at least they offer the fertile ground to harvest solutions to real problems. Furthermore, multilateral mechanisms in

non-traditional security areas could help build trust, cooperation, and confidence among countries. It may take years, even decades before unfriendly countries could reduce their realpolitik calculations and genuinely cooperate, but these non-traditional security issues offer a good starting point.

In brief, the Concert of Northeast Asia is not a formal or even an informal institution so much as a philosophical construct. Although interest in multilateralism has boomed in recent years as regional players attempt to address security challenges, in most cases, their diverging interests are the roots of the failure of multilateralism in producing meaningful results.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) serves as a great example of this failure. People had hoped that it would develop into an effective mechanism in addressing regional security concerns. However, the reality gradually squashed such aspirations. Since its creation, the ARF has offered no significant solution nor result in conflict prevention and crisis resolution. The reasons are diverse. First, the ARF is based on consensus-building, informal dialogue, and flexibility instead of institutionalization. It is non-binding for members and has no power to take actions collectively. Second, ASEAN, as the core pillar of the ARF, lacks the internal solidarity and external political power to persuade bigger powers such as China and the US to cooperate. Third, the ARF cannot compete, let alone replace the dominant role traditional security alliances play in regional security affairs. Again, it is the geopolitical reality that undermines the effectiveness and probability of the ARF becoming a real regional security mechanism.

People should have realistic expectations about multilateral mechanisms in Northeast Asia. Unlike North America or Europe, Northeast Asian countries' sense of common identity and shared values are much less and the geographic rivalry and hostility are much more severe. Multilateral forums could serve as a platform to share information and communicate perspectives, but bilateral channels are the more reliable and realistic way from which meaningful progress in regional security affairs can be expected. Multilateral mechanisms have their utilities, mostly manifested through the regional players' need to jointly address common non-traditional security challenges in the region. However, the hope of addressing geopolitical security challenges through multilateral forums is premature and an overestimation of the regional reality.

Multilateralism in Northeast Asia: Its Prospects and the US-Japan Alliance

By Wataru Yamaguchi

Today we have the beginnings of trilateral cooperation among China, Japan and South Korea. Is there a requirement or a need for multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia beyond what exists today? Does it depend on the issues? What is the relationship between promoting multilateralism and deepening the US alliances?

This paper first analyzes the present state of multilateralism in Northeast Asia especially based on economic and security issues. Next, it discusses the prospect for multilateralism in the future by focusing on the Six-Party Talks and the US alliances. Lastly, it discusses multilateralism in Northeast Asia from the viewpoint of the US-Japan alliance.

Analysis of Present State

In East Asia including Northeast Asia, there are already various regional cooperation mechanisms. Major countries in Northeast Asia – Japan, China and Korea – participate in several multilateral regional frameworks, most of which are founded after the Cold War: ASEAN plus three, ASEAN Regional Forum, etc. When discussing multilateralism in East Asia, it is impossible to ignore ASEAN, an important cooperative organization.

How should cooperation be valued? The Chairman's Statement of the fourth East Asia Summit (RAS) is highly symbolic. It advocates that the EAS "should play a complementary and mutually reinforcing role with other regional mechanisms, including the ASEAN dialogue process, the ASEAN Plus Three process, the ARF, and APEC in building an East Asian community."¹ Several institutions "play a complementary and mutually reinforcing role" while other institutions take strong initiatives on their own.

Recently, Japan-China-South Korea trilateral cooperation has been developing outside of the ASEAN framework, particularly in the field of economics. For instance, the Third Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit held in May 2010 adopted the Trilateral Cooperation VISION 2020. The document includes sections on the Institutionalization and Enhancement of Trilateral Partnership, the Sustainable Economic Cooperation for Common Prosperity, and the Cooperation in Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection." It also tackles nontraditional security issues such as terrorism, drug problems, food safety and infectious diseases.²

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Chairman's Statement of the 4th East Asia Summit," <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/eas/state0910.pdf>> (access date: September 5, 2010).

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Trilateral Cooperation VISION 2020," <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/jck/summit1005/vision2020.html>> (access date: September 4, 2010).

However, it is still difficult to enhance cooperation on traditional security issues, as the Trilateral Cooperation VISION 2020 can only say, “We will explore the possibility to establish the ‘Trilateral Defense Dialogue’ in order to strengthen security dialogue and facilitate exchange and cooperation among the defense or military personnel of the three countries.”³ Moreover, the Trilateral Cooperation has not been institutionalized enough.

Analysis of Economy and Security

When examining multilateralism, it is necessary to identify the issues the mechanisms are trying to resolve. This section focuses on economic and security issues in the region. They are two important aspects: what sort of threats countries in East Asia face and whether they experienced serious threats.

In the field of economy, threats to East Asia are external. The Asian currency crisis in 1997 is a prime example. The crisis promoted institutionalization because policymakers felt a strong need to buffer external economic threats. Now economic exchanges are rapidly expanding in East Asia partly because of the rise of China. This brings about large economic gains. The more economic activities increase, the more issues of economic friction rise. Thus, there needs to be firmer multilateral structures that can effectively deal with economic issues beyond what exist today. Indeed, the institutionalization has been promoted in order to discuss economic matters.

In the field of security, there are not external but internal threats for the region. Though the Cold War has ended, its structure still exists in this region in the form of the China-Taiwan issue and the divided Korean Peninsula. China’s military expenditures increase and North Korea’s nuclear development affect the region’s stability. Therefore, it is difficult to fundamentally ease the mutual mistrust in the region. This contrasts starkly with Europe, which had the external security threat of USSR.

It is true that policymakers acknowledge the important role of cooperation in addressing terrorism in the wake of 9/11. However, terrorism is not a traditional security issue created by state actors. The need for multilateral mechanisms for security issues beyond what exists today is currently not strong enough. So there seems to be difficulty in creating new institutions. What is important is enhancing “the institutional linkage” among the existing institutions and frameworks.⁴

Prospects for the Six-Party Talks

Then what will multilateralism on security affairs become? When thinking about the prospects for multilateral security frameworks in Northeast Asia, the Six-Party Talks

³ Ibid.

⁴ Yasuyo Sakata, “Hokuto Ajia no Chiiki Anzenhosyo Kyoryoku(Regional Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia),” *Ajia Taiheiyō no Chiiki Anzenhosyo Akitekutya(Regional Security Architecture in Asia-Pacific)* (Tokyo foundation, 2010), p. 84 <<http://www.tkfd.or.jp/admin/files/2010-08.pdf>>(access date: September 10, 2010).

needs to be mentioned because they include major countries with significant influence in the region: Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the US and Russia.

Where is the Six-Party Talks headed in the foreseeable future? Will it collapse or will it serve as the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism? The talks will not become the cornerstone of a multilateral security framework. There are two reasons for this: its limited purpose and the existence of multilayered security frameworks in Northeast Asia.

First, the Six-Party Talks are limited to the problems surrounding North Korea's nuclear development for the foreseeable future. That is because the North Korean issues are unlikely to be resolved in the near future. Even the UN Security Council has not been able to address the latest North Korean provocation sufficiently, even though it has the power and the authority to use force should it be required.

Even if the problems were to be solved in some way, the focus of the talks will not shift from the activities of North Korea. For instance, if North Korea should abandon all of its nuclear programs and also agree to accept inspections by an appropriate institution, the Six-Party Talks will work to verify whether North Korea is faithful in the fulfillment of its promises. That is to say, the main subject of the discussion will not change unless North Korea changes dramatically.

Second, there already are multilayered security frameworks in Asia. On the one hand, US alliances serve as a deterrent against war. On the other, the ASEAN Regional Forum promotes preventive diplomacy and encourages regional confidence-building. Such alliances and international organizations are more comprehensive and more institutionalized than the Six-Party Talks, so there is no obvious reason that the talks would take a leading role among these multilayered security mechanisms. The talks may be able to supplement and strengthen the overall framework by advancing security dialogues, but they have no means to use force to settle conflicts in critical moments.

Prospects for the US Alliances

What will serve as the nucleus for a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism? It is not easy to predict what will happen in the future in Northeast Asia, as it is fraught with uncertainty, particularly considering the North Korean issues and the tense situation between China and Taiwan. In such a region, bilateral alliances centering on the US are relatively stable. Each ally of the US can address not only traditional security issues but also terrorism and issues relating to nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles. Moreover, a more multilateral arrangement among US allies has a tremendous amount of potential in the sense that it can contribute to stability in Asia.

Recently, not only the US bilateral alliances but also the security relationship between Japan and South Korea has been deepening. For example, according to news

reports, the Japanese government sent its Maritime Self-Defense Force's convoy and a P3 patrol planes to participate in Korea's Proliferation Security Initiative exercise in this October⁵. In addition, Japanese and South Korean governments are also considering an agreement on mutual supply of goods and services when they are engaged in UN peacekeeping activities.⁶

Therefore, the US-Japan-ROK relationship is sometimes described as a virtual multilateral alliance. The three countries have held tripartite summits and Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) meetings on foreign policy toward North Korea. The relationship can be described as an entente which consults on important security affairs.⁷

Though the Japanese constitution and attitude toward the right of collective self-defense seem to be the bottleneck to the deepening relationship, Japan is becoming more positive about contributing to international security. Japan has been changing its attitude gradually by changing its interpretation of the constitution.

In August 2010, The Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era, an advisory panel to the Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan, submitted a report entitled "Japan's Vision for Future Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era."⁸ It is a speculative draft of the new National Defense Program Guidelines, which was completed by the Japanese government at the end of 2010. The report included reviews of several important items: the exclusively defense-oriented policy, the ban on weapons exports and the interpretation of the right of collective self-defense. While these policies will not be adjusted immediately, they have been changing gradually especially after 9/11.

Thus, the US alliances, especially US-Japan and US-ROK, will remain the centerpiece in this region and have a large amount of potential. However, there are several challenges to overcome. If it becomes a firmer alliance modeled on NATO, what will be the threats? At this time, it is DPRK. Meanwhile, how will China react to the cooperation? China will feel uneasy about the relationship and try to increase its military expenditures more rapidly for self-defense. Therefore, close coordination among US, Japan, and ROK may pose a security dilemma in the region even though they intend to deter regional conflicts. It is impossible to stabilize Northeast Asia without China's cooperation.

⁵ Nikkei Shimbun, August 24, 2010, <<http://www.nikkei.com/news/category/article/g=96958A9C93819481E0E1E2E3978DE0E1E2EAE0E2E3E28297EAE2E2E2;at=ALL>> (access date: August 25, 2010).

⁶ The Chosun Ilbo (English Edition), August 25, 2010, <http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/08/25/2010082500638.html> (access date: August 25, 2010).

⁷ Heiwa Anzenhosyo Kenkyusyo (Research Institute for Peace and Security), ed., *Nichibei Domei Saiko* (Rethinking of the US-Japan Alliance), (Tokyo: Aki Shobo, 2010), p. 223.

⁸ Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, "Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era" <<http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/shin-ampoboue2010/>> (access date: August 30, 2010).

Furthermore, can the trilateral cooperation deepen? Mutual sentiment of the public will be a major stumbling block. This year is the 100th anniversary of the conclusion of the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty. Japanese Prime Minister Kan made a statement on the Japan-ROK relationship: “I express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and my heartfelt apology.”⁹

It generally made a favorable impression on many Japanese and Korean people. But some Koreans did not accept it. In Japan, some conservatives criticized it by claiming it is unreasonable, and some progressives said that it is not enough to apologize. This problem is too complicated to solve easily. Serious efforts need to be made for a long time.

Perspective of the US-Japan Alliance

Lastly, this paper discusses multilateralism in North East Asia from the perspective of the US-Japan Alliance. On one hand, those who emphasize the importance of the US-Japan alliance say that multilateralism weakens the alliance. On the other hand, those who support multilateralism argue that the alliance interferes with the development of multilateralism. They are based on the same assumption that multilateralism and the US-Japan Alliance in Northeast Asia cannot coexist. However, they are complementary to each other unless assuming a fairly extreme case: nation-states cease to exist and an East Asian Union is formed. Multilateralism can avoid the security dilemma, which may be caused by alliances. But the strong tie between allies, not only military but also economic, and shared values can serve as an important deterrent against war.

The problem is that there are several destabilizing factors in the short term, even though Japan and the US share a mutual interest from a broader standpoint. The US-Japan relationship has been deepened not by politicians but mainly by government bureaucrats, especially after the Cold War. For instance, redefining the US-Japan Security Treaty in the 1990s was promoted by government officials of the US and Japan. This suggests that even if politicians cannot take initiatives, a good relationship between the US and Japan can be built by government officials.

Meanwhile, the US has a large fiscal deficit. The range of choices for the US and its military campaigns are limited by fiscal constraints. Thus, the US cannot fulfill its great potential in security issues. So its foreign policy must be a moderate multilateral one for some time to come.¹⁰

⁹ Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, “Statement by Prime Minister Naoto Kan” <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/kan/statement/201008/10danwa_e.html > (access date: September 9, 2010).

¹⁰ Heiwa Anzenhosyo Kenkyusyo (Research Institute for Peace and Security), ed., *Ajia no Anzenhosho 2010-2011* (Asian Security), (Tokyo: Asagumo Shuppansya, 2010), pp. 64-65.

Conclusion

To deal with economic and nontraditional security issues, there is a need for multilateral institutions in Northeast Asia beyond what exists today. However, on traditional security issues, there does not seem to be that same need. What is important is not creating new institutions but strengthening the cooperation among the existing institutions. In this region, deepening the international economic interdependence does not result in increased security cooperation. Some think of the Six-Party talks as the centerpiece of regional security in Northeast Asia, but it is not, because the purpose of the talks is limited and there is already an existing security framework in Northeast Asia.

In the region, which is full of uncertainty, bilateral alliances centering on the US are relatively stable. From the perspective of the US-Japan alliance, multilateralism and the alliances are complementary in the long term. In the near future, it may be difficult to promote multilateralism in Northeast Asia.

Appendix A

Program Report

By Yun Sun

Carl Baker chaired a roundtable with the Young Leaders to discuss what they learned from the Japan-US-China-ROK dialogue held Aug. 9-10, 2010. He asked what the YLs learned at the conference, especially on the utility and prospects for further development of multilateral mechanisms in resolving the security challenges in Northeast Asia. He also sought thoughts and inputs from the YLs about the inclusion of the ROK into the trilateral security dialogues among US, China, and Japan.

At the onset of the discussion, Young Leaders were asked to give their on the two days of dialogue among senior participant. A US YL began by suggesting that the program would be more useful for the YLs if they could have been given time to present their perspectives on multilateral security mechanism at the conference. This would allow them to demonstrate different philosophies and thinking among different generations on the value of such mechanisms. Second, discussion on cooperation could be expanded to include nontraditional security issues, such as energy, human security, food security, and other areas on which countries could work together. The YL pointed out that although maritime security was included in the agenda, it was marginalized at the conference. The YL observed that perceived threats from China and North Korea dominated much of the discussion and felt there could be more interesting ways to discuss those topics.

A Japanese YL felt that a major change in the conference this year was that functional issues were added to the agenda. While observing that this was clearly by administrative design, it was a move in the right direction as it helped promote a better dialogue on opportunities for multilateral cooperation.

A French YL commented that the conference was absolutely stimulating in terms of debate, but the involvement of the YL was less than expected. The YL observed that the EU was not mentioned when discussing the possible expansion of the dialogue on the topic of the Korean Peninsula. Although the European Union (EU) had been absent over the past decade after the demise of the Korea Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), there is a need to get the EU involved in Asian issues. She argued that although the EU does not have the same direct interest as others in the region, it has to maintain the status of a player.

A Korean YL focused on China's rise. Despite the widespread predictions in the 1990's about China's collapse, China seems to be sustaining its strong economic development. The YL observed that Japanese participants seem unconvinced about China's economic future. However, the issue of how China could be better integrated into the world must be discussed and answered.

Mr. Baker then directed the discussion to the issue of how to address the conflict between dialogues on functional issues and conversations on the generic security debate. For example, he said these dialogues – as generic as they are – are stretched in different directions over the functional issues. But the challenges lie in getting the functional experts in the conference to think about their roles in the general discussions on multilateral security framework.

On that issue, an American YL pointed out that the conference offers the venue to begin with the basic, functional issues and gradually relate them to the theme of the conference and generic security perspective. The YL observed that the financial crises and economic challenges are discussed as factors in national security and security perceptions.

Mr. Baker then asked the YLs on the relationship between China's military modernization and regional multilateral security cooperation. An American YL commented that China's desire for bilateral engagement with the US created suspicions among other countries in the region. Furthermore, China's rejection of engagement (such as the suspension of mil-to-mil exchanges) is seen as a sign of rejection of cooperation. A Japanese YL pointed out that although the Chinese experts at the conference refused to acknowledge it, the modernization itself is a major source of tension in East Asia.

A Chinese YL retorted that China's military modernization is defensive and not offensive in nature because China does not have the capacity to challenge the status quo. The only issue here is transparency, which China is working hard to improve. A Korean YL responded that according to the traditional realist thinking, even if China's posture is defensive, it cannot overcome the security dilemma that is rampant in the region. The Korean YL sought the input from the French participant on how the EU overcame its security dilemma. The French YL answered that the existence of common threat from the Soviet Union was a key factor that pushed the rest of Europe together; unfortunately, East Asia does not have that common threat.

Another Chinese YL pointed out that China's rise is much bigger than military modernization. China is also an economic and financial power. Although China's military modernization has been ongoing for the past three decades, its involvement in multilateral dialogue has been growing, not decreasing. The Chinese YL also observed that transparency is a false debate to begin with: "China will never be transparent enough to make other countries satisfied and other countries will never feel secure enough about China's intentions."

A Japanese YL pointed out that China's modernization is legitimate. China is growing in size and it must have a strong military to protect its interests. The Japanese YL argued that criticisms of China's military modernization lie in its lack of transparency, not modernization. An American YL concurred on the point that opaque intentions of China does not help to convince other countries that its rise is peaceful, and

when China suspends mil-to-mil exchanges whenever the US-China relations go wrong does not help to create a positive image.

Mr. Baker followed up with a question on what type of multilateral dialogues will help resolve the security dilemma. An American YL argued that no multilateral mechanism could solve the challenge China presents, and perhaps the best format will be a mechanism that does not include China. Two Japanese and Korean YLs proposed an ASEAN+4. Most YLs agreed that China's interests and postures are in conflict with those of the US in the Asia-Pacific region. An American YL particularly pointed out that dialogues with China tend to focus on immediate headline issues which hinder more forward-looking cooperation on longer-term issues. A Chinese YL argued that China's foreign policy is responsive in nature. The YL observed that China's approach toward multilateralism is completely pragmatic – China wishes to involve as many participants as possible, which it believes will diversify the discussion and produce meaningful results. The Chinese YL argued that China prefers bilateralism over multilateralism.

The issue of how to deal with China turned out to be the key focus of the discussion. The French YL suggested that democratization could facilitate the integration of China into the international system. A Korean YL believed that as long as the dialogues are ongoing, people will eventually come to agreement.

The conversation then was steered to the issue of Korean reunification and the application of multilateral cooperation. A Korean YL and a French YL observed that international assistance is indispensable in the process of reunification. However, China will object to any arrangement that it sees as detrimental to its interests. YLs agreed that reunification will be an extremely expensive project, more expensive than the German reunification. The abductee issue will have to be resolved before Japan makes any substantial contributions toward reunification.

Finally, the discussion took a natural turn toward North Korea's regime stability. A US YL commented that at the end of the Cold War, people were predicting that North Korea would collapse very soon; however, the regime had proven to be more resilient than people expected. However, the US YL also suggested that unthinkable events are not completely impossible in history. For example, the collapse of the Soviet Union had been beyond anyone's imagination, yet it still happened. YLs agreed that although the scenarios are not completely clear, countries must prepare for the unexpected with contingency plans and multilateral discussions.

Appendix B

Pre-Conference Essays

*“The Six-Party Talks will serve as the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism.” Do you agree? Why? If not, why not?
How will the creation of such a forum affect US alliances in Asia?*

Ms. See-Won BYUN

The Six-Party Talks established its working group on the Northeast Asian Peace and Security Mechanism as part of the February 2007 action plan for the implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement.¹ Whether the Six-Party Talks will serve as the nucleus of such a regional security mechanism will depend on several factors. The first is North Korean denuclearization. This is the primary goal of the Six-Party Talks. As long as the North Korean nuclear issue remains unresolved the talks cannot move forward and evolve into a broader, long-term security forum. Second are the bilateral relationships among the six parties. Japan-DPRK tensions over the abductee issue, historical and territorial disputes among China, Japan, and South Korea, and most recently inter-Korean tensions over the *Cheonan* sinking have stalled progress in multilateral talks. Third is the evolution of the broader regional security framework. To remain effective as an exclusively Northeast Asian mechanism for security cooperation the Six-Party Talks must coordinate efforts with other regional security institutions such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asia Summit, and +3 initiatives.

Prospects for creating a formal security forum ultimately depend on sustained political will and coordination among each of the six parties. Current trends not only highlight challenges to the resumption of talks but also suggest widespread declining confidence in their effectiveness. Although North Korea declared its willingness to return to talks in July, subsequent actions led by South Korea and the United States in response to the *Cheonan* incident have heightened tensions with China while demonstrating the viscous cycle underlying the talks: North Korea will uphold its nuclear ambitions as long as US “hostile policy” remains while the international community will continue to punish the North for its provocations.

The creation of a Northeast Asian security forum could complement US alliance efforts to expand cooperation to regional and global issues, strengthening alliance coordination among the United States, Japan, and South Korea. On the other hand, it could challenge the relevance of US alliances as the primary provider of regional stability. China would not accept a broadened scope of US alliances and recognizes the contradictions between the current alliance structure and a regional multilateral security framework. Divergent views of regional architecture require realigning national interests

¹ “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement,” Beijing, Feb. 13, 2007, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t297463.htm>

with the provision of public goods based on a common perspective on regional security threats and priorities.

As the only framework for policy coordination between key Northeast Asian players the Six-Party Talks have driven efforts to sustain regional dialogue. The *Cheonan* incident appears to have reinforced tensions between China and Russia on one side and the United States and its allies on the other. But more importantly, North Korea's rising priority in both bilateral and multilateral agendas has demanded more effective security coordination among US allies and partners. While the latest UN Security Council statement attempted to lay a renewed foundation for six-party dialogue, progress will depend on North Korea's response and a careful coordination of bilateral and multilateral responses.

Ms. Eunil CHO

*'The North Koreans have gained, or bought, a lot of time through the six-party-talks framework to pursue their own agenda. I think it's important now, at this critical point in time, for us not to repeat any past mistakes...[it's] very important for the remaining five countries – which excludes North Korea – to come to an agreement on the way forward.'*²

Lee Myung-bak, South Korean President

Interview with Mary Kissel of Wall Street Journal, June 13, 2009

The Six-Party Talks are the likely starting point for a permanent multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia. The nuclear talks are specifically designed to deal with North Korean nuclear and missile issues through urging multilateral cooperation. The Six Party process provides a venue for seeking a peace-oriented 'concert of powers' among key players in the region.³

North Korea's nuclear programs have been the primary sources of post-Cold War pessimism over Northeast Asia that would trigger heightened tensions and even lead to a regional nuclear arms race. North Korea's rogue behavior, once explained as a bargaining chip to build a relationship with the United States, creates more dangerous problem that includes withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), long-range missile tests, and disclosure of the nuclear program.⁴ Regional actors have committed to work through the 6PT for addressing the nuclear program since the first meetings in August 2003 and made tentative moves to develop a common approach with shared power and responsibilities to settle this problem. After its missile launch in 2009, it is obvious that North Korea will keep nuclear weapons and seeks to be dealt with in further talks as a

² http://online.wsj.com/article/NA_WSJ_PUB:SB124484758194711341.html

³ See T. J. Pempel, "Security Architecture in Northeast Asia; Projections from the Rearview Mirror" Paper presented at the 2nd MacArthur ASI Conference on "Cooperation in Northeast Asia: Architecture and Beyond," (Seoul, June 14-15, 2010)

⁴ Dingli Shen, "Cooperative Denuclearization toward North Korea," *The Washington Quarterly* 32:4 (October 2009), pp. 175-188; Yongho Kim, "North Korea: A Perpetual Rogue States?" in G. John Ikenberry and Chung-in Moon (eds.) *The United States and Northeast Asia: Debates, Issues, and New Order* (Lanham: Lowman & Littlefield, 2008), pp. 143-164.

nuclear weapons state.⁵ The possibility of a military confrontation cannot be ruled out as they deal with fundamental issues regarding North Korea's regime survival.

Despite the failure of peace talks and resumption of the negotiation process, the 6PT is the key to the development of a Northeast Asian security mechanism. The 6PT, first of all, bring together allies and rivals that would fashion a new framework to stabilize a potentially volatile future. Cooperation between the United States and China appears to be on the rise. South Korea, Japan, and China have taken advantage of the nuclear talks through engagement and institution building. China and Russia, which once bilaterally wielded influence on North Korea for aid, trade, and diplomatic support, look create regional multilateral forms to target specific crises through negotiation.

Moreover, the 6PT pursues regional multilateralism over bilateralism – US-North Korea negotiations. In contrast with Europe or Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia has no regional multilateral institutions capable of easing persistent, deep tensions and setting mutual goals to meet new challenges.⁶ Long-standing US-led bilateral treaties have provided military deterrence in the Asia-Pacific region. The United States served as the leader in managing regional instability with support of its Asian allies, South Korea and Japan. Key countries in the Six Party process are now involved not only in the peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula but also in security cooperation on both a bilateral and multilateral basis.⁷ They try to develop the 6PT as the most feasible mechanism to resolve security dilemmas, heightened tensions, and mutual distrust rooted in the region.

Therefore, while we question the sustainability of the 6PT and its limited appeal to North Korean interests, the Six Party process is needed to cope with Northeast Asian security needs and to marshal resources for addressing serious security issues posed by North Korea through promoting multilateral process for future institutional development.

Mr. Sungmin CHO

If Northeast Asia region is ever going to have its own security mechanism in the near future, it will evolve from the framework of the Six-Party talks. The Six-Party talks already set a formula meeting the basic needs of the future security mechanism in the region. It includes all five regional states in Northeast Asia plus America. In addition, the Six-Party Talks have discussed one of the most difficult security issues in the region. Ironically, North Korea continued to offer the problem that demanded a collective

⁵ Evan A. Feigenbaum and Robert A. Manning, "The United States in the New Asia," *Council Special Report* No. 50 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, November 2009), p. 23.

⁶ Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), "Constructing Security Order in Asia: Conceptions and Issues," in *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press), pp. 70-150.

⁷ See Lawrence E. Grinter, "The Six-Party Talks and the Future Denuclearization and Rehabilitation of North Korea," *Pacific Focus* 23:3 (December 2008), pp. 294-311

response,⁸ and relevant countries had to communicate, consult and cooperate with each other under the framework of the Six-Party Talks. If the Six-Party Talks can resolve this issue, then the six countries in Northeast Asia will have passed the hard test of handling security problem through coordination and will be ready to launch a formal institution to discuss other security issues on a regular basis.

But the Six-Party Talks have failed to resolve the issue of North Korea's nuclear program. Instead of being a problem-solving mechanism, the Six-Party Talks have become a 'talk shop' for problem-management, with a minimal goal of continuing dialogue for its own sake. This happens because North Korea has disregarded the framework of the Six-Party Talks at its convenience. It is because the Six-Party Talks are not appropriately institutionalized and regularized. The Six-Party Talks so far have mostly focused on how to compensate for the North Korean compliance but did not discuss how to punish violation of commitments. As Professor Zhu Feng suggested, it is necessary to come up with 'new thinking' to adopt 'coercive diplomacy' in the framework of the Six-Party Talks.⁹ Also, it is necessary to hold the Six-Party Talks on a regular basis, even in the absence of a particular country, in order not to set bad examples. Institutionalization to adopt punitive measure and regularization of the Six-Party Talks need to be discussed now, not only to resolve the North Korea issue, but to establish an effective security mechanism in Northeast Asia.

If the Six-Party talk successfully evolves in to a Northeast Asian Security mechanism, this will favorably affect the US alliances in the region. First, the Six-Party Talks reflect the reality of regional structure better than any other security regime in Northeast Asia. For example, the Trilateral Summit Meeting among South Korea, Japan and China only reflects the impulse to cooperate among three Asian countries based upon ethnic as well as cultural commonalities and geographical proximity. However, it does not reflect the real power structure of Northeast Asia where the US exerts enormous influence and the existence of Russia. In terms of membership, Six-Party Talks have generated educational effects about the fact that the US is entitled to be a primary actor when discussing security issues in Northeast Asia.

Second, the framework of the Six-Party Talks is beneficial for US alliances to cope with the long-term trend of China's rise. The structure of the Six-Party Talks provides China with a chance to play a mediator. This is one way for the US alliances to engage with China by tying together within a multilateral institution. If there is no multilateral mechanism to accommodate China, there is a chance that China's rise will confront US alliances. If the US alliances need to engage with China and, at the same time, to avoid unease of either South Korea or Japan and their fear of abandonment, engagement should be multilateral and the existing framework of the Six-Party Talks serves an example for such format.

⁸ Smith, Sheila. "New Impulses for Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia," Council on Foreign Relations, December 2009, p.4.

⁹ Zhu Feng, "Liufang huitan yu qiangzhi waijiao (Six Party Talks and Coercive Diplomacy)," *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi (Contemporary International Relations)*, Vol.7.,2009, p.47.

Ms. Eun Joo CHOI

The Six-Party Talks will be of central importance to the future Northeast Asian Security Mechanism. However, other formats are necessary as well. Bilateral relationships between the Six-Party Talks members will support the Six-Party Talks themselves. The key members of the region, China, Japan, and Korea, could provide a base by continuing and improving trilateral summits. These talks should work with broader organizations in Asia, to create a network through which security could be maintained more efficiently.

The key Six-Party Talks gather the main players at one table – China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, and the United States. Although the sessions focus on North Korea's nuclear situation, many view them as the ideal framework for solving other Northeast Asian security issues. Nevertheless, for the Six-Party Talks to succeed, other measures must be taken.

Strong bilateral cooperation between the members will maintain the bond around the entire group; this, of course, includes the US alliances. However, the US must adjust its alliances to fit the Six-Party Talks. Instead of the US being the leader of its bilateral relationships, it must become an equal partner. Working together with its partners, the US should view itself as main supporter of the global framework. The six-party group, as a whole should act as leaders, not one individual country.

Also important is the trilateral relationship between China, Japan, and Korea. As countries directly involved with Northeast Asian Security, these three should try to improve communication and understanding between each other for better cooperation. The recent May 2010 summit at Jeju Island shows signs of hope.

To connect all these efforts on a bigger scale, the individual members of the SPT could work with other groups in Asia. Such groups would be the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Naturally, South Korea and China are the best countries to connect the two different types of groups.

Trilateral summits will provide the Northeast Asian region more stability, and bilateral relations will keep the six-party group intact. US alliances will be kept, though modified to make room for other relationships that need to be formed. In addition, working with broader regional groups will strengthen the area as a whole. By utilizing all these networks, countries will be able to work through security issues more fluidly.

Dr. Guibourg DELAMOTTE

The February 2007 plan for North Korean denuclearization, followed by the beginning in October 2007 of the disabling of the Yongbyon plant and the submission by North Korea of production records in March 2008, probably marked the peak of

international optimism of the Six-Party Talks' potential to provide a peaceful resolution to the North Korean situation.

This optimism built up until February 2005, when North Korea announced that it suspended its participation in the talks. The 2006 crisis marked by the July missile tests and the October nuclear test further stalled progress – until February 2007.

Several outcomes to the North Korean situation are conceivable. The most desirable one, from the international community's point of view, would be that North Korea rejoined the Non-Proliferation Treaty again and that accepted the IAEA safeguards in accordance with the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, and ideally the Additional Protocol. Should the Six-Party Talks achieve this, it was thought they could provide the security mechanism which Northeast Asia lacked.

Contrary to Southeast Asia which has the ASEAN Regional Forum, Northeast Asian security is based on US alliances with Japan and South Korea and has proved unable to break the Cold War divides. Japan now seeks to build bilateral relations with US allies (Australia, South Korea, India), which will improve security cooperation in Asia, but will not create a new order nor engage Russia and China. By providing a framework of exchange with Russia and China, the Six-Party Talks do seem promising.

However, power transition in North Korea makes it less likely that the Six-Party Talks will solve the crisis. If the talks are not successful, Northeast Asia would be in even greater need for a cooperation framework, particularly between Japan, the US, Russia, and China. A Four or Five-Party Talk framework (involving South Korea) would need to supersede the current Six-Party Talks (which could subside if they contain North Korean proliferation activities, for instance).

Even if the Six-Party Talks were successful, could they provide a solution to the other major challenges facing Northeast Asia? Assuming the North crisis is solved, Japan, Russia, China and the US would need to engage in closer dialogue. China would be (and probably already is) the greatest challenge to Northeast Asian security. North Korea would not help addressing this challenge. Therefore the Six-Party Talks framework would need reconsidering.

Mr. Kei KOGA

No. First, the effectiveness of the Six-Party Talks (SPT) is increasingly in doubt. Since its inception in 2003, the forum focused on North Korea's nuclear development, yet in 2007, it established the working group called Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism and attempted to utilize the framework to expand its function. US Secretary of State Rice was eager to promote this movement by pointing out that such a framework would be useful nurture habits of cooperation, which has never existed. Admittedly, such a movement is welcome; however, considering that (1) the SPT primarily aim at denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and no participant is willing to expand its

function at the expense of such objectives, (2) the SPT failed to prevent North Korea from undertaking nuclear and missile tests in 2006 and 2009, and (3) the SPT has stalled since 2007, the probability for the SPT to become “the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism” is extremely low and highly conditional (i.e., North Korea becoming willing to denuclearize or North Korea’s regime changing to a more democratic society).

Second, even if the SPT has potential to transform into a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism, it is difficult to maintain its institutional form, and it becomes necessary to transform it. The current motivation for cooperation among the five parties except for North Korea is preventing destabilization resulting from within North Korea’s nuclear development. Yet, if the situation deteriorates, the five parties might consider an ad-hoc consultation mechanism for crisis and consequence management in the Korean Peninsula. However, this would likely provoke North Korea since it may view the movement as containment of North Korea, which China and Russia are unwilling to accept. In this sense, unless all five parties’ immediate interests converge, the SPT is not likely to maintain its institutional form though it would become a primitive base for creating a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism.

Third, there are other frameworks that have more potential to be the core or part of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism. One example is Northeast Asian trilateralism. In 2008, Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperation was established on the basis of “+3” cooperation within the ASEAN+3 framework. Moreover, there are on-going discussions to create a US-Japan-China or US-Japan-ROK framework, whose agenda would be more comprehensive. If the framework is to nurture habits of cooperation and habits of compliance for international laws and norms, these frameworks are more effective than the SPT.

Assuming such frameworks were established, compatibility with US alliances depends on their evolution. If participants in these fora see them as a tool to increase their political leverage and set one framework as the core of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism, it could create political tension, as shown in the case of the US opposing creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 and the Japan-China political rivalry in establishing an East Asian Summit in 2005. Yet, since all Northeast Asian states except North Korea regard the US alliances as vital to regional stability and seek the evolution of the bilateral alliances into more networked alliances like the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, the multilateral forum is unlikely to replace the US alliances, and the forum may ask the alliances to provide more regional public goods.

Mr. Joon Sung LEE

The Six-Party Talks in 2010 will have significant changes because of the new circumstances in the region. For example, the *Cheonan* incident changed each countries’ position toward North Korea. China and Russia opposed any direct identification of

North Korea as the suspect while the US and Korea launched a full-scale joint military exercise.

Japan and the United States are also keeping firm line, criticizing North Korea and suggesting North Korea find new opportunities to change its international status.

South Korea is cooperating with all participants in the Six-Party Talks, seeking a solution through multilateral talks. South Korea and North Korea are experiencing the most serious crisis in 33 years because of the *Cheonan* incident. South Korea is now rebuilding its military abilities through full-scale joint exercises with the United States.

This has created great concern in Beijing. While China is neither criticizing nor supporting North Korea, Chinese have expressed dissatisfaction and concern over the exercise. The US presence in Northeast Asia is making China reconsider the seriousness of the upcoming Six-Party Talks.

North Korea and South Korea are at the core of the current Northeast Asia crisis. The denuclearization process that will be the focus of the 7th round of Six-Party Talks will be the nucleus of gradual process of bringing peace back to Northeast Asia. The position that China will take in those talks will be critical given North Korea's reliance on China.

Mr. Baowei LIANG

I. The Necessity of Security Cooperation Mechanism in Northeast Asia

The security situation in Northeast Asia has drawn much attention. No peace agreement has replaced the 1953 armistice pact; thus, a condition of belligerency still exists on the Korean Peninsula. The US maintains the US-Japan and US-ROK military alliances. Historical issues, such as history textbooks and Yasukuni Jinjia issues, exist between China and Japan. The two countries also diverge on issues like Diaoyu Island and East China Sea demarcation. The Tokdo dispute separates Japan and South Korea; the four northern islands ownership dispute stands between Japan and Russia; the kidnapping problem is between DPRK and Japan. The two North Korea nuclear crises have brought about the possibility of war. Therefore, a comprehensive multilateral security mechanism is necessary in northeast Asia.

II. The Six-Party Talks encompass both the potential and the limits of a multilateral security mechanism in Northeast Asia

The Six-Party Talks show these nations' concern in this region and somewhat ensure the interests of all sides are accounted for in an open and cooperative manner. The necessity of the talks is made evident, to some extent, by failed efforts at resolving the North Korea nuclear crisis. Because of long-held rancor, it is not workable to take a collective security model in Northeast Asia. Distrust in the great powers leads to failure

of great power-coordination. The Six-Party Talks center on the North Korea nuclear issue. Though the items on the agenda are limited at the moment, they can go further in aspects of economy, politics, culture, society and so on after the resolution of the nuclear crisis. In reality, the talks have prevented military conflict, despite their temporary stagnation.

However, the talks still have problems like poor institutionalization, lack of enforcement and too much dependence on consensus. The previous talks show that the principle of “action for action” can easily move the talks into dispute and even confrontation. Either failure to carry out the “consensus action” or different understanding of the “consensus action” will suspend the talks. Therefore, the Six-Party Talks cannot be the security cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia.

III. The US Bilateral Alliance and the Six-Party Talks

Though the Six-Party Talks sometimes conflict with US dominance, they allow bilateral and multilateral talks under the framework. These talks work together. The US will make use of bilateral alliances, bilateral dialogues, great power coordination, and the UN to reach its goals.

Ms. Greer MEISELS

Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, stated, “Asia is rich in dynamism, but relatively thin in influential political, economic, and security-related institutions, in contrast to Europe, which often lacks dynamism but is institution-heavy.”¹⁰ Though I agree with Haass’ basic assertions, I question whether this region needs an institutionalized security mechanism let alone whether it could support one.

Whether you describe it as a mechanism, architecture, or framework, one seems to be confronted with an inherent contradiction when looking at the security relationships of Northeast Asia. On the one hand there are those who worry about “metastability”¹¹ and feel potential great power rivalries and other destabilizing agents could be remedied through an institutionalized, multilateral security arrangement. On the other hand, are those who argue that Northeast Asian security mechanism is intellectually appealing but not realistic or feasible in any near-term time horizon.

The Six-Party Talks are the most obvious example of security multilateralism in Northeast Asia. One of the six main points in the Sept. 19, 2005 Joint Statement included language attesting to the importance of the six to promote peace and security in Northeast

¹⁰ < <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/haass17>>.

¹¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski discusses “metastability” in, *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*. He argues Northeast Asia is reminiscent of pre-World War I Europe, and that the dangers of regional power rivalries in Northeast Asia need to be mitigated so as not to bring about the downfall of the region.

Asia.¹² And one of the five Working Groups established by the Feb. 13, 2007 “Beijing Agreement” is responsible for the creation of a “Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism.”¹³ While this enthusiasm is welcome, it is increasingly difficult to reconcile the process’ inherent difficulties.

First, the relative merits of the Six-Party Talks are being called into question. North Korea’s continued intransigence, increasingly hostile provocations and boycott of the six-party process have brought the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula to a grinding halt. Various circles question the efficacy of the Six-Party Talks and have growing doubts as to whether it should be continued.

Second, though multilateral efforts like the Six-Party Talks are significant, it remains to be seen whether a security mechanism could address the region’s other major concerns. Certain topics such as Taiwan’s future and cross-Strait relations or the myriad territorial disputes between nearly each and every regional player would seem to be taboo. Other nontraditional security threats that a mechanism could address, for example, port security, piracy, energy security, etc. often extend beyond the region’s borders and call into question the need for this particular group of countries to work on them. This does not mean that cooperation amongst Northeast Asian countries on these issues isn’t imperative, but it raises the issue of whether *this* sort of specific, discrete security mechanism is needed to tackle them. Therefore, the region could follow a course of *ad hoc* multilateralism – the course the region has followed until now.

However, one Northeast Asian multilateralism, in whatever guise, should not replace or usurp the bilateral alliances that exist in Northeast Asia. Any institutionalized multilateral arrangement should be seen augmenting the “hub and spoke” model of alliances. Such a mechanism could draw into the fold important partners, such as China who, though not an ally, is a necessary and critical actor in addressing both traditional and new security threats. Similarly, no matter if, or how, a security structure in Northeast Asia evolves, it is important to understand that it may not be a panacea. This region is rife with mistrust, hung up on historical injustices, and beleaguered with incongruous political systems, values, and ideologies, which may continue to spoil future multilateral endeavors.

Defusing and stabilizing this potentially volatile region should be one of the major foreign policy objectives for all countries. Consistent and deeper engagement, while perhaps not the same as a mechanism *per se*, will bolster the ties that bind the region and will ensure that there is a security climate conducive to addressing Northeast Asia’s latent and overt tensions.

¹² The fourth point reads: “The Six Parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia. The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum. The Six Parties agreed to explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia.” <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490.htm>>.

¹³ <<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t297463.htm>>. Russia is to head this group.

Mr. Daniel MICHAELI

As long as territorial disputes continue to rankle Asians and two civil wars from the 20th century – China/Taiwan and North Korea/South Korea – remain unresolved, there will not be a meaningful Northeast Asian security mechanism. Rather than serving as a template, the Six-Party Talks stand as a demonstration of why the region is unprepared for such a mechanism.

The Six-Party Talks brought together six countries with the largest stakes in Northeast Asian security. The goal of denuclearizing North Korea has obviously not been met. But the talks *could* have been the seed of a regional security mechanism had a secondary, less demanding, goal been achieved: coordinating security policies vis-à-vis North Korea. Instead, the security policies of the “five parties” are badly misaligned. Responses to the sinking of the *Cheonan* are a stark reminder. Moscow and Beijing continue to pretend the incident never happened, and China is unwilling even to consider the evidence against North Korea. Meanwhile, on a different level, all indications are that China continues to refuse to talk with South Korea and the United States about contingency scenarios for a North Korean regime collapse – the kind of longer-term security coordination that could substantially reduce the chances of miscommunication and conflict down the road.

The successes of the Six-Party Talks, to the extent there have been any, are in the UN Security Council resolutions sanctioning North Korea. Passage of the resolutions did depend on Chinese frustration with North Korea, which may not have manifested without a direct Chinese role in the negotiations. But gaining Chinese buy-in for a UN Security Council resolution is ultimately a tactical issue. Trilateral US-China-North Korea talks could have produced the same UN Security Council resolutions. (And Chinese noncompliance with the resolutions, even though China backed them, is a constant source of trouble.)

The Six-Party Talks are theoretically useful as a way to attempt to show North Korea that a “divide and conquer” strategy with its neighbors won’t be effective. But in recent years, North Korea has demonstrated that even with incredibly provocative behavior, from nuclear testing to nuclear proliferation (Syria) to silently sinking a South Korean ship, Northeast Asian countries are unable to coordinate security policies. Widely differing perceptions of security challenges resulting from the unresolved Korean civil war must be reconciled before a real regional security mechanism could take shape.

Other regional arrangements, particularly on the economic front, *are* emerging in the region: particularly significant is the “Plus Three” (the ASEAN Plus Three minus ASEAN), bringing together three of the Northeast Asian countries with the greatest economic clout, including the world’s second- and third-largest economies by GDP. But such arrangements are likely to have very limited impact in the security realm. It is telling that even since Hu Jintao and Lee Mung-bak met during a third trilateral “Plus Three” summit this spring, where they discussed the *Cheonan* incident and Lee reassured Hu that

he would not respond with force, Beijing has been no more willing than before to coordinate with Japan and South Korea on North Korean security issues.

Beijing is actually a major force behind most of the region's security challenges. The possibility of a mainland attack on Taiwan keeps military planners busy from Beijing to Tokyo to Canberra to Washington; and China's maritime and island disputes with Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Malaysia break ASEAN's unity and are a constant source of tension. No country wants to form a security mechanism to balance explicitly against China. Doing so would encircle China and ultimately reduce security in the region. But, as long as China is the source of so many security concerns, a security mechanism would fail at confidence-building unless China drastically alters its approach to a host of territorial disputes, including Taiwan. This is unlikely for quite some time.

Bilateral alliances with the United States will, therefore, remain the lynchpin of Asian regional security. In addition to the issues mentioned above, Japan and South Korea will need to address their history and resolve the Takeshima/Dokdo dispute before they could fully invest in any regional security mechanism. Given North Korean and Chinese provocations, Japan and South Korea may come closer to resolving those issues – long before China is likely to resolve *its* disputes that keep a regional security architecture from being effective. In this context, closer defense ties between Tokyo and Seoul are likely to *strengthen*, not weaken, the US alliance system.

Yet imagining a multilateral security mechanism that could help ensure security in Asia is not impossible. The creation of such a mechanism would depend largely on whether China can move to address the disputes that concern its neighbors. Such reassurance is needed before a security architecture can be built.

Dr. Kevin SHEPARD

Basing a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism on Six-Party Talks is one of the best ways to ensure failure. The Six-Party Talks, an *ad hoc* forum to resolve North Korean nuclear issues, has failed to bring about consensus on interests, strategies, timelines, or end goals. For Washington, the more immediate concern is proliferation, not denuclearization. South Korea, in the aftermath of the *Cheonan* incident, has joined ranks with Japan in demanding a North Korean apology on a subject unrelated to nuclear dismantlement before returning to talks.¹⁴ The Chinese have, in recent months, subtly shifted from a strategy of stability *and* denuclearization to one of stability *instead of* denuclearization, and Chinese participants in regional forums have acknowledged that Beijing expects little before a change in North Korean government. Continuing support for Six-Party Talks is not indicative of their success; it is simply a recognition that there is no better option.

¹⁴The *Cheonan* incident gives great pause to those in support of a six-party framework for regional security cooperation. Consider what course of action such talks could have taken that would be acceptable to all sides, and we can quickly see such a forum's inadequacies.

These failures to coordinate on a single issue that *all six countries* pay lip service to should be a red flag when discussing a potential basis for regional security architecture. A regional framework should involve the major powers with national interests in Northeast Asia, and this is what draws many to the Six-Party Talks as a model. However, several questions arise. What role would North Korea play? Pyongyang has a say in Six-Party talks because the issue at hand is within the DPRK; does Pyongyang get a say in US arms sales to Taiwan or territorial disputes between Moscow and Tokyo? Six-Party Talks are hosted by and in China, a strong advocate of non-intervention. With this background, what issues would a Six-Party regional forum tackle, and with what means would they resolve conflicts? Six-Party Talks were born out of countries with specific interests related to the North Korean nuclear interest. If this is expanded to Northeast Asia, how do we define “interested party”? If China and Russia are considered Northeast Asian states, what is Mongolia, which is squeezed in between them? If Northeast Asia extends east to the US, why not to Canada?

Before discussion on a forum for regional security issues, it might be prudent to decide what the scope (cooperation on regional issues, or regional cooperation on extra-regional issues?), impetus (reactionary or preemptive?), and level (functional coordination, working-level discussion, or politically significant cooperation?) of such multilateral security cooperation is desirable and feasible. Only then should we design a mechanism, albeit likely one including most if not all of the six-party players. But we should also allow for the exploration of seats for ASEAN, Australia, the EU and possibly others.¹⁵ While peripheral actors such as these should be invited, there should be a core component, most likely consisting of the ROK, PRC, US, Japan, and Russia.

Even if such a multilateral regional forum were formed, the US would maintain strong alliances with South Korea and Japan, and would continue to seek more trilateral cooperation with Tokyo and Seoul. At the same time, the closer ties between Japan, South Korea and China that such a forum would facilitate would also be encouraged by Washington, as it does not feel the threat of being ‘squeezed out’ of the region. Further integration of Russia into Northeast Asia could prove contentious as historical animosities resurface, and the growing footprint of both Russia and China would encourage Tokyo and Seoul to strengthen ties with Washington to ensure US commitment to extended deterrence. Regional multilateral security cooperation would be tedious and may not be demonstrably productive in the short term, but it would not threaten US interests or allies, and should be encouraged.

Ms. Yun SUN

Six-Party Talks will not serve as the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism. In fact, the idea of a multilateral security mechanism for Northeast Asia is more a rhetorical construction than based on reality. The region lacks a collective identity

¹⁵ The inclusion of North Korea would indicate much-improved relations with its neighbors. In light of ongoing talks with Russia, the EU, China, and the two Koreas on rail and energy, improved relations could significantly increase EU and Russian interests in Northeast Asia.

or a tradition of security cooperation. Interactions among states are characterized by geopolitical competition, and sometimes hostility. Northeast Asia is the ultimate geopolitical arena, where zero-sum calculus and the balance of power prevail. Regional powers have depended more on bilateral security arrangements than multilateral security mechanisms to solve their security concerns.

The Six-Party Talks is a perfect example of the inability of multilateral mechanisms to address regional security challenges. Its failure to resolve the North Korea nuclear crisis is fundamentally embedded in the geopolitical realities of the issue – the competition between the US and China.

Beijing's strategic judgment that the US represents the greatest threat to China's national security determines its perceptions and approach toward North Korea. North Korea, however provocative or unstable, is a lesser evil compared to a unified, even denuclearized pro-US Korean Peninsula. The competitive and zero-sum nature of the US-China bilateral security relations precludes a multilateral solution since there is no super-national or multilateral consensus that could address the core issue. A comparable case would be the United Nations during the Cold War, which failed to effectively tackle security crises multilaterally because many of them were the result of the US-Soviet bilateral clash.

The ability of the Six-Party Talks to address the North Korea nuclear issue was stalled and undercut by China's limited vision for the forum. As the host and chair, China has never realistically aspired that the Six-Party Talks would resolve the crisis. Rather, it sees the process as keeping negotiations open and lessening the possibility of crisis escalation. For Beijing, Six-Party Talks are about the prevention of conflicts on its border, not denuclearization or regime change. Pyongyang's lack of security, the root of its nuclear brinkmanship, can only be addressed by the US and DPRK on a bilateral basis. Six-Party Talks, therefore, is merely a prequel, paving the way for bilateral negotiation.

Beyond the North Korea nuclear issue, it's highly improbable that Six-Party Talks could address the other two potential threats to peace in the region: the competition between Japan and China, and the Taiwan issue. For example, Six-Party Talks on Japan-China territorial disputes will inevitably bring in the disputes between them and other parties, complicating the situation and preempting meaningful results. On Taiwan, Beijing's insistence on it being China's internal affairs precludes any multilateral discussion.

In Northeast Asia, the rhetoric might still be on interdependency and common interests, but everyday realities routinely expose the emptiness of such slogans. A multilateral mechanism can not address the security challenges in the region, most of which are bilateral by nature. Six-Party Talks have proved incapable of tackling the most immediate regional security challenge. It will not serve as the foundation for a multilateral security mechanism for the region.

Mr. Wataru YAMAGUCHI

The Six-Party Talks will not serve as the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism. There are two reasons for this: its limited purpose and a multilayered security framework in Northeast Asia.

First, the Six-Party Talks are limited to the problems surrounding North Korea's nuclear development in the foreseeable future because the North Korean issues won't be resolved in the near future. This is based on the fact that even the UN Security Council has not been able to address the latest North Korean problem sufficiently, even though it has the power and the authority to use force should it be required.

Even if the problems were to be solved, the focus of the talks will not shift from the activities of North Korea. For instance, if North Korea should abandon all its nuclear programs and agree to accept inspections by an appropriate institution, the Six-Party Talks will start to verify whether North Korea is faithful in the fulfillment of its promises. That is to say, the main subject of the discussion will not change unless North Korea changes dramatically.

Second, there is already a multilayered security framework in Asia. On the one hand, US alliances serve as a deterrent against war. On the other, the ASEAN Regional Forum promotes preventive diplomacy and encourages regional confidence-building. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization also tackles security issues. Such alliances and international organizations are more comprehensive and more institutionalized than the Six-Party Talks, so there is no obvious reason why the talks would take a leading role in this multilayered security mechanism. Indeed the talks may be able to supplement and strengthen the framework by advancing security dialogues, but they have no means to use force for settling conflicts at a critical moment.

If this is indeed the case, what will serve as the nucleus of a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism? In such a region, US alliances are relatively stable. Therefore we should pay more attention to the US alliances in Asia. Each ally of the US can address not only traditional security issues but also terrorism and issues relating to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles. Moreover, a more multilateral arrangement among US allies has tremendous potential in the sense that it can contribute to stability in Asia.

Ms. Adrian YI

There are many reasons to doubt that a Northeast Asian Security Mechanism will be institutionalized. The Six-Party Talks have a specific objective – to achieve a peace agreement and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula – however, the talks do not serve as a binding security mechanism with enforcement measures. The talks can be more accurately referred to as a dialogue mechanism rather than a security mechanism. The talks have been useful in that the six nations have had a chance to develop habit of

cooperation and communication. But, the Korean Peninsula is no closer to a peace agreement and denuclearization than at the inception of the talks in 2003.

The Six-Party Talks may serve as the model or nucleus of a Northeast Asian Dialogue Mechanism where Northeast Asian nations can convene on a scheduled basis to discuss security issues not unlike the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). However, the political differences of the major Northeast Asian powers and the deep mistrust between them will prevent them from forming a treaty-based binding security mechanism such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Although, a treaty or alliance-based security mechanism is not an option, an ad-hoc or issue-based dialogue mechanism is likely to continue to serve as a forum for Northeast Asian nations to deal with security issues.

Such multilateral forums will reinforce the role of US alliances in Asia especially when dealing with non-traditional security challenges. Hard security will always remain at the core of US alliances however, many of the 21st century threats are transnational in scope and require more than the traditional mil-mil cooperation between two states. Most threats today require regional if not global coordination to combat non-traditional security threats such as climate change, piracy, and resource scarcity. A Northeast Asian Security Forum can help US alliances in Asia become more global in scope by providing an institutional framework focused on dealing with issues that require regional cooperation.

Appendix C

About the Authors

Ms. See-Won BYUN is a research associate with the Center for US-Korea Policy at The Asia Foundation in Washington. Previously, she did research for the Freeman Chair in China Studies at the Center for Strategic & International Studies and provided program support to the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at The Brookings Institution. She was a Brent Scowcroft Award Fellow of the Aspen Institute's Aspen Strategy Group foreign policy program in spring 2007. In Korea, Ms. Byun was a program officer for UN-University exchanges and served as editorial assistant at the Institute of East & West Studies. She co-writes the China-Korea section of *Comparative Connections*, a quarterly publication of Pacific Forum CSIS. Ms. Byun received a BA in economics from Brown University, an MA in Chinese area studies from Yonsei University, and an MA in international affairs from The George Washington University. She studied international politics at Peking University in Beijing and is proficient in Chinese and Korean.

Ms. Eunil CHO graduated from Waseda University in 2008 with a major in political science. She is currently a master's candidate at the Graduate School of International Studies at Yonsei University. Her academic interests focus on Northeast Asian security issues and regional security cooperation. She interned as a research assistant at New York Times Tokyo bureau in summer of 2006, press-room intern at the 6th Asia Cooperation Dialogue in 2007; and Liaison for Japan's finance minister 2008 ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting.

Mr. Sungmin CHO is studying toward a master's degree in international relations at Peking University. He received his BA in political science and international relations at Korea University. He spent one year as an exchange student at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada in 2003-2004. In 2005, Mr. Cho joined the Republic of Korea Army in the position of intelligence officer. Serving three years, including a seven-month tour to Iraq in 2006. Currently, he is an intern at the Beijing office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and is working on his dissertation with a focus on the North Korean nuclear issue and its impact on Sino-US relations.

Dr. Guibourg DELAMOTTE is assistant professor at the French Institute for Oriental Studies (Inalco). She is also associate research fellow at Asia Centre (Paris) and adjunct fellow at Temple University, Japan. From May to July 2010, she was NIDS fellow with the National Institute for Defense Studies (Tokyo). She read law at University Panthéon-Assas and the University of Oxford, international relations at the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) and holds a master's in Japanese from Inalco. Her PhD dissertation on Japan's defence policy (School of Social Sciences, EHESS) received the Shibusawa-Claudé award in 2008 and will be published by Presses Universitaires de France (PUF) in October 2010. In 2007, she coedited a book with Pr François Godement,

Geopolitique de l'Asie (Armand Colin-Sédès). Her publications include several articles and contributions (to Ramsès, Documentation française's Asie, The HAPR).

Mr. Kei KOGA from Japan, is a 2009 Vasey fellow and a PhD candidate in international relations at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. His research interests include international relations theory, international security, terrorism, East Asian regionalism, US-Japan relations, and ASEAN. Before attending Fletcher, he served as a research fellow at the Japan Forum on International Relations (JFIR) and as assistant executive secretary at the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC). He also teaches international relations and East Asian security at the Open University of Japan. He received an MA in international affairs at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, and a BA in international affairs at Lewis & Clark College.

Mr. Tetsuo KOTANI is a PhD candidate at Doshisha University and research fellow at the Ocean Policy Research Foundation. His dissertation focus is on the strategic implication of homeporting US carriers in Japan. His other research interests include US-Japan relations, international relations in the Asia-Pacific region, and maritime security. He is a member of the International Advisory Council, Project 2049 Institute, and the Book Review Editor of the Journal of Indian Ocean Region. He was a visiting fellow at the US-Japan Center at Vanderbilt University. He received a security studies fellowship at Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), 2006-2008. He won the 2003 Japanese Defense Minister Prize.

Mr. LIANG Baowei is a PhD candidate of the School of International Relations and Public Affairs at Fudan University. He is interested in political and diplomatic of the Asia-Pacific. Currently, he is studying civil-military relations of Japan as a foreign visitor at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia at the University of Tokyo.

Ms. A. Greer MEISELS is an MA student at Harvard University. She was the assistant project director at the Forum on Asia-Pacific Security at the National Committee on American Foreign Policy in New York. In that capacity, she managed projects on US, China, and cross-Strait relations, multilateral cooperation for a denuclearized Korean Peninsula, the US alliances with Japan and South Korea; and a quadrilateral dialogue bringing together the United States, Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK) to discuss both regional and global security issues. Previously she received a Princeton in Asia fellowship which enabled her to serve as a visiting lecturer at the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing for the 2007-2008 academic year. Ms. Meisels has also worked for the International Crisis Group and the International Peace Academy (now International Peace Institute). Ms. Meisels has been a member of the Young Leaders program since 2007 and has participated in Asia-Pacific security conferences in Taipei, Tokyo, Beijing, Washington, DC and Honolulu. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude from Hunter College, CUNY majoring in political science and classical and oriental studies.

Mr. Daniel MICHAELI is a research associate in US foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), where his work has focused on China, India, the future role of the United States in Asia, and US global strategic issues. Prior to joining CFR in 2009, he was a Fulbright research fellow in China, where he conducted research on civil society and economic development. Michaeli received his BA from the University of Chicago and has also been published by *Businessweek*, the *Huffington Post*, and the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

Mr. Taku OTSUKA was elected as a member of the House of Representatives in September 2005. In the House, he served on the Security Committee, the Committee on Cabinet, the Special Committee on Prevention of International Terrorism and Japan's Cooperation and Support; Humanitarian Assistance for Reconstruction in Iraq, and the Special Committee on Political Ethics and Election Law. In the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), he served as the deputy director general of the International Bureau. In the last election held in August 2009, he lost his seat. He has already started his campaign toward the next general election. Before entering politics, he worked in the financial sector (the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Ltd) and received a Master in Public Policy degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. in Law from Keio University. He is currently serving as an affiliated fellow at National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) on foreign policy and science and technology policy.

Dr. Kevin SHEPARD is a James A. Kelly Korean Studies Fellow at the Pacific Forum CSIS. His research interests include the DPRK policy-making environment, economic reform in the North and its impact on society, cooperation schemes for DPRK infrastructure development, and North Korean foreign relations. He has contributed to *The Dynamics of Change in North Korea* (Kyungnam University, 2009); *Navigating Turbulence in Northeast Asia: The Future of the US-ROK Alliance* (KEI, 2010); *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* (KINU, 2010); and the forthcoming *A Roadmap for Expanding US-ROK Alliance Cooperation* (The Asia Foundation, 2010). His articles have also appeared in *Asia Business and Technology Report*, *IFES Forum*, and *ICNK Forum*. He holds a Ph.D. in North Korean politics and unification policies from Kyungnam University, Graduate School of North Korean Studies, as well as an MA in international policy studies from Sydney University and an MA in Korean from the University of Hawaii.

Ms. Yun SUN is a China analyst at International Crisis Group. She focuses on China's foreign policy, especially its relations with great powers and with conflict countries/areas. Located in Beijing, her company monitors China's policy shifts on issues such as North Korea nuclear tests, China's involvement in Afghanistan-Pakistan, border disputes with India, etc., and provides policy recommendations for the US and EU advocacy offices, as well as policy organizations upon their requests. Ms. Sun worked in Washington, DC at Mansfield Foundation and Asia Society for 5 years on US policy towards Northeast Asia. She holds an MA in International Policy and of Asia-Pacific Regional Studies from George Washington University and China Foreign Affairs University.

Mr. Wataru YAMAGUCHI is a PhD student in political science at Doshisha University. He waived his senior year of undergraduate studies and entered the Graduate School of Law at Doshisha University in 2008. His prior education includes a MA in political science from Doshisha University in 2010. His research interests include Japanese diplomacy in the 1980s and US-Japan security relationship. His master's thesis focused on the Japanese attempt to dispatch minesweepers of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force or guard vessels of the Maritime Safety Agency toward the Persian Gulf in 1987. He was an intern at the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS) in 2008 and will be a visiting researcher at Stanford University in September.

Ms. Adrian YI is a Kelly Fellow at the Pacific Forum CSIS. She received her MA in Korean language at the University of Hawaii as a part of the National Security Education Program (NSEP). She studied abroad at Korea University for a year and interned as a research assistant at the Center for Security and Strategy at the Korea Institute for Defense Analysis (KIDA). She received a BA in international relations and foreign languages (Chinese and Japanese) from the University of Puget Sound. She studied Chinese at Middlebury College and has studied abroad in Japan through the Rotary Program. She has also worked with the Department of State at the American Institute in Taiwan.

Appendix D



Japan-China-US-ROK Dialogue

August 10-11, 2010
Shoyu Kaikan ♦ Tokyo, Japan

Agenda

Monday, August 9

- All day** Arrival and check-in at Hotel Villa Fontaine (Roppongi)
- 17:30** **YOUNG LEADERS introductory session with Carl Baker**
Meet in the hotel lobby
- 18:00 Reception Dinner – Restaurant “Plates” (2nd floor, Ark Mori Bldg., Ark Hills)

Tuesday, August 10

- 09:00 **Bus leaves the hotel**
Registration at Shoyu Kaikan
- 09:30 **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Masashi Nishihara
Ralph Cossa
Zhu Feng
- 09:45 **Session I: *Third Party Perceptions of Bilateral Relations***
How does each country see relations between the other countries? How does the US perceive Sino-Japanese relations today and prospects for an “East Asian Community”? How does Japan perceive the US-China relationship and the scope for “G2” cooperation on key bilateral issues? How does South Korea perceive Sino-Japanese-US relations and prospects for an “East Asian Community”?

Tuesday, August 10 (cont'd.)

Chair: Ralph Cossa
Presenters: Andrew Oros
Seiichiro Takagi
Pan Wei
Kim Young-ho

11:15 Coffee Break

11:30 **Session II: *Changes in Domestic Politics and their Impact on Foreign Policy***

How significant are Hatoyama's resignation and Kan's elevation for internal politics and foreign orientation? What are the sources of China's new "assertiveness" and developments in the run-up to the 2012 leadership transition? What are President Obama's prospects in the 2010 midterms and his National Security Strategy?

Chair: Seiichiro Takagi
Presenters: Matake, Kamiya
Pan Wei
Weston Konishi
Hwang Jae-ho

13:00 Lunch (lunch box)

14:00 **Session III: *Developments on the Korean Peninsula***

How do we see the current situation on the Korean peninsula and intra-Korean relations? What about the impact of the Cheonan incident on regional security relations, the six-party talks, and China-ROK relations? What is the scope for regional cooperation on Korean Peninsula issues?

Chair: Evans Revere
Presenters: Lee Sang-hyun
Zhu Feng
Scott Snyder
Narushige Michishita

15:30 Coffee Break

16:00 **Session IV: *Maritime Security***

What is the state of Sino-Japanese relations after the Chinese fleet activities in the Pacific south of Japan? Tensions over the East China Sea? What are US-China maritime relations after the US-ROK naval exercises

Tuesday, August 10 (cont'd.)

in the Yellow Sea? Any proposals to improve military-to-military relations and confidence-building measures?

Chair: Masashi Nishihara
Presenters: Hideaki Kaneda
Ken Gause
Lee Seok-soo

17:30 Close

18:30 Dinner – Restaurant “Turandot” (2nd Fl, Ark Mori Bldg., Ark Hills)

Wednesday, August 11

09:30 **Session V: *The Impact of the Financial Crisis on Regional Security***
How is the financial crisis affecting the balance of power in the Asia Pacific region? What are the prospects of China-Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation and free trade agreement? What are implications of the on-going crisis in the Euro zone?

Chair: Seiichiro Takagi
Presenters: Zhu Feng
Masayuki Tadokoro
Drew Thompson

11:00 Coffee Break

11:15 **Wrap-Up: *The Potential for Quadrilateral Cooperation?***

Chair: Ralph Cossa
Speakers: Evans Revere
Masashi Nishihara
Zhu Feng

12:30 Close

12:45 Working lunch: YOUNG LEADERS roundtable discussion, moderated by Carl Baker

18:30 Dinner – Ark Hills Café (2nd floor, Ark Mori Bldg., Ark Hills)

Appendix E



Japan-China-US-ROK Dialogue

August 10-11, 2010
Shoyu Kaikan ♦ Tokyo, Japan

Participants

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