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New momentum for security cooperation between Germany and Japan

In this globalized world

Keynote Speech for Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Conference:

“German-Japanese Security Policy Forum

Germany’s Contributions to Missions Abroad - “Lessons Learnt” for Japan”

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Mr. Paul Linnarz, Ambassador Hans Carl von Werthern, and Colonel Carsten Busch, thank you very much for providing me with the opportunity for the keynote speech to Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Conference twice a year. Der Verhaeltnis zwischen beiden Laendern ist fuer die gemeinsame Sicherheit sehr wichtig. Ich moechte zur Verstaerkung und Entwicklung der Verteidigungsmitarbeit der beiden Laendern viel beitragen. Back in English, it is a great honor for me to be able to participate in this timely and important event to talk about Japan-German defense and security cooperation.

We always appreciate the great security attention of NATO and its members to this region. If I borrow the expression of an American expert, it should be regarded as European pivot to Asia. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to the cooperation of the German Government and the German Embassy in Tokyo, which serves as our NATO contact point embassy this year and next year. We look forward to working even more closely with Germany, capitalizing on today’s momentum.

The National Diet of Japan passed the security legislation on September 19. It is going to take effect within six months. The new legislation will definitely promote international security and defense cooperation, enhance deterrence and contribute much to the peace and stability of this region and the entire world.

The new interpretation of the constitution as the basis of this legislation maintains the basic logic of the previous interpretation. Japan's interpretation has been consistent. There are some constitutional restrictions in use of force and in logistical support; nonetheless you can be assured that legal mechanism necessary for seamless response to all possible contingencies is now established.

The Government of Japan is going to thrash out what it can do and has to do with its security partners. It is rather too early to be specific with these points yet; nevertheless you can expect enhanced security roles of Japan and more robust cooperation with European countries, particularly Germany as an important member of both NATO and EU.

Legal technicalities aside, I can think of several candidate items for cooperation based on the new legislation as follows:

First, UN-sponsored peace-keeping. Japan's unit may perform more missions, e.g. protection of civilians and rescue of foreign troops participating in the same mission in a remote place. Thus, Japan may conduct joint exercises with foreign forces for these missions.

Second, Japan may participate in peace-keeping operations sponsored not only by the UN but also by other entities, EU for example.

Third, logistics support to foreign forces. In 2001, Japan legislated for refueling coalition naval vessels, including German vessels, in the Indian Ocean in order to support OEF-MIO. It was a time-limited special measures law, which consumed a lot of time and political energy to establish and to renew. The new legislation has made it possible to provide logistics support more quickly to foreign forces operating for the peace and stability of

the world without further legislation.

Fourth, protection of compatriots in contingencies abroad. The new legislation has made it possible to conduct such operations to rescue stranded Japanese nationals abroad. Foreign nationals in the same situation can also be rescued together with those Japanese under certain conditions.

Fifth, use of force as the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. When an armed attack takes place against a foreign country which is in a close relationship with Japan and threatens Japan's own survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn the Japanese nationals' life, liberty and right to pursue happiness, then Japan may exercise the right of collective self-defense. With Germany and other NATO members, Japan may engage in joint exercises whose scenarios include the situation in which Japan has to exercise that right.

Although Germany and Japan are geographically remote from each other, it is natural for both nations to address common security interests beyond geography in this globalized world. Today, with all these in mind, I would like to discuss future possibilities of Japan's defense relations with NATO and EU members focusing on Germany from my own personal perspective. There are three points as follows: First, differences and similarities between Germany and Japan about the respective defense policies. Second, the contemporary international security environment. Third and finally, Japan's defense cooperation with NATO and with Germany.

Now, at the outset, let me point out some differences and similarities.

I would like to quickly mention the following four points: Number 1, bilateralism and multilateralism. Number 2, history after the respective rearmaments. Number 3, points in dispute in the respective countries. And

finally, relations with their neighbors.

Number 1, bilateralism and multilateralism. Looking back at history, both nations, - defeated in 1945 and exposed to the threat of the former Soviet Union -, ensured their national security by placing themselves into the bipolar structure generated through the East-West confrontation of the Cold War. The alliance with the US was a key determinant factor of the national security and defense policy in both nations from the outset. Accordingly, interoperability with the US military was a big task for both.

Germany promoted its own security policy in the multilateral context in the Atlantic and also in the European integration, while Japan established its alliance relationship with the US and its partnership with other US allies in the Asia-Pacific through the network of bilateral alliances centering on the US. Multilateralism in security is still at a formative stage in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in Northeast Asia. On the other hand, we see more advanced integration in Southeast Asia and Japan contributes to the multilateralism in the region through ADMM+ and other relevant frameworks.

Number 2, history after the rearmaments. Breakout of the Korean War was a wakeup call for both nations. The Allied terminology, “irresponsible militarism,” which had originally intended Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, changed its meaning to denote increasing threat of communism. In the German case, rearmament, restoration of sovereignty and participation in alliance proceeded all together and this made a considerable difference from the Japanese case.

Breakout of another war had a major impact on the debate in both countries on their international security contributions. It is the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its war with the coalition in 1990 and 1991. Tremendous amount of financial contributions of both countries ended up with strong criticism by the international community as “checkbook diplomacy.” It is not fair to treat Germany and Japan equally on this matter. The German Government sent minesweepers to the Mediterranean and jet fighters to Turkey at the beginning of 1991 and also sent minesweepers to the Persian Gulf on the de-facto termination of the combat

operations. In retrospect, Germany could not have afforded to do more because it was exactly the time of its reunification, as Professor Toshiya Nakamura argued in his book several years ago. Nonetheless, it was a wakeup call at the beginning of a new era.

Having said so, I have to mention here that West German defense forces had a long history of overseas operations even in the Cold War days. Japan's overseas operations are not to be compared. The first cases of Japan's overseas operations are as recent as minesweeping operation in the Persian Gulf in 1991 and UN peace-keeping in Cambodia in 1992-1993.

Number 3, when you look at the constitutional debates in both countries over missions abroad, you will notice the difference of issues in question. The issue in Germany was operations "out of NATO area" while the issue in Japan was combat operations "in the territory of foreign countries". Germany has a separate constitutional court, "Bundesverfassungsgericht", which has a judicial review power to rule on the constitutionality of legislation and acts of the administrative branch. The court in 1994 delivered definite judgment on the issue of out-of-NATO-area operations of the German defense forces. On the other hand, Japan does not have such a separate constitutional court. However, the Supreme Court of Japan gave one important decision about the constitutionality of Japan's inherent right of self-defense in 1959. Japan's new interpretation of the Constitution takes the same line as this court decision. In spite of the difference, it is worth sharing the experience of serious endeavors to address huge political issues related to the interpretation of the constitution.

Number 4, relations with their neighbors. In the aftermath of their activities up to 1945, both countries pay the closest attention to the relations with their neighbors. Today, I do not have the time to discuss the history issues, but I want to remind you that the Government of Japan is not a revisionist. Japan benefits from the rules-based international order generated during the past

seventy years. Japan's interests are in upholding the order together with like-minded countries including Germany. There is no reason for Japan to be a revisionist. Those who try to challenge the order by force or by coercion should be called revisionists. As a result of both countries' continuous efforts for transparency in their postures and policies in the face of their neighbors' cautious views, both have a good track record of transparency, which forms the basis of international cooperation. This excellent track record provides a basis for both countries to urge other countries to promote transparency.

So much for the comparison between the two countries, and I would like to proceed to my second point, the contemporary international security environment. We have seen dynamic changes of the environment since the end of the Cold War era when the previous interpretation of the Japanese Constitution was established. It is increasingly acute. I will refer to three kinds of challenges Japan faces. They are, at the same time, challenges all nations including Germany have to face when they work together for the peace and stability of the world. They are, first, Chinese activities in one of the most important strategic domains, i.e. the sea, second, nuclear and missile development of North Korea, and third, international terrorism.

First, China's maritime activities in East Asia. In the East China Sea, Chinese law enforcement vessels repeatedly intrude into the Japanese territorial waters around Japanese islands called Senkaku. China declared Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) as if Senkaku Islands belonged to China. Even apart from the Senkaku issue, China's ADIZ could infringe upon the freedom of overflight because China wants it to have a binding force over the high seas. In the South China Sea, meanwhile, China is engaged in another type of violent activity, building artificial islands rapidly and massively. China does not deny the possibility to utilize those artificial islands for military purposes. These unilateral attempts to try to alter the status quo by force or coercion pose a grave concern not only to the littoral states but also to the entire international

community, as all of us depend on maritime trade and traffic. If you acquiesced in an act of illegal nature in one hemisphere, you could not say no to another act of the same nature in the other hemisphere at all. In this sense, European security and Asian security are inseparable.

Second, North Korea. It already deploys hundreds of ballistic missiles which keep most of the Japanese territory in their range. They would get to Japan in only ten minutes or so after the launch. In addition, North Korea has conducted nuclear test three times since 2006. It is developing missile-mountable miniaturized nuclear weapons as well. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means makes regional conflicts even worse.

Third, international terrorism. Violent extremism such as ISIL is rising. Fresh in our memory is that Japanese nationals became victimized in Algeria, Syria and Tunisia. ISIL is a post-modern threat as a transnational and technology-savvy terrorist group. At the same time it is a pre-modern threat as it denies even the concept of national border and aims at slavery.

Under these circumstances, it is needless to say that no single country can ensure its own security by its own efforts alone. Cooperation with partners including Germany is increasingly important.

Now, I will rush to my final point: Japan's defense cooperation with NATO, and Germany in particular. The new legislation, the new "Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation" and the new principles on the transfer of defense equipment – all these initiatives pave the way for German-Japan and NATO-Japan cooperation. Particularly, the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation, which define roles and missions of the two allies focusing on military terms to fit the bilateral alliance relationship right into the contemporary global and regional security environment, have several key words to characterize its unique nature. Two of them are particularly relevant. One is "global" and the other is "partner." Even this bilateral document emphasizes the importance of cooperation with other partners.

The new principles on the transfer of defense equipment and technology will offer the way for joint development of sophisticated weaponry with states in close cooperative security relationship.

Now, NATO-Japan cooperation, first. The Joint Political Declaration between NATO Secretary General Rasmussen and Prime Minister Abe in April 2013 reaffirmed the principles of cooperation, including the values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and outlined items of future cooperation including cyber-defense, disaster relief, counter terrorism, non-proliferation, and maritime security. Accordingly, “Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme between Japan and NATO” (IPCP) of May 2014 aims at materializing the relevant commitment in the Joint Political Declaration and at identifying priority areas for cooperation. These commitments by the highest leaderships are already carried into action. We hope NATO and Japan will promote and deepen practical cooperation, taking this momentum on.

Interoperability between NATO and Japan provides the very basis of actual cooperative activities. I appreciate NATO’s Interoperability Initiative, and hereby I express a sense of gratitude to NATO for including Japan in the twenty-four partner countries to participate in Interoperability Platform. We look forward to working more closely together with NATO.

Second, cooperation between Germany and Japan. Here, I would like to focus on exchange of security expertise between the two countries. I will touch upon two points here. The first is synergy of the alliance with the US and regional cooperation. German expertise is in the synergy of the Atlantic Alliance and European unity, while Japanese expertise is in the synergy of Japan-US Alliance and East Asian regional integration. The format of alliance is different and the degree of regional integration is different between the two sides; nonetheless, exchange of views on our respective approaches will give them new perspectives.

Different from the Euro-Atlantic, the Asia-Pacific region does not have

any region-wide overarching security frameworks. Japan's alliance with the US is on a bilateral basis, similar to other US commitments in this region. Having said so, Japan's position is, in essence, in common with that of Germany, as Japan also needs to seek for synergy of the alliance with the US and cooperative relationship with its regional partners.

Advanced regional integration, improved transparency and enhanced confidence building and engagement of the US for the regional security – these fruitful achievements in Europe are exactly what we should share in detail beyond geography, in order for us to contribute much more to uphold the established rules-based international order.

The other point is about defense force reform. Both Japanese and German defense forces have had a long history of defense force reform since the end of the Cold War. Japan has been making its own defense buildup effort in order to establish “Dynamic Joint Defense Force” based on the National Defense Program Guidelines of 2013. This new concept of defense capability places much more emphasis on jointness, readiness, sustainability, resilience and connectivity to meet our future challenges. Future defense force has to be more mobile, more efficient and more effective. This endeavor could be shared with our German friends. If I may add one more point, Japan's defense forces emphasize their role in disaster relief because Japan is prone to natural disasters. Dynamic Joint Defense Force also emphasizes it. By sharing this know-how with Germany, we will be able to enhance opportunities for international disaster relief cooperation.

Both countries held a defense ministerial meeting on the margin of the Shangri-La Dialogue this summer. It was the first bilateral defense ministerial in the past six years. We have a momentum to promote bilateral cooperation in a variety of formats including high level exchanges, working level exchanges, trainings and exercises, equipment and technology, and intellectual exchanges.

The basis of this forward-looking enterprise is shared values articulated in the Joint Political Declaration and our common resolve to uphold the rules-based order of the global community.

Now, as consistently stated in the Japanese national security policy documents for a long time, the Government of Japan places great importance on the Japan-US alliance relationship as a pillar of its defense policy. Similar to the reality that Japan's own security does not stand alone independently from that of other countries, the security relationship between Japan and the US does not stand alone independently from a variety of other bilateral and multilateral security relationships in today's world, such as NATO and EU. As German Defense Minister von der Leyen stated in this year's Shangri-La Dialogue, an overarching security framework is needed and that is why a lot of investment has been done in partnerships and alliances. As she clearly said, a sustainable security architecture is never against any country. Those who complain about our legitimate security efforts should remember this point.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying that we, the Japanese, look forward to working more closely together with Germany for common security in the coming age, in accordance with our firm commitment to proactive contribution to peace.

Once again, Mr. Linnarz, Ambassador von Werthern and, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity. Hat mich sehr gefreut!

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