

European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP):

Japanese Perspective

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Introduction

For many years, the process of European integration was regarded with an admiration which brought a peace and prosperity in the region. For Japanese, one of the most important concerns in its international relationship was the reconciliation with its neighbours, particularly with China and Republic of Korea. The European integration process, which deliberately aimed to achieve perpetual peace between France and (West) Germany, was considered as a good precedent, and opened up the possibility that the archrivals can not only cooperate but also share their sovereignty for greater good.

The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is considered as the final process of the sharing of sovereignty. Since the failure of European Defence Community (EDC) and slow progress of European Political Cooperation (EPC) and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), it was considered that the European integration would remain intergovernmental as long as Member States jealously protect their national decision-making autonomy. However, the rapid progress after the St. Malo Franco-British summit in December 1998 made us think that the European integration was transformed into higher dimension, and it will reach to the level that Japan would hope for Asia – a permanent interlocking relationship economically and militarily.

This paper, however, would discuss that the reality is not that simple, and there are still a lot of problem in the process of European integration. The ratification of the Constitution for Europe and subsequent Lisbon Treaty notwithstanding, the process of European integration came to halt and forced to reconsider that ways in which it deals

with its own citizens. In short, it is still difficult to declare that there is a single European social space and identity. Nevertheless, this paper argues that the process of developing ESDP would create a coherent image of what Europe is and what Europe does towards the world, and there are many things that Japan can learn a lot from this process. In doing so, we shall discuss how ESDP can be seen from outside and what lessons that Japan can learn from it.

How do we see ESDP

From Japanese point of view, ESDP is often regarded in comparison with the security and defence policy of the United States. During the Cold War, Japan was in a comfortable position as a junior partner to the alliance with the United States while Japanese government retained a position for not sending troops outside its jurisdiction. The unique alliance system under the US-Japan Security Pact, where Japan would not bear the obligation to protect the United States while the US forces do, made it possible for Japan to be a low profile international actor militarily. However, the end of Cold War changed the circumstances. The United States has much less priority to protect Japan (without immediate threat from Russia), and demanded Japan to share the burden not only for maintaining the troops stationed in Japan but also the responsibility to maintain international peace and stability. The first shockwave came during the Gulf War in 1991. Although there was a strong pressure from the United States to send Japanese troops to Iraq, the only things under the Constitution Japan could do were to send a vessel to sweep mines in the Persian Gulf and 13.5 billion dollar. The Japanese contribution was heavily underappreciated, which made Japanese government to realize the importance of more substantial and visible contribution for international peace and stability. Thus, Japan has decided to send troops under the UN command in the peacekeeping operations which were increasing in numbers after the Cold War. After sending a large number of troops, 1,200 men and women, to Cambodia, Japan has been participated in several UN PKO activities in Mozambique, Rwanda, Golan Heights, and East Timor etc. However, Japanese participation is limited to contribute for logistical support rather than front line missions which might be involved in combat actions.

This timid participation in peacekeeping operation is a matter of debate in Japan today. There are certain group of people who encourage to share much heavier burden and to take more international responsibility for peace and stability from which Japan has been greatly benefited. On the other hand, there are group of people who would argue that

Japan shall not take part the activities which might endanger Japanese soldiers and Constitution (which declared that Japan would not possess military force for solving international conflict), meanwhile the UN decision is based on the accord of powerful states (Permanent 5 countries) and not democratically decided.

For both groups, the experience of Europe is a quite useful reference for the debate. First, the neutral countries such as Sweden, Ireland etc. have been in favour of participating in the ESDP. For a long time, Japan has certain admiration to these neutral countries which demonstrated their conviction for standing up against the big powers. However, it became clear that the same countries also have convictions that they shall contribute to the peace and stability of the world, and they may use the military means for achieving this aim. This demonstration of commitment to the peace and security is something that Japan shall regard as a reference of its policy.

Second, the method of intervention to global affairs by European countries is based on the multilateral and civilian methods, unlike that of the United States. As it has shown in the case of Iraq War, European countries (France and Germany in this case) tried to respect the UNSC as much as possible. Even Britain, which eventually went into war with the United States, tried to convince the Bush Administration that it should respect the UN diplomatic process. At the peacekeeping operations, the European countries have contributed heavily in military forces as well as civil policy and "rule of law" missions. These operations are also very useful reference for Japan on how to contribute to the peacekeeping operations without using much of military forces.

Third, although the European method of intervention is based on multilateral and civilian one, it does not mean that Europe put a self-constraint on the use of military force. It is still controversial but the military intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo was widely regarded as a "humanitarian intervention" and its use of force was justified for stopping atrocities of brutal violation of Human Rights. Obviously, Japan would not take the same action in such circumstances, but it is certain that Japan shall take some action within the limit of its Constitution to prevent such violation of Human Rights. What is important in this issue is that there should be a firm and convincing principle of intervention. I think Japan has avoided the discussion of what should be the base of such principles for taking military and non-military actions.

Just taking these three points, it became clear that there are many things that Japan can

refer to, and learn from, the experience of ESDP. Of course, we shall not look only the brighter side of the story. There are actual combat actions in Bosnia and Kosovo, and there are many European soldiers lost lives in Afghanistan and other peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, it would be difficult for Japan to avoid thinking about its role in the global society (as expressed in this symposium) and to remain uncommitted to the maintenance of peace and security of the world.

Having said that, there are two questions raised in the observation of the process of ESDP development. First is that whether Europe would seek a position of the superpower or hegemony in the future. Although the focus of ESDP is strictly on the Petersberg Missions, which is mainly on peacekeeping, humanitarian support, conflict resolution etc., but given the situation between Georgia and Russia, in Iran, and in Middle East, Europe might need to demonstrate itself as a "superpower" for effectively conducting its external policy. Obviously, Europe as a "superpower" does not necessarily possess a heavy military arsenal which may harm the image of Europe as a "leader of conscience", but at the same time, it would not be useful if nobody listen to what Europe says. From Japanese point of view, it would be interesting to see how Europe would use its resources of influence with minimum exercise of military power.

Second question is the relationship between national strategies and European action. As it became clear in the Iraq War, there are many domains where European countries do not share the strategic visions, particularly with regard to the transatlantic relations or vis-à-vis Russia. Although there are certain degrees of common ground, but when push comes to shove, there are many things that cannot be done at the European level. In my assumption, the European Constitution or Lisbon Treaty were supposed to provide firmer ground for common actions, but without institutions as much as strategic cohesion, it would be difficult to predict which direction that Europe would move. As a scholar of European integration, these are interesting questions that motivate us to study ESDP.

What can we learn from Europe?

So what are the lessons what we need to learn from European experience? First, we need to respect the sincere response to the changing international structure. In Japan, the question of peace and security has been always an ideological issue which divided the political camps from left to right. The Constitution, which renounces the use of

military force for solving international disputes, became untouchable due to a long debate over the role of Self-Defence Force (SDF) and US-Japan alliance. As a result, we became very conscious about the domestic dogmas rather than the actual change of international structure. Even after the collapse of Soviet Union and 9.11, the basic principle of security policy has not changed. We have sent SDF to Indian Ocean and Iraq, but only as a response to the request from the United States, rather than its own conviction for the fight against terrorism or maintenance of peace.

On European side, there was a significant debate over the role of Europe in the global security through the experience of Bosnia, Kosovo, Madrid and London. The recognition that the world has changed and the Cold War alliance (NATO) does no longer guarantee American intervention in European affairs made European leaders responsible for taking their own actions for international crises, particularly that with strategic importance. And it is not only the leaders of larger Member States such as Britain, France and Germany, but also Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Ireland, and even Switzerland which is not the Member of EU. This transformation of the security strategy may not be completed, but it is certain that European leaders are fully aware of the necessity of change, whereas Japanese leaders don't.

Second, the sense of responsibility as the largest market in the world, population bigger than the United States, and internationally influential actor is very high in Europe. Although Japan, as a single nation, is the second largest economy, the sense of responsibility and the role in the international affairs are very limited and timid. Of course, it is as the result of the devastating memory of the World War II as it was in the case of Germany. Nevertheless, Japanese lack of sensitivity to the responsibility is somewhat outstanding.

In my understanding, the underlying cause of this difference comes from the relationship with the United States. During the Cold War, both Japan and Europe have been dependent on the United States so that they were able to concentrate on their domestic/internal issues and economic growth. However, through the experience of Bosnia and Kosovo, European countries realized that it is no longer possible to depend on the United States, so it should act of its own for protecting its interest, whereas Japan still believes the United States would provide security guarantee when the Japanese interest became in danger. Thus, European states realized that they need to be more proactive towards the maintenance of peace and stability whereas Japan need to

strengthen the relationship with the United States. In order to do so, Japanese government has to respond to the requests from the United States for sending troops to conflict zones and providing services to the troops based in Japan. In other words, Japanese security policy is a product of compromise between the US pressure and the Constitutional constraints. In this regard, Europe, through its development of ESDP, became much more independent actor in global affairs. The role in negotiating with Iran and peacekeeping in Afghanistan (both are not successful yet) is more spontaneous one compare to Japanese role in Indian Ocean and Iraq. In short, Europe became a global actor whereas Japan does not.

The other thing which divides Japan and Europe is autonomous capability. Britain and France are the permanent member of the UN Security Council and they can use veto power as a leverage for leading the negotiation to their favour. None of the European countries has constitutional constraints for sending troops outside Europe except Germany. Although European countries depend on various infrastructure particularly related to C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) and strategic airlift, European countries have at least minimum capability to conduct their operation outside Europe as in the case of Artemis in DR Congo. Japan, on the other hand, does not have such capability at all. SDF may independently conduct its humanitarian aid missions or truce monitoring missions, but it critically lacks the strategic and tactical infrastructure for autonomous operations. This made Japan more dependent on the United States in security field.

Furthermore, we can learn from Europe on its role for securing regional stability, especially after the fall of Berlin Wall. The former Communist countries were quickly turned into a chaotic free market and democracy where there was a little institutional and legal framework. It was the EU which provided a model and hope for these countries to transform their market, administrative system, and political structure. The Copenhagen criteria requires these countries to achieve (a) stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities, (b) the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, and (c) the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Among which the most difficult one was to accept *acquis communautaire* (acquis) to meet the requirement to participate in the single market. The *acquis* is a comprehensive legal system of EU laws which contains 31

Chapters, 8,000 items in 18,000 page-documents. It provides a detailed model of market regulation and public administration. Without these guidelines it was difficult to stabilize the confused countries in the East.

The Copenhagen criteria were in fact a product from the lessons of former Yugoslavia. Since the fall of Communist regime, the critical issue for EU (then EU-15) was how to avoid the ethnic violence among Central and Eastern European nations. Through Copenhagen criteria, the EU provided these countries a hope for their future as a Member State of EU, which became very strong incentives to overcome the ethnic divide and historical tensions. This model of regional stability is also working in European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) to some extent. EU exercise certain influence over Ukraine, Croatia and Turkey, and also involved heavily in the Russia-Georgia crisis. The role of EU in regional stability is becoming more and more important.

On the other hand, Japan has not been active for establishing such a role. Of course, there are various issues which made it difficult for Japan, such as territorial disputes with South Korea, China and Russia, and historical issues represented in textbook issue and Yasukuni, but it is also true that Japanese governments were not eager to take responsibilities and initiatives for regional stability. They have not been keen to activate the economic leverage for altering the attitudes of neighbouring countries, as in the case of Copenhagen criteria. In my opinion, Japan still has the capability to take initiative, but given the fiscal constraints and confusion of its economic condition, it is increasingly difficult to exercise its influence whereas the growing economies such as China would possibly be good at doing so.

Having said that, it is misleading just to list up good things about EU. There are some bad examples of EU as a model. First, its effort to anti-terrorism coordination was far from perfection. Although there has been a significant improvement of Police and Judicial cooperation, notably the intelligence coordination, there are many weak spots. The most crucial part is the border control on eastern side. Since many Central and Eastern European countries joined the EU, the EU border stretched to large extent. And given the free movement of people, information and money, it is difficult to trace the traffic of terrorists through EU countries if they use these weak borders. Japan has also its weakness for border control and intelligence activities in particular. So there are issues for both of us.

Second is the question of non-proliferation. It is no secret that the black market of nuclear technology developed by A.Q.Khan of Pakistan was composed with the technology leaked from Europe. Khan learned the nuclear physics in the Netherlands, and involved in procuring nuclear sensitive technologies from Switzerland and the Netherlands. Both Japan and most of European countries are the member of non-proliferation regimes including Nuclear Suppliers' Group or Wassenaar Arrangement, and it is very difficult to prevent the transfer of technology, however, because of the freedom of movement of people and goods made it easier for Khan to develop a network of black market.

Third is a quite different issue on strategic understanding. It is the question with regard to the arms embargo to China. For Japan as well as the United States, lifting embargo to China would mean a serious empowerment of Chinese military capability. However, there was a serious discussion during 2004-2005 that Europe would lift embargo unilaterally. It was largely motivated by political concerns with China, but also there was an economic interest in selling arms and related goods to China. It is also true that even the embargo is still effective, European countries export certain amount of military-related goods to China, which might be classified as arms in Japanese standards. This issue implies that Europe may be very proactive for maintaining the security in Europe, Africa and Eurasian continent, but not so much in Asia.

What can we do with Europe?

Although there is a big difference in our strategic objectives, relationship with the United States and autonomous capabilities, there are many things that Japan and Europe can do together. First of all, both Japan and Europe have been and continued to be cooperative for anti-terrorism actions. Although no one knows how terrorist network extends worldwide, everyone knows that it does. There has been a strong transatlantic cooperation on intelligence sharing and coordinated operations for home-grown and foreign terrorist activities. Also there is a certain degree of cooperation between Japan and the United States. Nevertheless, there is little evidence that there is an intensive cooperation between Europe and Japan. It may be true that the terrorist operations in Asia and Europe are not strongly linked, but there are reasons to believe that the cooperation is important. For one thing, both Japan and Europe shares to fight against home-grown terrorism. In 1995, the sarin gas attack in Tokyo shook Japan and the

world. The Aum Shinrikyo was not linked with Al-Qaida or global extremist network, but it was a religious extreme cult with global ambition. Japan has successfully contained the threat of Aum Shinrikyo, and it would be a useful asset for other counter-terrorism efforts. On the other hand, Europe also faced large scale terrorist attacks in Madrid and London, and there have been many operations to capture terrorist plans in Germany and Britain. The European experience provides useful lessons for Japan.

In wider context, the fight against terrorism, particularly the actions in Afghanistan, may be another area where Japan and Europe can cooperate. Although the security situation in Afghanistan is deteriorating, there is a definite need for reconstruction and fight against Taliban. Under the Constitution, it is not easy for Japan to substantially contribute to the ISAF operations, however, Ichiro Ozawa, the leader of the largest opposition, and potentially next Prime Minister after the election, once expressed his opinion for sending SDF to ISAF because there is a clear mandate by the UN Security Council whereas Japanese operation for supporting Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) that was not authorized by the UNSC. Whether Japan sends its SDF to Afghanistan or not, it is certain that the current operation in Indian Ocean to support OEF is not enough to show Japanese commitment to counter-terrorism action. Cooperation with Europe would certainly contribute to build an image that Japan is the ally for counter-terrorism.

Furthermore, it is important for Japan to collaborate in the United Nations. Recently, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) issued a report analysing that the European effort for carrying out its policy for peace negotiation with Iran, Human Rights issues in Africa and international development is not well accepted by other Member States, notably with developing countries, China, Russia and India¹. Not only in the UN but also in other international organizations, it would be beneficial for both Japan and Europe to cooperate to achieve the shared objectives. Of course in some cases such as whaling which may not be able to share among us, but there are many areas where the collaboration would be possible, certainly on the case of anti-terrorism and other global security issues. In doing so, Japan needs to shift its foreign policy focus from bilateral relationship with the United States to more multilateral cooperation with Europe.

¹ Richard Gowan & Franziska Brantner, *A Global Force for Human Rights? an Audit of European Power at the UN*, European Council for Foreign Relations, 2008

This would imply further cooperation in peacekeeping operations in Darfur, Middle East or Caucasus. Traditionally, these are the areas where Japan did not express its interest for contributing peace and stability, but for Europe, these are strategically important. Taro Aso, former Foreign Minister, and hopeful next Prime Minister, proposed a concept called “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” including support for newly democratized countries such as Georgia, Ukraine, Jordan, India, Thailand and so on. The idea of supporting baby democracy and putting pressure for non-democratic societies to alter their political regime does not contradict with European principle for external policy.

However, we must pay attention for factors which may constrain further cooperative actions. First, both Japan and Europe shall pay attention how the United States would react to the cooperation. Obviously, it would support for Japan and Europe to cooperate on counter-terrorism, particularly for strengthening the ISAF, but it would not do so for the joint effort in the UN. As we have witnessed, the United States was against the European proposal for International Criminal Court of Justice. As long as Japan-Europe activities are coherent with the US interests, there would be no problem, but it may not be always the case.

Second, we shall pay attention to emerging big powers such as China, India and Russia. Both Europe and Japan have high stakes in these countries economically and are vulnerable due to economic and energy dependence. These countries might take advantage of energy and economic giant for pushing Japan and Europe to be active in peacekeeping operations (as we can see in Georgian case) and international institutions (WTO would be a good example).

Other than these outside factors, there are many internal factors which would constrain the scope of cooperation between Japan and Europe. First and foremost, the Constitutional constrains would prohibit full-fledged military cooperation, particularly in combat action. Such a constraint assumes that there would be no immediate necessity for developing interoperably as both Japan and Europe do with the United States. Cooperation in logistics, command and communication infrastructure, and procurement of military equipments is based on the assumption that there will be a joint operation with higher degree of integration. However, because of the Constitutional constraint, there is no such assumption between Japan and Europe. Thus, the cooperation should be based on the division of role and responsibility, i.e. Europe will

be in the frontline operation whereas Japan would remain in the back seat. This, in fact, was the case in Southern Iraq where Japan provided humanitarian assistance while Dutch and British Armies protected Japanese troops. If this kind of division of the role is acceptable, the cooperation will be the most efficient one.

The other internal factor is the problem of strategic objectives. As discussed in the case of arms embargo, European strategic interest is not located in Asia whereas the security situation in Asia is crucial to Japan. From geopolitical and geoeconomic point of view, it is not surprising that there is a difference in strategic objectives, but it is worrying for developing further cooperation between Japan and Europe. However, this difference is coming from the lack of mutual communication and recognition as security partners. Since the importance of China, India, and Russia in the global security structure is increasing, it would not be wise for Japan and Europe keep away from strategic dialogs. Such a difference can easily overcome, and should overcome, through more intensive dialog between Japan and Europe.

Without strategic objective and necessity to develop interoperability, there is not much incentive for developing a scheme to share infrastructure for C4ISR. In a modern period, the security is heavily dependent on the intelligence, surveillance and communication, and both Japan and Europe possess technological and industrial capability to develop infrastructure for C4ISR, but it is difficult to foresee that there will be cooperation in this domain. However, as discussed above, the cooperation between Japan and Europe becomes increasingly important, and it would make a lot of sense for Japan and Europe to cooperate in developing common C4ISR architecture. First, it would reduce dependency on the American intelligence on both sides. Of course, Japan-Europe cooperation shall not undermine the relationship with the United States, but this cooperation would be supplement in case where the United States is reluctant for sharing intelligence. Second, the European experience of multilateral cooperation on intelligence sharing such as BOC (Besoin Opérationnelle Commun, or Common Operational Requirements) would give a softer image for Japanese activities to develop infrastructure for C4ISR. There is a wide spread public perception that any intelligence activities would be something conspiratorial and intrigue, which might sneak into a military operation without Constitutional scrutiny. However, the collaboration with Europe would provide a positive image that such intelligence infrastructure would be used for better and humane purposes.

Finally, the Three Principles of Arms Export Control would be an internal constraint for technological and industrial collaboration between Japan and Europe. The Three Principles is originally defined that Japan would not export arms and related technologies to (a) Communist countries, (b) countries with UN arms embargo, and (c) countries in conflict or with potential to go into conflict. However, in 1976, the Three Principles are re-interpreted to: (1) The government will not authorize the export of arms or related goods and technologies to the countries concerned in the previous Three Principles; (2) To the countries other than the previous Three Principles, the export of arms or related goods and technologies shall be abstained, based on the spirit of the Constitution and Foreign Exchange Law; (3) The export of installations related to the manufacturing arms shall be regulated according to the arms.

Under this 1976 interpretation of the Three Principles, any international technological and industrial collaborative programme is prohibited, even with the United States. Recently, the Three Principles were relaxed only for research and development of missile defence system with the United States, but these principles remain effective on everything else. If Japan and Europe try to pursue international collaborative project for developing common system, it would be extremely difficult within such self-imposed regulation. However, there is a sign of hope that the Three Principles may further be relaxed for non-combat purpose technologies. For example, there is a discussion on exporting landmine destroyer for ISAF and other peacekeeping operations. Even equipments important for peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction such as landmine destroyer was not allowed to be exported because it may be used to adversary forces to clear up the landmine field for invasion. However, as the case of missile defence demonstrated, the interpretation of the Three Principle would be made by the Cabinet, and there is a possibility that the Cabinet may allow the export of non-combatant equipments. This policy can be applied for research and development of non-combatant, peace-contributing technologies with Japan's allies. Thus, there is a possibility to collaborate with Europe where expertise and competences on peacekeeping operations are accumulated.

Conclusion

For Japan, there are many things that can be learned from Europe. From the historical background, the European experiment of establishing perpetual peace and providing stability and prosperity in and around the region is highly admired by Japanese public.

The cooperation with Europe would be more easily acceptable option for Japan than its cooperation with the United States. Furthermore, the concept of strengthening autonomous capability from the United States becomes increasingly important in Japan, while maintaining firm and secure relationship with the United States. Particularly in times like this, where there are insecurity in the region with unpredictability of Russian actions, non-transparent Chinese military spending, and uncertainty about the future of North Korean regime, the autonomous security capability as well as strong coalition with the United States is crucially needed. The European experience – maintaining coalition with the United States while developing autonomous capability – is definitely a lesson that Japan should learn.

Together with the autonomous capability and cooperation with the United States, Europe has been very active as an international peace maker in Georgia, Lebanon, and Iran. This is something that Japan shall learn from it. For many years, it was considered that Japanese weakness in diplomatic effort for peace making was because of lack of military capability. However, the EU, not a military alliance or military superpower, has been quite successful in the peace negotiations and peacekeeping operations. Of course, Britain and France are UNSC permanent members and possess certain military capability, but their negotiation is not backed by their military capability. Mr. Solana, the High Representative of CFSP, and the leader of Presidency of the EU have certain influence over the global issues, not because they are military giant, but because they represent EU. Perhaps, Japan as a single country may not be able to do the same thing as Europeans do, but it would be possible if Japan would cooperate and work together with its regional neighbours, or with Europe.

There are several areas of security where Japan-Europe cooperation would be fruitful and contributing to the peace and stability of the world. It is definitely true that the peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace building such as DDR (Decommissioning, Demobilizing and Reintegration) and reconstruction. Japanese participation in the DDR process in Afghanistan (at the initial stage, but withdrew in a short while) together with the European countries was a good model for cooperation, though it was the case of American-centred cooperation. It would be fruitful because Japan and Europe share the similar value in intervening in post-conflict situation. Both Japan and Europe are not eager to exercise their influence over the territory and control the local governments. Rather both Japan and Europe genuinely contribute to the peace and reconstruction of the region from humanitarian point of view, and try to

maintain the peace for economic development. This does not mean that Japan and Europe are contributing because of greed, but it is their interest for having secure and stable global market as economic and non-military giants.

In conclusion, it is logical and rational goal for both Japan and Europe to act together as global multilateral and civilian forces, contributing peace and stability, for the greater good of international community. Japan and Europe, as non-military power, economic giant, conscious on humanitarian issues and allies of the United States, share basic common foundation for their security policy, and it is unmistakably true that the cooperation would bring a better and secure world.