

The Revised U.S.-Japan Security Guidelines: Implications for Beijing and Taipei

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This study outlines the background and evolution of the U.S.-Japan security relationship, and discusses the provisions of the revised 1997 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines. It also shows how the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan hold different views of the new security pact. In conclusion, the author suggests that the agreement holds important implications for both Beijing and Taipei, and may help deter aggression and preserve peace and stability in the Western Pacific.

Keywords: U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines; East Asian security; Taiwan's security; Taiwan's defense; People's Republic of China

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On September 24, 1997, the governments of the United States and Japan announced an agreement amending their longstanding guidelines for military cooperation in the event of a crisis or conflict in East Asia. This study outlines the background and evolution of the U.S.-Japan security

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partnership, and discusses the provisions of the revised post-Cold War defense arrangement. It also shows how the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan hold different views toward the new security pact. In conclusion, the author suggests that while the updated defense agreement does not signify a momentous change in policy, it does strengthen the foundation for U.S.-Japan military collaboration if Washington becomes embroiled in a future crisis in the Taiwan Strait. In this critical respect, the new guidelines may help deter aggression and preserve peace and stability in the Western Pacific.

U.S.-Japan Security Cooperation During the Cold War

During the Cold War, U.S.-Japan security relations passed through several distinct phases. In the first period—which extended from the Imperial Japanese surrender in 1945 until the outbreak of the Korean conflict in 1950—Japan possessed no armed forces. Governed (and protected) by American occupation forces, Japan appeared to renounce war as an instrument of national policy in its 1947 Constitution. According to Article 9 of the American-drafted document, "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation . . . land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained." As then-Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru explained, "now that we have been beaten, and we haven't got a single soldier left in our hands, it is a fine opportunity for renouncing war for all time."¹

The second phase in U.S.-Japan security ties extended from roughly 1950 until 1960. As American occupation troops were deployed to fight in Korea, they were replaced by the Japanese Police Reserve Force—a unit that evolved ultimately into the Self-Defense Force (SDF). It also was during this period that the formal American military occupation of Japan came to

¹See John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 380-81.

an end. In 1951, the United States and Japan signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty and a highly unequal Mutual Security Treaty. In the words of Kenneth Pyle:

In addition to granting bases to the United States, it gave the United States a veto over any third country's military presence in Japan, the right to project military power from bases in Japan, and an indefinite time period for the treaty. In addition, the United States insisted on extraterritorial legal rights for its military and dependents. At the same time, [Prime Minister] Yoshida was also compelled to recognize Taiwan as the legitimate government of China.²

Although no longer formally occupied, Japan was in effect "a military satellite of the United States."³

The signing of a revised bilateral defense pact in 1960 ushered in the third phase in U.S.-Japan security cooperation. Although controversial at the time (the new treaty ignited the largest demonstrations in Japanese history), it is clear that both countries profited from the new defense arrangement. The United States successfully integrated Japan politically, economically, and strategically into its global campaign to contain the spread of Soviet influence. It retained basing privileges on Japanese soil, which proved critical as a staging ground and workshop for U.S. forces during the Vietnam War, and secured a pledge from Tokyo that it would cooperate with Washington if "the security of the Far East is threatened."⁴ As for Tokyo, it successfully eliminated provisions allowing the United States to intervene in Japanese politics (under the terms of the original treaty the United States could "put down large-scale riots") and gained a voice in the deployment of U.S. forces on its territory. Japan also secured assurances that Tokyo would be consulted before Washington used military bases in Japan for actions elsewhere in Asia. Finally, the alliance gave Japan an explicit guarantee of American protection if attacked (although Japan was

²Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Japanese Question: Power and Purpose in a New Era* (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1992), 27.

³Ibid.

⁴For more information about Japan's importance to the United States during the Vietnam conflict, see Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms, and Policies," in *East Asian Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 292-93.

not obligated to help defend the United States). This "nuclear umbrella" enabled Tokyo to hold its defense budget at roughly one percent of its GNP for almost three decades—a figure that led critics to charge that Japan enjoyed a "free ride" with respect to its national security.

Throughout the Cold War, Japan barred its SDF from participating in operations outside of Japanese territory—a practice that annoyed many American military planners. But it is inaccurate to suggest that Tokyo paid nothing for its defense. Japan served as a forward base of the U.S. military in Asia, the armed forces of the two countries engaged in frequent joint exercises, and an agreement establishing the "Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation"—procedures to follow in the event of a Soviet attack—was signed in 1978.⁵ It also is noteworthy that by the 1980s, Japan was paying for a substantial portion of the costs associated with the stationing of American troops in Japan. Moreover, Japan's defense budget grew steadily—a trend that has accelerated in the post-Cold War era—and Tokyo now boasts one of the world's largest defense budgets (see tables 1 and 2). In fact, by the end of the Cold War, Japan's SDF was "the most technologically sophisticated non-nuclear force in the Asia-Pacific."⁶

U.S.-Japan Security Ties During the Post-Cold War Era

During the Cold War, Japan played a vital role in America's containment policy. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, however, the *raison d'être* for the U.S.-Japan security pact vanished. Concerns both nations once overlooked for the sake of national security emerged as major issues of contention. As a 1996 National Defense University study observed, the relationship began to deteriorate "because of the disappearance

⁵For a complete text of the 1978 "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation," see Japan Defense Agency, *Defense of Japan: Response to a New Era* (Tokyo: July 1996), 305-9.

⁶Ian Gow, "Civilian Control of the Military in Postwar Japan," in *Japan's Military Renaissance?* ed. Ron Matthews and Keisuke Matsuyama (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 58.

Table 1
Japan's Military Expenditures, 1985-95

Year	Unit: US\$ million	
	Current Dollars	Constant 1995 Dollars
1985	27,400	37,550
1986	29,480	39,340
1987	31,970	41,380
1988	34,740	43,370
1989	37,640	45,110
1990	40,740	46,820
1991	43,820	48,430
1992	46,030	49,510
1993	47,760	50,070
1994	49,300	50,540
1995	50,240	50,240

Source: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1996* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1997), 76.

Table 2
Military Expenditures: Top Ten Countries, 1995

Country	Unit: US\$ million	
	Military Expenditures	
1. United States	277,800	
2. Russia	76,000	
3. China	63,510	
4. Japan	50,240	
5. France	47,770	
6. Germany	41,160	
7. United Kingdom	33,400	
8. Italy	19,380	
9. Saudi Arabia	17,210	
10. South Korea	14,410	

Source: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1996*, 36.

Table 3
Top Ten U.S. Negative Trade Balances, 1996

U.S. Deficit Positions	US\$ Million
1. Japan	-47,580
2. PRC	-39,520
3. Canada	-21,682
4. Mexico	-17,506
5. Germany	-15,450
6. Taiwan	-11,447
7. Italy	-9,528
8. Malaysia	-9,283
9. Venezuela	-8,424
10. Nigeria	-5,160

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, *U.S. Foreign Trade Highlights 1996* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 1997), 32.

of the Soviet threat, the rise of trade tensions, and inertia or inattentiveness to alliance management."⁷

U.S.-Japan trade has skyrocketed, but contrary to popular misconception, it is not a one-sided relationship. America now exports more products to Japan than it does to any nation outside of North America. Japan is the leading market for American agricultural exports, U.S.-produced aircraft, and crude materials such as wood. Nevertheless, Japan remains America's top deficit country (see table 3) and many Americans believe that the country engages in unfair trade practices. For example, an official U.S. government study complains that "while Japan has reduced its formal tariff rates on imports to very low levels, it has maintained non-tariff barriers—such as non-transparency, discriminatory standards, and exclusionary business practices—and a business environment that protects domestic companies and restricts the free flow of competitive foreign goods into the Japanese

⁷Patrick M. Cronin, "The U.S.-Japan Alliance Redefined," *Strategic Forum*, no. 75 (May 1996): 2.

markets."⁸ Some Japanese defense planners fear that, with the end of the era of superpower rivalry, these economic frictions could "spill over" and adversely affect the U.S.-Japan security relationship.⁹

In addition to economic tensions, the end of the Cold War has called into question some of the strategic underpinnings of the U.S.-Japan security partnership. One set of issues involves the stationing of American forces in Japan. Some Japanese—particularly those who live in Okinawa—favor a significant reduction in U.S. troop strength. They contend that the "inconveniences" associated with protection under the American security umbrella now outweigh the benefits. Others believe that Tokyo pays far too large a share of the costs associated with keeping American troops in Japan (US\$4.57 billion in 1996).¹⁰ Some Americans counter that, in the words of Ted Galen Carpenter, "Japan's much-touted host-nation support of \$5 billion a year actually pays only a small fraction of the total cost of the U.S. security commitment."¹¹

Yet another dispute is associated with the sharing of defense technology. Voices in the U.S. Congress have long expressed strong reservations about the joint production of a new Japanese warplane—the FSX (now called the F-2). Perhaps the biggest debate, however, has revolved around the role that the SDF should adopt in response to recent changes in the international security environment.

Although Japan ultimately contributed billions of dollars to finance the Persian Gulf War, a strict interpretation of the 1947 Constitution prevented Tokyo from joining the allied coalition. This led American critics to demand that the SDF contribute meaningfully to future peacekeeping operations. The 1994 Korean nuclear crisis also served to underscore the

⁸United States Trade Representative, *1997 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), 185.

⁹See National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review, 1996-1997* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, December 1996), 208.

¹⁰In 1996, Japan provided US\$4.57 billion or roughly 78 percent of the total cost of stationing U.S. troops in their country. See Robert G. Sutter, *Japan-U.S. Relations: Issues for Congress in the 1990s*, CRS Issue Brief (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, October 14, 1997), 2.

¹¹Ted Galen Carpenter, "Paternalism and Dependence," *CATO Institute Policy Analysis*, November 1, 1995, 1.

limitations of the U.S.-Japan military alliance. Confronted with the prospect of a second Korean conflict, military planners in Washington were unsure as to the level of support they could secure from Tokyo if Pyongyang's bellicose threats proved real. This prompted Joseph Nye, then U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, to argue that the 1978 Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation were dangerously outdated. Japanese Foreign Ministry officials also acknowledged that "the present system has many deficiencies."¹²

In order to address these concerns, President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto met in Tokyo in early 1996. Following the summit, the two leaders issued a Joint U.S.-Japan Declaration on Security on April 17, 1996. Under the terms of the Declaration, the United States and Japan agreed to revise the 1978 framework for defense cooperation.

After over a year of negotiation and study, new U.S.-Japan defense guidelines were issued on September 24, 1997. The accord was hailed by Kurt Campbell, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia and Pacific Affairs, as "the Asian corollary of NATO expansion."¹³ Under the terms of the revised security pact, Japan may play a more active role in the event of hostilities in East Asia. Highlights of the agreement include the following measures:

- Japanese naval vessels may participate in blockades against other nations in support of internationally recognized sanctions;
- Japanese naval vessels may engage in minesweeping activities in Japanese or international waters;
- Japan will allow U.S. forces to use civilian harbors and bases during a crisis;
- Japan will supply food and fuel to American naval vessels during a crisis;
- Japan and the United States will increase the sharing of intelligence if hostilities in the region appear imminent;

¹²Nigel Holloway, Matt Forney, Peter Landers, and Michael Vatikiotis, "Not to Our Liking," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 26, 1997, 18.

¹³Nigel Holloway and Peter Landers, "Ménage à Trois?" *ibid.*, October 9, 1997, 24.

- Japan will help locate and rescue American pilots downed at sea;
- Japan will help evacuate civilians trapped in unstable countries;
- Japan and the United States will cooperate in the ways described above when confronted with "situations that may emerge in areas surrounding Japan."¹⁴

Perhaps the most significant—and controversial—segment in the new defense pact is its provision for joint military cooperation in "areas surrounding Japan." Most agree that the phrase refers to the Korean Peninsula; after all, it was the 1994 Korean nuclear crisis that prompted U.S. officials to call for a revision of existing defense guidelines. But the phrase might also apply to other areas—including the Taiwan Strait.

American officials emphasize that the new defense agreement is "not being aimed at any individual nation, any third nation."¹⁵ But they refuse to respond directly to questions about the pact's geographical scope. For example, when asked if Taiwan is included under the scope of the new guidelines, Kurt Campbell replied, "This is an extremely delicate matter. . . . the clear guidelines for U.S. engagement towards Beijing and towards Taipei are encompassed in the three communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act."¹⁶ When asked if this meant "Taiwan will not be included in the security guidelines," Campbell stated, "I didn't say that and I didn't answer that question."¹⁷ On other occasions, high-ranking U.S. officials have stressed that "the guidelines are not defined in any way geographically" or that the agreement focuses on the help that Japan might be able to

¹⁴For more information on the specific terms of the agreement, see Steven Lee Myers, "Risking China's Wrath, U.S. and Japan Bolster Military Ties," *New York Times*, September 24, 1997, A7, in Lexis/Nexis; Willis Witter, "Japanese Troops to Go Near Combat If U.S. Fights in Area; New Pact Faces Parliamentary Battles," *Washington Times*, September 23, 1997, A13, in Lexis/Nexis; Todd Crowell and Murakami Mutsuko, "Japan Rising," *Asiaweek*, June 20, 1997, 20, in Lexis/Nexis; and National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review*, 323-26.

¹⁵Myers, "Risking China's Wrath, U.S. and Japan Bolster Military Ties," A7.

¹⁶See "Foreign Press Center Briefing, Issues in the Asia-Pacific: Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia and Pacific Affairs, Kurt Campbell," *Federal News Service*, September 19, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

¹⁷Ibid.

give "principally in the Korean Peninsula if the contingency ever arose."¹⁸

Like their counterparts in Washington, most Japanese have been less than forthcoming when asked direct questions about the geographical parameters of the new defense agreement. For example, when Prime Minister Hashimoto traveled to China in September 1997, he never stated that Taiwan would be included or excluded from the scope of the guidelines. The Prime Minister only assured PRC officials that "my country will never support 'two Chinas' or Taiwan independence."¹⁹ On one occasion, however, a high-ranking Japanese official did address the issue directly. On August 17, 1997, Seiroku Kajiyama, Chief Cabinet Secretary, said that the new guidelines would "naturally cover" a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait.²⁰ He added that Japan's leaders had "strong anxieties about a possible military liberation of Taiwan by mainland China."²¹ Not surprisingly, these remarks touched off a storm of protests in Beijing.

Views from Beijing and Taipei

Although the Cold War is over, both Washington and Tokyo continue to derive numerous benefits from the U.S.-Japan security alliance.²² For example, the United States retains forward military bases that could prove critical during a regional crisis. Moreover, Tokyo shoulders a substantial portion of the costs associated with stationing troops in Japan and has agreed to play a more active role in the event of hostilities in East Asia. For its part, the U.S.-Japan security relationship is and will be indispensable for

¹⁸See Joseph Fitchett, "A U.S. Push for Chinese Military 'Transparency'," *International Herald Tribune*, October 9, 1997, 10, in Lexis/Nexis. Emphasis added.

¹⁹"Japan Backs Beijing on Taiwan Issue," *South China Morning Post*, September 6, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.scmp.com/index.asp>.

²⁰Nicholas Kristof, "For Japan, A Quandary on Pleasing Two Giants," *New York Times*, August 24, 1997, 9, in Lexis/Nexis.

²¹Ibid.

²²For a complete discussion of these benefits, see Shinichi Ogawa, "Significance of the Post-Cold War U.S.-Japan Alliance and Prospects for Security Cooperation," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 6, no. 1 (Summer 1994): 57-78.

Japan's security.²³ Tokyo retains a powerful ally that may help it cope with possible threats from North Korea, China, or a resurgent Russia. Other benefits include the need for only moderate increases in military expenditures, technology and arms transfers that may help the SDF enhance its defensive capabilities, and a powerful partnership that bolsters Tokyo's bargaining position when negotiating with other states.

Some governments have appreciated and welcomed efforts to revitalize the U.S.-Japan security alliance. But other countries—particularly China and North Korea—have opposed the changes. Still others have preferred not to comment.²⁴ The following discussion provides a brief overview of how two archrivals—the PRC and Taiwan—have reacted to the recent modifications in the U.S.-Japan defense pact.

Beijing

The Chinese government has viewed the recent changes in the U.S.-Japan security arrangement with alarm. When meeting with Japanese officials, Premier Li Peng declared that "the Chinese government and the Chinese people can never accept any activity directly proposing or hinting obliquely at including Taiwan in the scope of the Japan-U.S. security cooperation."²⁵ Indeed, PRC authorities have steadfastly insisted that it is "absolutely unacceptable for the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation to cover the Taiwan region directly or indirectly,"²⁶ and have employed a number of arguments to defend this position.

PRC authorities contend the new security measures constitute a gross interference in China's internal affairs. According to Beijing, the Republic of China was "finally overthrown by the Chinese people" in 1949 and no

²³Ibid., 61.

²⁴For example, when asked how Thailand responds to questions about the new security guidelines, a Thai diplomat replied that "we don't say anything." See Holloway, Forney, Landers, and Vatikiotis, "Not to our Liking," 16-17.

²⁵"Japan Urged to Learn from Past," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 38 (September 22-28, 1997), on the worldwide web at <http://www.chinanews.org/bjreview/BJREVIEW.HTTP>.

²⁶"China Calls Japan Explanation on U.S. Defense Cooperation, 'Obscure and Unconvincing'," Xinhua News Agency, October 9, 1997, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, October 11, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

longer exists.²⁷ Taiwan is not a government, but only a renegade province of China. Consequently, the new defense arrangement "is utterly unacceptable to China because it has been universally recognized that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. This is also what was recognized by both the United States and Japan."²⁸

PRC officials have not been mollified by American and Japanese assurances that the phrase "surrounding situations" refers to "not a geographical concept, but rather a concept pertaining to the nature of events that would have a major impact on Japan's peace and security."²⁹ Shen Guofang, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman, describes such explanations as "obscure and unconvincing."³⁰ In fact, PRC analysts have compiled an inventory of the various ambiguities included in the new defense pact:

- The scope of the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation specified in the new guidelines is ambiguous;
- The criteria that the new guidelines use to define the eruption of a war are ambiguous;
- The main body to judge what constitutes an "incident" requiring U.S.-Japan security cooperation is ambiguous;
- The legal foundation for the new guidelines is ambiguous—they appear to violate Japan's Constitution.³¹

Many PRC analyses suggest that these obscurities are designed to "cover up" the "real purposes" of the defense guidelines, but remain divided over what specifically the United States and Japan hope to accomplish. Some fear that the United States will use the revised security pact

²⁷See Taiwan Affairs Office, *The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China* (Beijing: Information Office of the State Council, August 1993), 9.

²⁸"PM Slams U.S.-Japan Defense Deal on Taiwan Strait," *South China Morning Post*, August 23, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.scmp.com/index.asp>.

²⁹See note 26 above.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹See Liu Wenyu, "Commentary: Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines Ambiguous," Xinhua Domestic Service (Beijing), October 8, 1997, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *China*, October 9, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://wnc.fedworld.gov>.

to advance a new global strategy centered on containing China.³² Others charge that Japan plans to use the accord to once again become an aggressive military power in Asia.³³ Still others argue that the two governments are suffering from a severe case of "enemy deprivation" and require a common enemy to maintain stability in their relationship during the post-Cold War era.³⁴

In sum, Beijing strongly opposes the recent modifications in the U.S.-Japan defense relationship. PRC authorities contend that any move to put Taiwan under the scope of the security pact is a violation of China's national sovereignty and, while some disagree over the document's real purpose, all concur that the guidelines have "aroused suspicion" in China.³⁵

Taipei

For its part, Taiwan generally has welcomed recent changes in the U.S.-Japan defense agreement. As ROC Foreign Ministry spokesman Wu Yuan-yen stated, "Our country positively approves any policies and moves that are conducive to enhancing security in the Asia-Pacific region."³⁶ But some Taiwanese have complained that the island should have been consulted before being included in the scope of the treaty. Indeed, Ju Gau-jeng, an independent legislator from Kaohsiung, charges that the United States and Japan "are behaving as barbarically as the powers in the 19th century."³⁷

Like their counterparts in Beijing, Taiwanese officials differ over the

³²See Robert Manning, "U.S., Japan Deepen Defense Ties--And China Gets Nervous," *Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 1997, M2, in Lexis/Nexis.

³³See "China's Cui Urges Japan Be Prudent," *China Daily*, June 11, 1997, 1, in Lexis/Nexis.

³⁴See Wen Hui, "China, U.S. Should Rethink Relations," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 38 (September 22-28, 1997); and "Enhanced U.S.-Japanese Security Alliance: Cause for Concern," *ibid.*, no. 24 (June 16-22, 1997), on the worldwide web at <http://www.chinanews.org/bjreview/BJREVIEW.HTTP>.

³⁵Willis Witter, "Japan Hints of Defense of Taiwan Enrage China," *Washington Times*, August 25, 1997, A1, in Lexis/Nexis.

³⁶See Yang Hsiu-fen, "Taipei Official on U.S.-Japanese Pact," *Zhongyang ribao* (Central Daily News), August 18, 1997, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *China*, August 23, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://wnc.fedworld.gov>.

³⁷Siew Welcomes Alliance: Premier Says Inclusion in Japan-U.S. Defense Pact Will Help Peace," *China News* (Taipei), September 24, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

considerations that may have led the United States and Japan to expand the scope of their security pact. ROC President Lee Teng-hui argues that his country's democratization played an important role in the decision, contending that "the democratization of the ROC has broken up an international order composed of the United States, Communist China, and Japan."³⁸ He further claims that the new guidelines prove that "democratization is therefore a guarantee for us to survive in the international society."³⁹

Others contend that strategic considerations played a paramount role.

John Chang, then-ROC Foreign Minister, stated that the new guidelines prove that "the ROC's strategic importance has gained international attention."⁴⁰ However, military officials suggest that it is the strategic importance of the Taiwan Strait, not the ROC, that led the United States and Japan to enlarge the parameters of the treaty. As one senior ROC military officer notes, "The expansion of the U.S.-Japan agreement to include Taiwan and the South China Sea is basically for Japan's national interests as Taiwanese waters are essential routes for oil transportation. Therefore, Japan is hoping for a stable situation in the Taiwanese waters or relying on U.S. military power to defend [the Taiwan Strait] against the Chinese Communists."⁴¹

Taiwanese authorities hold few illusions about the new defense guidelines. They acknowledge that as the agreement refers only to "areas" surrounding Japan, they "cannot assert that the Taiwan Strait is included in the U.S.-Japan defense scope; instead, things will depend on the nature of incidents actually taking place in and around Japan."⁴² Consequently, of-

³⁸Stephanie Low, "U.S.-Japan Alliance Resulted from Democracy in ROC: Lee," *China Post* (International Airmail Edition), September 25, 1997, 1.

³⁹Sofia Wu, "Democratization Helps Upgrade ROC's Strategic Position: Lee," Central News Agency, September 24, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.taipei.org/teco/ciccc/news/weeknews.htm>.

⁴⁰Flor Wang and Mike Chang, "Taiwan Welcomes Hashimoto's Remarks," Central News Agency, April 10, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

⁴¹"Taipei Welcomes U.S.-Japan Defense Pact Expansion," *Zhongguo shibao* (China Times) (Taipei), April 11, 1997, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *China*, April 15, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://wnc.fedworld.gov>.

⁴²"Ministry on U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines," *Zhongyang ribao*, September 25, 1997, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *China*, September 26, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://wnc.fedworld.gov>.

ficials stress that Taiwan must strengthen its "own combat preparedness and defense capabilities to sustain national survival and development."⁴³

While Beijing and Taipei hold different views toward the recent changes in the U.S.-Japan security pact, neither government professes to thoroughly understand the real significance of the document. ROC Premier Vincent Siew has stated that since his government did not participate in the drafting of the new guidelines, "it cannot fully understand their true spirit."⁴⁴

Conclusion: Implications for Beijing and Taipei

Public opinion polls reveal that a majority of the American people now view China as either "unfriendly" or as an enemy. This sentiment is shared by a large portion of the Japanese population: 54 percent of Japanese believe that Beijing's military buildup is a threat to stability in Asia and 46 percent believe the PRC will become a military threat to Japan.⁴⁵ Moreover, 32 percent believe that a future crisis between China and Taiwan poses the greatest threat to Japan's security.⁴⁶ But it is an exaggeration to suggest that the new U.S.-Japan defense guidelines are aimed primarily at the PRC. As North Korea's Central News Agency declared, this "document meant for war" was created "with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as their main target."⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the revised security agreement

⁴³Sofia Wu, "ROC Looks Positively on New Japan-U.S. Security Guidelines," Central News Agency, September 23, 1997, on the world wide web at <http://www.taipei.org/teco/cicc/news/weeknews.htm>.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵See Pierre-Antoine Donnet, "China Fears Spur Alliance with U.S.," *South China Morning Post*, June 6, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.scmp.com/index.asp>; and "Mainland Growing as Rival to Japan," *South China Morning Post*, September 3, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.scmp.com/index.asp>.

⁴⁶Victor Lai and Lin Wen-fen, "Half of Americans Expect Intervention in Taiwan Strait Crisis," Central News Agency, November 25, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.taipei.org/teco/cicc/news/weeknews.htm>.

⁴⁷See "Pyongyang Condemns New Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines," Xinhua News Agency, September 27, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

does hold important implications for both Beijing and Taipei.

Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. policy toward Taiwan has changed. In 1992, President George Bush lifted the ban on the sales of advanced fighter aircraft to Taiwan. In 1994, after over a year of study, the Department of State announced several measures upgrading America's "unofficial" political ties with Taipei—the United States dropped barriers to high-level exchanges, allowed high-ranking ROC officials to make "transit stopovers" in the United States, and permitted Taipei to upgrade the name of its thirteen representative offices in the United States (from the Coordination Council for North American Affairs to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States). That same year, Congress passed legislation enabling U.S. citizens of Taiwan origin to register their place of birth as Taiwan on U.S. passports (prior to that time, passports of Taiwan-born American citizens listed "China" as their place of birth). In 1995, the Clinton administration reversed policy and permitted Lee Teng-hui to visit Cornell University—a move that infuriated Beijing. Early in 1997, Washington announced that visas granted to Taiwanese tourists would be stamped as being issued in Taipei rather than Hong Kong. However, the United States has *not* revised its position toward Taiwan's security.

U.S. policy toward Taiwan's security continues to be outlined principally in the Taiwan Relations Act and a series of joint communiqués that both Washington and Beijing signed. This means that the American position toward Taiwan's defense continues to be both ambiguous and contradictory. For example, the TRA warns that the United States would consider any hostile actions directed against Taiwan as "a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States." But Washington is not committed to Taiwan's defense. The law provides the United States only with an *option* to defend Taiwan. And while the TRA states that the United States will help Taiwan maintain an adequate self-defense capability, Washington promised to reduce its arms transfers to Taiwan in the August 17, 1982 U.S.-PRC Joint Communiqué.

The new U.S.-Japan security agreement does not represent a radical shift in American or Japanese policy toward Taiwan, and does not commit either nation to Taiwan's defense. Although the regulations do refer to bilateral military cooperation "in situations in areas surrounding Japan," there

is no specific geographical reference to Taiwan in the text. Indeed, both American and Japanese officials emphasize that the reference is "a situational concept."

For Beijing and Taipei, the real significance of the revised U.S.-Japan security pact lies in its ability to bolster the viability of one option available to Washington during an emergency in the Taiwan Strait—namely, the military option. Under the terms of the 1960 alliance, Tokyo has already pledged to help the United States if "the security of the Far East is threatened."⁴⁸ This fact was acknowledged in a secret study commissioned by Japan's Defense Agency after China staged provocative "missile tests" off Taiwan's coastline in 1996.⁴⁹ Indeed, Prime Minister Hashimoto reportedly ordered the Defense Agency to draw up comprehensive plans to support American forces if war broke out during the crisis.⁵⁰ But with the new arrangements, defense planners will have some idea of the level of support they may expect from Japan if the United States becomes embroiled in a future crisis in the Taiwan Strait, and they will be able to call upon Tokyo for that support. As one Japanese legislator explained, "For Japan, the United States, and China, the role Japan should play in crisis situations is now more defined. Now it has become clear exactly how far the SDF can go."⁵¹

The new guidelines hold other important advantages for the United States. One benefit is that they may serve as an additional deterrent to PRC aggression. A state's ability to protect another country against attack depends on the credibility of the deterrent threat, while a protecting state's credibility in turn depends largely on its military capabilities and willingness to use them. Without ever mentioning China specifically, the revised guidelines nevertheless send a strong signal that the United States is now

⁴⁸As Philip Bowring observes, "The Taiwan Strait has always been implicitly included in the U.S.-Japanese treaty." See Philip Bowring, "Behind the Noise About Taiwan is a Chinese Strategic Vision," *International Herald Tribune*, September 5, 1997, 8, in Lexis/Nexis.

⁴⁹Victor Lai and Sofia Wu, "Japan Mulling Its Role in Washington-Beijing Military Conflict," *Central News Agency*, July 27, 1997, in Lexis/Nexis.

⁵⁰See Jason Blatt, "Scheme to Back Troops," *South China Morning Post*, July 28, 1997, on the worldwide web at <http://www.scmp.com/index.asp>.

⁵¹See note 13 above.

better positioned to handle any conflict that might emerge in the Taiwan Strait. In that respect, they complement longstanding American policy by underscoring Washington's continued commitment to a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue.

Perhaps equally important, the new defense arrangement does *not* guarantee an American (or Japanese) response to hostilities. Washington and Tokyo will better be able to coordinate a defense of Taiwan only if they choose to do so; consequently, the continued uncertainties associated with an American response to hostilities across the Taiwan Strait may lead *both* Beijing and Taipei to act with restraint.

In sum, the new U.S.-Japan defense guidelines do not portend a momentous change in policy. However, they do legitimate a bigger military role for Japan in East Asia, while simultaneously enhancing the foundation for U.S.-Japan military collaboration in the event of a crisis or emergency. In this respect, the new guidelines may help to deter aggression and preserve peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.