

Military Aid as an Alternative Strategy: Understanding Japan's OSA through a Comparative Analysis with the U.S. FMF

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Abstract

The amalgam of security-related issues that Japan faces in the region of East Asia, such as tensions due to the rise of China and inter-state relations, has become increasingly problematic for Japan as it navigates its foreign policies. Under such convoluted conditions, Japan announced the concept of Official Security Assistance (OSA) in 2022. While OSA is yet to be fully understood, this study aims to comprehend the intentions behind Japan's new military aid by comparing its conceptualization with the U.S. Foreign Military Financing as a reference point.

The research compares Japan's OSA and the U.S.' Foreign Military Financing. Specifically, the study focuses on two points: (1) the presence of threats to the countries and (2) the role of military aid as an alternative strategy in dealing with security conditions. Through this juxtaposition, we assert that the intention of military aid acted as an alternative strategy by avoiding certain risks and enhancing and diversifying the means of deterrence against a potential threat. Moreover, the study seeks to analyze the trajectory of military aid provided by the U.S. and the challenges and outcomes OSA may experience. As Japan emphasizes its Indo-Pacific strategy and its resurgence as an active actor in the East Asian security realm, this new concept may prove to be a significant turning point.

Key Words: *Official Security Assistance (OSA), Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Japanese National Security Strategy, Military Aid, Alternative Strategy*

Acknowledgment: This work was supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea's Brain Korea 21 FOUR Program, "Cultivating the Next Generation of Academic Leaders in Interdisciplinary Studies of International Area and Development Cooperation for A New National Strategy" at the Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University.

INTRODUCTION

Japan's presence in the field of security entered a new chapter at the end of 2022 as the Japanese government released several official documents related to its security policies. The three documents of Japan's National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), and the Defense Buildup Program all resonate the same theme of Japan's confrontation of convoluted security-related conditions that are as concerning as the days at the end of the Second World War. On this theme, Japan's NSS illustrates its objectives as follows:

“As a major global actor, Japan will join together with its ally, like-minded countries, and others to achieve a new balance in international relations, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. In so doing, Japan will prevent the emergence of situations in which any one state can unilaterally change the status quo easily, and redouble efforts to secure a stable, predictable, free and open international order based on the rule of law”¹⁾

As a middle power in East Asia, Japan's security challenges have escalated mainly due to the rise of China. In a situation where Japan is facing a shift in the regional power balance and threats being newly defined in the Asia-Pacific region, pursuing the norm of pacifism and abiding by its constitutional guidelines are being challenged. In this light, Japan has been seeking to strengthen its relations with like-minded partners and enhance its security-related capabilities to defend itself amidst an increasingly complex security environment. With this objective, the Japanese government under Prime Minister Kishida has set out specific goals such as increasing its military budget, strengthening its missile defense and counter-strike capabilities, and reinforcing its ties. While scholars are split on whether or not these measures have enough potential to make a significant change due to concerns ranging from budgetary matters to domestic support, this study argues that these goals indicate a shift in Japan's security strategy with aims to prepare the successful management of various security-related issues.

In this aspect, it has become pivotal to understand the newly coined term, Official Security Assistance or OSA. Although there is not enough information to thoroughly assess and examine the intended outcomes of this concept, the current conditions in which Japan is situated can be compared with cases where other states have utilized military aid. Thus, this research attempts to analyze OSA through a comparative analysis with the U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) -- a form of military aid with multiple similarities to OSA in terms of states'

1) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, “National Security Strategy (NSS),” Dec. 16, 2022, available at https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page1we_000081.html (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

intentions behind implementation. The analysis focuses on two major aspects: 1) the characteristics of the security situation that the U.S. and Japan confronted and 2) the rationale for choosing military aid as a solution. By employing this analysis, we seek to juxtapose the similarities between the U.S.' strategies in utilizing FMF and OSA in order to assert that, through the provision of military aid, both countries intended to solve security issues without directly engaging in them. In other words, it is to claim that military aid increased the influence donor states had towards their aid recipients and thus acquired alternative deterrence mechanisms for pursuing national interests. In the last sections of the paper, by reviewing the analysis of the effectiveness of the FMF, this research seeks to provide the possible trajectories of OSA.

Reviewing Japan's new security framework and the implementation of OSA are significant academically on two fronts. First, there exists a limited amount of research related to OSA, as it has been less than a year since it was created. In this light, while most of the newly conducted research on OSA focuses on weapon exports, our research examines a significant shift in Japan's security strategy. Therefore, by exploring Japan's intentions for OSA, we highlight OSA's expected contributions to Japan's national security strategy as well as the challenges it may face. Second, scholarly attention has mainly been given to the role of security aid provided by Western donors. Current literature lacks research on the security aid by other countries situated in different regional power dynamics as in the case of East Asia. It is not difficult to see that donor countries' international stance and security concerns affect the intentions and outcomes of security aid. Therefore, by focusing on the unique security conditions that Japan is situated in, especially in terms of the power dynamics with the surrounding countries, Japan's form of military aid can be understood from a perspective outside of the Western context.

In sum, as OSA signifies Japan's new and comprehensive security strategy to maintain stability, the study explores OSA as an alternative option. Although Japan faces emerging challenges and increasing pressure from in and outside of the region, it has been limited in increasing its role in the field of security due to inter-state struggles and legality issues. On this note, the research claims that by adopting a non-traditional security mechanism approach that can alter the current security architecture, the framework of OSA serves as an alternative foundation to mitigate the security struggle that Japan has been experiencing. Thus, exploring the initial directions of OSA and the preliminary analysis of its purpose can help assess Japan's new opportunities in the security sector as well as the potential changes it can make in the security dynamics within the region.

Defining OSA

Conceptualization of OSA

The term OSA was introduced in December 2022 with the official approval of the Japanese Cabinet. Japan treated the concept of OSA as a new cooperation framework that is different from the existing concept of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The following <Table 1> presents similarities and differences in their definition, official purpose, key trends, and characteristics.

<Table 1> Comparison between Japan's ODA and OSA

		Official Development Assistance (ODA)	Official Security Assistance (OSA)
	Definition	Non-military government support targeting the socio-economic development of developing countries in various sectors such as social infrastructure, services, and economic infrastructure	Government support to strengthen the security of like-minded countries by providing equipment and supplies
	Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of assistance to developing countries, focusing on Asian countries ● Catering to the national interests of Japan 	
Differences	Official Purpose	Economic and social development of developing countries for quality growth and promotion of free and open international order based on the rule of law	Deepening regional security cooperation, reinforcing the comprehensive defense architecture, and strengthening deterrence capacities
	Key Trends and Characteristics	The Development Cooperation Charter addresses increasingly complex and serious global challenges and the importance of international cooperation in initiatives including (a) climate change and environment, (b) health, (c) disaster risk reduction, and (d) education	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan specifies that OSA applies to fields not directly relating to any international conflict, including (a) activities for ensuring peace, (b) stability and security based on the rule of law, (c) humanitarian activities, and (d) international peace cooperation operations

Source: Kazuki Uechi, Anri Takahashi, Yoshihiko Tajima, "Where is "Doshikuni"? Ambiguous definition, Japan steps into military assistance, What is OSA?" Asahi, Apr. 6, 2023. [in Japanese]; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "National Security Strategy (NSS)," Dec. 16, 2022, available at https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page1we_000081.html (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023). ; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Official Security Assistance (OSA)," Nov. 13, 2023, available at https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/ipc/page4e_001366.html (accessed on Nov. 14, 2023).

As shown, both ODA and OSA provide forms of assistance to developing countries, with Japan's strategic focus on Asian countries. In addition to providing aid to developing states, the assistance seeks to cater to the national interests of Japan, including building coalitions with nearby countries. The two differ, however, in that OSA targets building security cooperation with countries and deterrence capacities of developing countries while ODA targets the overall well-being, economic, and social development of developing countries.²⁾ The National Security Council of Japan clarifies that OSA serves as a means to foster stable and highly predictable international security dynamics based on the rule of law. It is important to note that Japan has already been delivering security-related assistance to militaries of nearby developing countries mainly by providing them with Self-Defense Forces equipment as well as education and training. The conceptualization of OSA, thereby, can be interpreted as an extended or enhanced version of assistance that focuses more on security-related strategic cooperation from a country to its security partners located in Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

Conditions and Principles of OSA

The provision of military aid is controversial and often intertwined with political and moral criticism. The main criticism against military assistance is due to a concern about exacerbating tensions that could potentially increase the instability in the recipient country or the region, subject to factors such as recipients' governance capacity or the vulnerability of regimes.³⁾ Other criticisms may be about donor states politicizing aid with ulterior motives other than developmental purposes. Against this backdrop, to maintain its philosophy of a peace-loving country, Japan has set specific principles of OSA in its Implementation Guidelines for Japan's Three Principles of Defense Equipment Transfer.

The Japanese National Security Council announces that OSA applies to areas unrelated to direct international conflicts, focusing on activities aimed at preserving peace, stability, and security. This goal is expected to be achieved through adhering to the rule of law and as part of humanitarian efforts and engagements in international peace cooperation. In addition to advancing a free and open global order and enhancing recipient countries' security and deterrence

2) Ogi Hirohito, "How Japan Can Make the Most of Its Latest Diplomatic Tool," *The Japan Times*, August 27, 2023, available at <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/commentary/2023/08/27/japan/new-security-policy-tool/> (accessed on Sep. 23, 2023).

3) Amira Jadoon, "Conflict Aggravation or Alleviation? A Cross-National Examination of U.S. Military Aid's Effect on Conflict Dynamics with Insights from Pakistan," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 135, Issue 4 (Winter, 2020), pp. 665-695.; Andrew Boutton, "Military Aid, Regime Vulnerability and the Escalation of Political Violence," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (2021), pp. 507-525

capabilities, OSA also addresses the need for humanitarian assistance. These include assistance in response to natural disasters, search and rescue operations, and provision of medical care. Moreover, Japan attaches high importance to international peace cooperation activities, including participation in United Nations Peacekeeping operations.

To maintain appropriateness, transparency, and international peace, Japan devises OSA within the framework of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines. To ensure that OSA does not violate any regulations, maintenance of appropriateness and transparency, disclosure of information, assessment and monitoring of the programs, proper management, and conformation to the principles of the United Nations Charter are thoroughly discussed in Japan's proposal of OSA. In strictly abiding by the norms of international peace and cooperation, especially in the legal aspect, the scheme of OSA aims to deviate itself from controversies of military aid and provocative narratives.

Research Framework

As the comprehensive understanding of OSA is still at an early stage, our primary objective is to examine the underlying motives and characteristics behind Japan's recent form of military assistance through a comparative study. The focus of the comparison is on two levels: the characteristics of the security environment that a state faces and how military aid was able to serve its security-related purpose.

First, we examine how national security interests were threatened by the unstable security conditions in the Middle East and Asian states to compare the U.S. FMF to the Middle East and Japan's OSA to Asian states. To better understand the level of interest the United States had in the region, we identify and analyze a number of concerns that it had about the spread of nuclear weapons, escalation of arms competition, acts of terrorism, and Iran's evolving threats that had instilled fear of destabilization. Meanwhile, Japan was mainly concerned with the rise of China, which increased its military spending in recent years. In addition to the direct threat heightened by China's military capabilities, there was growing tension in the region as China rigorously attempted to increase its influence in the region. We investigate not only China's friction with surrounding states but also with the U.S., which is deeply involved in the region. By doing so, we seek to propose that amidst such security challenges, FMF and OSA appear to hold regional security threats in check and contribute to stability. Against this backdrop, the research focuses on certain risks and limitations the states may face as they directly engage in the areas of interest, which led to the strategy of military aid and

capability building. In this study, by enhancing the military capabilities of like-minded states in turbulent regions, we uncover that the two states intended to stabilize and secure security interests in the region without escalating security tension, increasing domestic opposition, violating legal constraints, or losing more money in dealing with the conflict.

In the last section of the analysis, we assess the feasibility of military aid as an alternative strategy. By looking at the success rate of the U.S. FMF in reaching its intended purpose and the challenges in its relations with the recipient states, we shed light on the challenges and the outlook of Japan's OSA.

U.S. Intentions on Foreign Military Financing

FMF is an ideal program for comparison to understand the purposes of OSA. Established in 1961 under the Foreign Assistance Act, FMF is a program of the U.S. Office of Security Assistance within the State Department that funds defense equipment, military training, and services to allies and security partners through grants or direct loans. <Table 2> below displays the yearly payment waived disbursement of FMF in Middle Eastern countries. The table shows a significant difference in the size of FMF provided to Israel compared to other states such as Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq. It has been the largest recipient of U.S. military aid, with more than 158 billion dollars accumulated after the Second World War. With this background, we focus on the case of the military aid provided to Israel.⁴⁾

<Table 2> Yearly Payment Waived Disbursement of FMF by Country

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Israel	3.175	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.3
Egypt	0.195	1	1.3	1.3	1.095
Jordan	0.470	0.425	0.379	0.472	0.425
Iraq	0.250	0.250	0.174	0.497	0.250

* \$ in billion in all cases

Source: ForeignAssistance.gov. available at <https://www.foreignassistance.gov/>(accessed on Sep. 29, 2023).

4) Elias Yousif and Rachel Stohl, "In Shadow of War, a Snapshot of US Military Assistance to Israel," Stimson Center, Oct. 13, 2023, available at <https://www.stimson.org/2023/in-shadow-of-war-a-snapshot-of-u-s-military-assistance-to-israel/>(accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

In addition to the sheer size of military aid given to Israel, the Jewish state also enjoys certain privileges such as Cash Flow Financing, which allows more lenient payment upon purchasing, and multiple defense capability development programs with the U.S. These special arrangements of aid to Israel, in combination with the security dynamic the U.S. faces in the Middle East, present a unique form of providing military aid. In this regard, the obvious question that needs to be answered is why the U.S. is so committed to its relationship with Israel and how the U.S. intends to utilize military aid to manage its security interests strategically. In the next section, we will examine the security conditions related to Israel and the Middle East to understand the intention and the role that military aid had.

Security Threats and Interests in the Middle East

The Middle East has been a region of significant concern for the U.S.' national security interests. It was once a stage for a power struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the past and China now. It was also a target for retaliatory action after 9/11, which spurred fear of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, arms race, and terrorist activities, including Hamas, Al Qaeda, and Hezbollah, buttressing instability in the region.⁵⁾ Generally, complicated security threats in the region have ranged from the Iraq War to Iran's relations with surrounding states, terrorism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and other regional conflicts.⁶⁾ Meanwhile, the economic value of the Middle East, including the stable supply of oil and the Suez Canal, which holds approximately 30% of the world's freight flows, makes the area still relevant.⁷⁾ Also, the U.S.' effort to maintain control and stability in the region through means like the Gulf Security Dialogue (GSD) among the states of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar as well as fortifying ports and protecting energy infrastructures demonstrates how important the region is to the U.S. in both the economic and security aspects.⁸⁾ Thus, as Narea claims, the goal is "keeping at bay unrest that would threaten access to the regional oil supply on which America remains dependent."⁹⁾

5) Michael J. Koplow, "What Is Hizballah Waiting For," Israel Policy Forum, November 2, 2023, available at <https://israelpolicyforum.org/2023/11/02/what-is-hizballah-waiting-for/> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

6) Ibrahim M. Oweiss, "Why Did the United States Fail in Its War On Iraq?," Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, April 8, 2010, available at <https://www.wrmea.org/2007-may-june/why-did-the-united-states-fail-in-its-war-on-iraq.html> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).; Samuel F. Wells, Mark A. Bruzonsky, *Security in the Middle East: Regional Change and Great Power Strategies* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2020).

7) New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "The Importance of the Suez Canal to Global Trade," Apr. 18, 2021, available at <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/the-importance-of-the-suez-canal-to-global-trade-18-april-2021> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

8) William Wunderle, Andre Briere, *U.S. Foreign Policy and Israel's Qualitative Military Edge: The Need for a Common Vision* (Washington DC: The Washington Institute, 2008).

In sum, the area has been, and still is, an essential area that the U.S. is deeply interested in preventing from destabilizing. While there are multiple political, economic, and historical objectives in the region, direct engagement has continuously led to unsuccessful results. Thus, the U.S. utilizes FMF as an alternative solution to direct engagement.

FMF as a Solution

First, we ask why the U.S. did not directly engage in the region but chose to find an alternative partner through military aid. As mentioned above, the U.S. saw changing interests in the region which ranged from battling the Soviet Union's influence to annihilation of Islamic terrorist groups and, more recently, state-building. Although the Middle East was a pivotal area, direct engagement had always been extremely costly, met with strong domestic opposition, but most importantly, unsuccessful. In one case, engaging in conflict with countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. saw costs growing exponentially with over 1.9 million accumulated personnel deployed in the Middle East with over eight trillion dollars being spent over the past 20 years.¹⁰⁾ As the Iraq War continued, fewer and fewer Americans endorsed the use of force in the region. This phenomenon is supported by Doherty and Kiley's 2023 work on how the public's positive assessment of the intervention in Iraq dropped from 54% in 2006 to 39% in 2018.¹¹⁾ This example shows that direct intervention was becoming less supported by the public and often met with fierce opposition. In another case, the multi-billion-dollar project to plant democracy in the region following the conflict has also failed with the U.S. having to pull back its forces from the region due to opposition.¹²⁾ In sum, direct intervention in the area was becoming less of an attractive option to pursue, which forced the U.S. to look for alternative options.

Against this backdrop, there are several rationales justifying why providing military aid to Israel was the adequate security strategy alternative to the U.S. To

9) Nicole Narea, "How the US Became Israel's Closest Ally," Vox, October 13, 2023, available at <https://www.vox.com/world-politics/23916266/us-israel-support-ally-gaza-war-aid>(accessed on Sep. 29, 2023).

10) Institute of Medicine, *Returning Home from Iraq and Afghanistan: Assessment of Readjustment Needs of Veterans, Service Members, and Their Families* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013).; Jill Kimball, "Costs of the 20-Year War on Terror: \$8 Trillion and 900,000 Deaths," Brown University, September 1, 2021, available at <https://www.brown.edu/news/2021-09-01/costsofwar>(accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

11) Carroll Doherty and Jocelyn Kiley, "A Look Back at How Fear and False Beliefs Bolstered U.S. Public Support for War in Iraq," Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy, Mar. 14, 2023, available at <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/03/14/a-look-back-at-how-fear-and-false-beliefs-bolstered-u-s-public-support-for-war-in-iraq/>(accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

12) Daniele Archibugi, "Exporting Democracy: What Have We Learned from Iraq?" *Dissent*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Spring, 2007), pp. 40-42.

begin, it is no coincidence that the extensive military support by the U.S. began with Israel's victory in the 1967 war. It is here that the U.S. saw an opportunity to utilize Israel as an instrument to stabilize the Middle East. As Zunes writes, "99% of U.S. military assistance to Israel since its establishment came only after Israel proved itself to be far stronger than any combination of Arab armies".¹³⁾ Thus, the FMF is not due to mere philanthropic interests but security-related strategic purposes that seek to have Israel stabilize and maintain dominance in the region on behalf of the U.S.¹⁴⁾ This idea was repeated by former President Bill Clinton as he signed the first 10-year military aid memorandum with the Israeli government to achieve peace in the region.

Once the mutually beneficial relationship was initiated, the U.S. adopted the concept of Qualitative Military Edge or QME, which is a stark example of the U.S.' effort to assist Israel in maintaining a superiority vis-a-vis its surrounding countries. The report written by the Congressional Research Service in 2020 on the topic of Israel's QME and the U.S.'s possible arms sale with the UAE shows the level of Washington's dedication to upholding this concept. The U.S. has not only given the first regional access to Israel on its defense technology, but it also has provided Israel with more advanced versions of equipment when the same platform was provided to other Arab countries.¹⁵⁾ Moreover, Israel's opinion on the arms sale of certain equipment to certain Arab countries has been influential while Israel is compensated with sufficient measures to nullify the capabilities of its adversaries.¹⁶⁾ The efforts made by the U.S. have also been seen through large amounts of investments in supporting the development of military equipment such as the Iron Dome and David's Sling.

All in all, FMF was a plausible solution for the U.S. in achieving its goal of stabilizing the Middle East by providing support for Israel. To the U.S. as a like-minded country, Israel prevented the risks of direct intervention while allowing the country to influence the region. Through extensive efforts of capability building, military aid has been an alternative strategy that can be seen as a mutually beneficial and, thus, sustainable solution.

13) Stephen Zunes, "Why the U.S. Supports Israel," *Foreign Policy In Focus*, May 1, 2022, available at https://fpif.org/why_the_us_supports_israel/(accessed on Sep. 29, 2023).

14) *Ibid.*

15) Jim Zanotti, "Israel: Major Issues and U.S. Relations - CRS Reports," Congressional Research Service, July 2022, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44245>(accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

16) Jeremy M. Sharp et al., "Israel's Qualitative Military Edge and Possible U.S. Arms Sales to the United Arab Emirates," Congressional Research Service, October 2020, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46580>(accessed on Sept.30, 2023).

Japanese Intentions in Official Security Assistance

In comprehending the objectives of the newly established OSA, it is imperative to delve into the complex array of factors that have catalyzed Japan's transition into a more assertive posture within its security policies. This transition underscores a strategic evolution aimed at addressing emerging challenges and demands within the contemporary global security landscape that have urged significant changes from Japan's traditional security strategy within the region. Three factors can explain changing security dynamics: (1) the rise of China's military, (2) China's growing influence in Asia, and (3) escalating tensions due to the U.S.-China rivalry.

The Rise of China's Military

Security threats have intensified in East Asia with the considerable rise in Chinese military spending and capability. This is in contrast to the case of Japan, which has suffered from severe military restrictions, including Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, the Three Principles of Arms Exports of 1967, and the updated Three Principles of Defense Equipment Transfer in 2014. According to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China's military expenditure in 2023 is projected to reach 292 billion USD, doubling its budget within a mere decade.¹⁷⁾ China's noticeable increase in its military budget is being perceived as a security threat, opening possibilities of an arms race in East Asia.

In addition to an immense military budget gap between Japan and China, the capacity of the Chinese military has escalated in recent years. The recent drastic armament of China indicates an increase in both quantity and quality. According to the annual Global FirePower (GFP) review, among 145 countries, China ranked in the top 3 for military strength and continues to increase warfare capabilities.¹⁸⁾ Possessing the most significant military force in terms of the total army personnel, China's military is reported to be systematic and comprehensive with professional military capabilities.¹⁹⁾ Moreover, China's strategic municipalities are located along the extensive coastlines to reinforce its maritime supremacy.²⁰⁾ As such, China has undertaken a comprehensive modernization and expansion of its

17) Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), "SIPRI Arms Transfers Database," 2023, available at <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

18) Global Fire Power, available at https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.php?country_id=china (accessed on Sep. 29, 2023).

19) Roger Cliff, "China's Future Military Capabilities," US Army War College Press, April 2023

20) Edward Sing Yue Chan, *China's Maritime Security Strategy: The Evolution of a Growing Sea Power* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

military forces, spanning across the land, air, and maritime domains. Such military rise exerts considerable pressure on Japan, as it confronts a dual challenge regarding both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of military power projection.

China's Growing Influence in Asia

China's mounting influence in Asia is another pressing challenge in Japan's security dynamics. China has been displaying a strong presence in the South China Sea (SCS) and Pacific Rim, signifying its ambition to dominate power in the region through assertive claims and active interactions. Cases of the SCS disputes and the development of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) led to China's surging influence in Asia and the changing security dynamics of the region.

While the SCS disputes first became prominent in the late 1980s, conflicts have been most contentious in recent years. Mounting competition over maritime resources, the increasing importance of SCS for global trade, worsening geopolitical tensions, and the rising international trend of nationalism together escalated tensions in SCS. Several international conflicts occurred as a result, including the Sino-Japanese confrontation over the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as well as conflicting maritime interests between China and other Southeast Asian countries such as Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.²¹⁾ Strident assertions of sovereignty and controversial ownership of maritime resources have amplified instability in the Asia-Pacific region.

China's ambitious expansion of the BRI is another example demonstrating China's rising influence. Launched in 2013, BRI has heralded investments in diverse infrastructure projects spanning Asia and extending its reach globally. By 2022, the financial commitment and investments associated with BRI had reached an impressive approximate sum of 67.8 billion USD, with the accumulated assets exceeding 962 billion USD since the program's inception.²²⁾ Comprised of two principal components, the Silk Road Economic Belt, a land-based network, and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road, a sea-based network, BRI signifies a cornerstone of President Xi Jinping's foreign policy, seamlessly aligning with the visionary conception of centralized trading.²³⁾ BRI extends China's influence in a profound manner, with its most significant impact discernible in emerging markets

21) Ian Storey, Lin Cheng Yi, *The South China Sea Dispute: Navigating Diplomatic and Strategic Tensions* (Singapore: ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, 2016).

22) Christoph N. Wang, "China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2022," Green Finance & Development Center, Feb. 3, 2023, available at <https://greenfdc.org/china-belt-and-road-initiative-bri-investment-report-2022/> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

23) Hu Pingchao, *The Belt and Road Portal*, Jun. 21, 2023, available at <https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/p/0T4ND13J.html> (accessed on Sep.30, 2023).

and developing nations located in SCS.²⁴⁾ In essence, China seeks to foster stronger strategic alliances with BRI participant countries, enabling it to secure coveted access to essential resources, uncharted markets, and promising investment opportunities. Such an expanding presence of China in the Pacific has alarmed Japan to precipitate its strategic relations with SCS as China increases pressure from Japan's perspective.

China's rising power as a potential regional, economic hegemon in Asia poses a big concern to Japan.²⁵⁾ Today, the Indo-Pacific region is of paramount importance to Japan in terms of trade. The southern theater plays a crucial role in global trade and any disruptions in the area can have significant consequences. Japan's security strategy takes into account stabilizing the Taiwan Strait and SCS. Japan's heavy reliance on imports, particularly petroleum, underscores the economic and energy-related dimensions of its security. The uninterrupted flow of resources is essential for Japan's financial stability, and any disruptions in the maritime routes through the region can lead to an immediate economic disaster.

Escalating Tensions Due to the U.S.-China Rivalry

Ikenberry introduced the concept of the security-economy nexus, which provides a framework for comprehending the intricate interplay between security and economy.²⁶⁾ In the context of Asia, the U.S. assumes the role of a security provider, while China takes the lead in the economic realm. This dynamic establishes a delicate equilibrium where each vies for influence in the region. When contemplating the most prudent diplomatic stance to adopt in pursuit of national interests, states often face the challenge of navigating the complex dynamics of the security-economy nexus. The question of which entity to align with - security-oriented the U.S. or economically-driven China - can be a perplexing one. The choice between the two giants greatly impacts a state's foreign policy, making it a crucial decision almost impossible to make.²⁷⁾ In such a situation, Japan's existing trajectory of alignment with the U.S. can risk the possibility of reactive measures from China.²⁸⁾ Furthermore, the perceived

24) Lauren A. Johnston, "The Belt and Road Initiative: What is in it for China?" *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, Vol. 6, Issue 1 (2018), pp. 40-58.

25) Yuka Koshino and Robert Ward, "Japan's Effectiveness as a Geo-Economic Actor: Introduction," *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, March 28, 2022, available at <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2022/03/japans-effectiveness-as-a-geo-economic-actor-introduction/> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

26) John Ikenberry, "Between the Eagle and the Dragon: America, China, and Middle State Strategies in East Asia," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 131, Issue 1 (Spring, 2016), pp. 9-43.

27) Yukio Hatoyama, "US-China Rivalry and Japan's Strategic Role," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 44, Issue 2 (2021), pp. 7-19.

28) Guanie Lim, Chengwei Xu, "The Political Economy of Japan's Development Strategy under

indecisiveness in Washington's policies along with the unclear strategic direction from the Trump administration has created a heightened security alarm from Japan's perspective.²⁹⁾ What can be a strategic leeway for Japan amidst the uncertainties of power struggles?

The fierce U.S.-China competition empowers the necessities for Japan in pursuit of a self-help-oriented diplomatic framework such as the OSA. In fact, preliminary research demonstrates the importance of having an alternative rather than having to choose between the alignment of either the U.S. or China.³⁰⁾ Japan's newly devised framework of OSA can be an answer to Japan's newfound security dilemmas.

OSA as a Solution

The first question is as follows: why not directly engage? The answer to the question is similar to the reasons for the U.S.'s reluctance to enter the Middle East. Like the U.S., Japan would suffer from too much potential risk and cost if it were to directly engage in the conflict. Japan also has to be careful in pursuing the objective of internal balancing as "power-projection forces are more likely to spark spirals of tension than weapons that can defend."³¹⁾ In other words, Japan's option of expanding military capabilities could send the wrong message to China, as East Asian states could also fall within the anarchical security dilemma. The tendency of avoiding provocative behavior has been consistent in Japan's security strategies. Its defense budget as a share of its GDP has rarely been above one percent, while its neighbors of South Korea and Taiwan rarely dropped below the two-percent threshold. This aspect, along with the legal restriction that Japan faces, displays Japan's reluctance to risk the costs of being seen as an aggressor.

Thus, OSA can be understood as a way to find an alternative answer to the issues Japan faces as it does not have Japan directly engage in the conflictual situation or violate its own constitution. As OSA focuses on the provision of security-related assets and building capabilities for like-minded countries, it avoids the problem that can arise with methods such as internal balancing. Also, as OSA is built around the idea of providing states with non-lethal assets and infrastructure

China-US Rivalry: The Crane, the Dragon, and the Bald Eagle," *The Chinese Economy*, Vol 56, Issue 4 (2023), pp. 281-291.

29) Shin Kawashima, "Japan-US-China Relations during the Trump Administration and the Outlook for East Asia," *Asia-Pacific Review*, Vol. 24, Issue 1 (2017), pp. 23-36.

30) Yuka Koshino and Robert Ward, "Japan's Effectiveness as a Geo-Economic Actor: Introduction," *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, March 28, 2022, available at <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2022/03/japans-effectiveness-as-a-geo-economic-actor-introduction/> (accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

31) Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (1999), pp. 50.

building, the adoption of OSA eliminates concerns about Japan violating its constitution or the Three Principles of Defense Equipment Transfer. Thus, without increasing the level of risk and costs that it may face, OSA can create leverage against the rising Chinese threat in the following aspect.

In the form of finding an alternative method of balancing, OSA can diversify its mode of security in terms of non-traditional capability building. The issue of maritime security is of great concern to Japan as conflicts in the South China Sea or the regions near the Taiwan Strait can cause security-related problems and severe economic damage. Matsumoto writes that “the main challenges that we are faced with now is to decide how to defend our territorial waters through non-military means while restraining from...the use of our military forces.”³²⁾ Japan’s focus on the provision of satellite communication systems and the emphasis on activities such as monitoring, surveillance, counter-terrorism, and counter-piracy, can be the starting point of a form of cooperation between Japan and Southeast Asian states in the field of non-traditional security. As Japan already has an established relationship with many states in East Asia on the basis of ODA, the new framework of OSA can build loosely tied security coalitions by providing equipment related to enhancing non-traditional capabilities and receiving a joint sharing of intelligence as well as a chance to test their own equipment in real-life conditions in return. This resonates with Matsumoto’s idea mentioned above in terms of utilizing non-military means and his claim that “Japan seeks to establish a coalition of like-minded regional partners and render support to capacity building for enhancing regional maritime awareness.”³³⁾

Furthermore, OSA is plausible as Southeast Asian states are concerned about their maritime security as much as Japan. Nguyen writes that “maritime security and cooperation is one of the most important components of APSC” as their economic, security, and territorial interests are closely intertwined.³⁴⁾ This attempt has already shown basic levels of cooperation through the mode of ODA. Midford writes that “Japan has gradually expanded its role and voice in SCS maritime security, first through ODA and the promotion of multilateral security cooperation.”³⁵⁾ It is on this foundation that OSA attempts to create a contingency

32) Futoshi Matsumoto, “Japan’s Maritime Security Policy.” In *The Future of the Seas in East Asia: Forging a Common Maritime Future for ASEAN and Japan*, edited by Shafiah F. Muhibat, Audrey Stienon, pp. 40. Jakarta: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2015.

33) Ibid. p.43.

34) Nguyen H. Son, “ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership in Southeast Asia: Maritime.” In *Beyond 2015 ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Democracy, Peace, and Prosperity in Southeast Asia*, edited by Rizal Sukma, Soeya Yoshihide, *Nihon-No Midoru-Pawa Gaiko [Japan’s Middle Power Diplomacy]*(Tokyo: Chikuma-shobo, 2005).

35) Paul Midford, “Japan’s Approach to Maritime Security in the South China Sea,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 55, Issue. 3 (2015), pp. 547.

plan that can not only respond to contingencies in the area but also diversify its security partners.

In sum, the mode of OSA can be a useful tool for Japan to circumvent the issues it has in engaging directly with China and violating its regulations. As Sullivan, Tessman, and Li write “military aid is a source of bargaining power because donors can link benefits to desired behavior by recipients,” the provision of non-traditional security aid to enhance the countries of East Asia in battling their non-traditional security issues can be mutually beneficial and thus sustainable.³⁶⁾ Furthermore, the purpose of Japan’s pursuit of OSA can be framed as establishing a method of alternative deterrence toward the rise of China and increasing tensions resulting from the U.S.-China competition.

Does Military Aid Work?

U.S. FMF Evaluation and Implications

Unlike OSA, FMF has been implemented for more than decades, and academic papers evaluating the roles and outcomes of FMF have been substantially discussed. To analyze how military aid can affect the behavior of recipient states, Sullivan, Tessman, and Li’s 2011 article presents the three models: Arms for Influence, Lonely Superpower, and Reverse Leverage.³⁷⁾

First, the concept of Arms for Influence refers to a situation where the provision of aid can influence the recipient’s behavior in favor of the donor country’s interests. Military aid can be used as a tool for a donor country to create a dynamic with the recipient that will allow them to substantially influence the recipient. Second, the Lonely Superpower model suggests that with aid comes defiance rather than compliance. This can be understood as a behavior with the motive to offset any notion of the recipient country. Third, in the Reverse Leverage model, the donor state relies on the recipient country for military aid. It refers to a situation where the client can have more control over the patron in a patron-client relationship between the donor and the recipient, as it can pursue other alternatives that can interfere with the national interest of the patron.

Considering the analytical approach in evaluating the models of military aid, next, we analyze FMF’s outcomes. By reviewing the impacts of FMF, the paper looks into how Japan must deftly navigate its strategic decisions to maximize its influence. We present FMF’s evaluation and outcomes of FMF based on positives or negatives.

36) Patricia L. Sullivan, Brock F. Tessman, Xiaojun Li, “US Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 7, Issue 3 (2011), pp. 275–294.

37) *Ibid.*

Positive Outcomes

Positive outcomes occur when the aid reaches its initial purpose in the donor country without significant side effects. Past literature has judged FMF's positive contributions once it has successfully had political, economic, or security influences over the recipient countries. The benefits of FMF may be narrowed down to three major points: (1) pursuit of common interest, (2) indirect intervention, and (3) sharing intelligence and technology.

First, as Iran was portrayed as the common enemy of Israel and neighboring states in the Middle East, it was easy for the U.S. to convince countries to coalesce forces, especially in addressing regional insecurities.³⁸⁾ The commonality of the regional interest in containing Iran or terrorist groups from power expansion creates a drive for countries to follow the superpower agenda. Nevertheless, the U.S. benefits from not being present in the region while addressing its national security interests.

Second, the concept of indirect intervention presents a pragmatic and resource-efficient approach to applying influence. FMF program emerges as a strategic conduit for the pursuit of the U.S.'s national interests through its collaboration with the proxy state, Israel. Jerusalem serves as a discerning diplomatic intermediary within the Middle East, capable of advocating the U.S.'s interests in the region and amplifying its influence within the regional landscape. This symbiotic relationship reflects the intricacies of the U.S. foreign policy implementation, where alliances and proxies play pivotal roles in shaping global dynamics.

Lastly, Israel and the U.S. share intelligence and technologies. While the U.S. has been focusing on keeping the QME program updated to the latest advanced versions of military goods, Israel has been able to develop its own technological capabilities over the past years, which helped enhance the intelligence missions in the region.³⁹⁾ HUMINT from Israel provides invaluable insight into the region's stability and aggressions. In addition, there exists the potential opportunities for testing equipment and sharing its effect between the two countries. On this note, military capabilities were enhanced dramatically throughout the procurement programs of Iron Dome and F-35 Lightning fighters.⁴⁰⁾ In terms of ballistic missile

38) William Wunderle, Andre Briere, *U.S. Foreign Policy and Israel's Qualitative Military Edge: The Need for a Common Vision* (Washington DC: The Washington Institute, 2008).

39) Jarrod Bernstein, "Ensuring Israel's Qualitative Military Edge," National Archives and Records Administration, November 17, 2011, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2011/11/17/ensuring-israels-qualitative-military-edge>(accessed on Sept. 30, 2023); Jeremy M. Sharp, Zim Zanotti, Kenneth Katzman, Christina L. Arabia, Clayton Thomas, "Israel's Qualitative Military Edge and Possible U.S. Arms Sales to the United Arab Emirates," Congressional Research Service, October 2020.

40) Jeremy M. Sharp, Zim Zanotti, Kenneth Katzman, Christina L. Arabia, Clayton Thomas,

interception capabilities, which the Israeli Defense Minister praised as displaying exceptional performance, the Iron Dome is considered a substantial success for both Israel and the U.S.⁴¹⁾ This was exemplified when the next Palestine conflict occurred in 2021 and the Iron Dome successfully intercepted 90% of 1,500 rocket projectiles directed at the municipal areas.⁴²⁾

Negative outcomes

The potential of regional countries not wholeheartedly pledging allegiance to the U.S. should not be overlooked. Loyalty in such a volatile context is a complex matter, where the middle-state dilemma complicates initial assumptions. Ultimately, it seems that many Middle Eastern states are ensnared by the other two models: the Lonely Superpower model and the Reverse Leverage model. Bound by their core interests, countries often find their alignment with the U.S. to be multi-dimensional. Engaging in defiance and seeking increased funds in exchange for loyalty creates problems for both parties involved. The U.S. faces the difficult question of whether to allocate more funds or halt aid altogether while uncertainty increases.

First, the U.S. finds itself as the Lonely Superpower. While the contribution of multinational FMF programs was a necessary support for regional stability, there were cases where the recipients defied the donor to prevent excessive dependence on the donor. This can be understood through the idea of Miller and Sokolsky as they suggest that the U.S.' military aid was dysfunctional in the sense that its aid had not only "failed to make major strides in [the recipients'] capabilities" but also had seen a situation where recipient countries "generally - and successfully - resist[ed] Washington's request to modify their policies in exchange for assistance."⁴³⁾

Secondly, the recipients find themselves having Reverse Leverage within the framework of FMF programs. Although the QME programs through FMF were initiated with shared objectives and unwavering determination, the ever-evolving landscape of international politics was subject to change. Emerging from the

"Israel's Qualitative Military Edge and Possible U.S. Arms Sales to the United Arab Emirates," Congressional Research Service, October 2020.; Jim Zanotti, "Israel: Major Issues and U.S. Relations - CRS Reports," Congressional Research Service, July 2022, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44245>(accessed on Sep.30, 2023).

41) Jarrod Bernstein, "Ensuring Israel's Qualitative Military Edge," National Archives and Records Administration, November 17, 2011, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2011/11/17/ensuring-israels-qualitative-military-edge>(accessed on Sept. 30, 2023)

42) Jim Zanotti, "Israel: Major Issues and U.S. Relations - CRS Reports," Congressional Research Service, July 2022, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44245>(accessed on Sep. 30, 2023).

43) Andrew Miller, Richard Sokolsky, "What has \$49 billion in foreign military aid bought us? not much," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace American Conservative, Feb. 27, 2018.

economic conflicts between the U.S. and China in the Middle East region, incidents of friction have come to light. This discord can be traced back to China's ambitious BRI investment plans, which caused ripples in its bilateral relationship with the U.S. Of particular concern is China's aggressive involvement in financing major infrastructure projects within Israel. The infiltration by China indicates the problem of alternative options for the recipient states. If the recipients can receive more aid or aid that is not earmarked for specific purposes from another donor, then the aid given by the U.S. loses its attractiveness. This worrisome reaction was exemplified by the Trump administration in 2019 when it raised a red flag regarding the need to curtail the expansion of China's investments within the nation.

Ultimately, upon careful consideration of the implications stemming from FMF in the Middle East, it is increasingly clear that these endeavors have, to a significant degree, engendered unfavorable outcomes. The reality is acutely pronounced in a region characterized by its tumultuous landscape, where the notion of enduring status quo remains elusive. In the Middle East, the propensity for profound transformations is heightened by the ascendance of extremist religious and ideological movements, contributing to the region's volatility. Moreover, Middle Eastern states' burgeoning partnership with China poses a potential disruption to the equilibrium necessary to maintain their robust bilateral relations with the U.S. This evolving partnership threatens to transform the Middle East into a contested arena, thereby complicating the already intricate web of international relations.

Challenges for Japan's OSA

Japan has several weak points in providing military aid. There is no comparison between the level of military aid that the U.S. can provide as a superpower with significant military budgets and technology and the level of military aid that Japan can hold in East Asia. In addition, the restriction currently imposed on Japan in terms of legalities prohibits Japan from supplying its recipients with perhaps adequate military assets. Moreover, the fact that Japan's system of providing aid has been heavily reliant on loans rather than grants and how Japan is geographically closer to the threat than the U.S. is to the threat can prevent Japan from further utilizing its influence and creating a coalition of like-minded nations.

These relatively weak points can lead to another issue. While East Asian countries are already heavily influenced by China, the limited form of military assistance that Japan can provide could be easily overshadowed by China. Over the issues related to the budget, legality, loan-based aid, and geographic proximity, Japan's leverage against its recipients could be overturned if China chooses to intervene. What increases the severity is that attempts to solve the relative

disadvantages are extremely difficult. Any attempt to make changes in the aforementioned sectors is bound to have severe domestic and international constraints. Additionally, Japan's proximity to China in the security dilemma affords China to keep a close eye on Japan. Under such conditions, the strong alternative that China could present would make it easy for Japan to find itself becoming an isolated regional power or succumbing to *reverse leverage*.

CONCLUSION

Amidst a highly complex security landscape and the dynamic interplay of regional power dynamics, Japan has crafted a comprehensive set of national security strategies: OSA. The paper delved into a thorough examination of Japan's underlying motives based on the security-related conditions by comparing it to military aid provided by the U.S. Although there are considerable differences between the security conditions, there are some substantial similarities that the two states share. They include the harsh security environment where both Japan and the U.S. were situated, their reluctance to enter directly into the area of conflict, and the use of aid to create an alternative solution to the problem by pursuing the acquisition of leverage over the recipients. Thus, by exploring these similarities, the study provides some foundation for future study.

Limitations

As it sought to establish a firmer foundation to assess Japan's OSA, this research suffers from some clear limitations. The first and perhaps the most significant weakness of this study lies in the lack of information and time. As aforementioned, the paper's major strength and weakness is that it is one of the earliest studies that attempt to conceptualize and understand the intentions and purpose of what Japan seeks to achieve with this form of military aid. Thus, as more concrete plans and interaction based on OSA proceeds in the future, the findings and conceptualization of this research may prove to be false.

Another limitation lies in the attempt to compare Japan and the U.S. horizontally. Although there were significant similarities between the intentions behind the military aid, there still exists stark differences in the situations and capabilities that the two states found themselves in. Japan's exceptionality in comparison with that of the U.S. can be found in multiple aspects. For example, in addition to the vast differences in military capabilities and spending, there are specific legal restrictions that bind Japan's military actions. As elucidated by Yoshihide, Japan's security posture reflects the Yoshida doctrine, which profoundly embeds pacifist principles in its political philosophy.⁴⁴ Likewise, Japan's TPDET and its Peace Constitution significantly limit the provision of lethal military assets to recipients. Unlike the

strategic intentions of FMF, these legal restrictions put Japan's OSA on a different foundation. The U.S.'s status of being free from such legal restrictions and its capability to provide a wider range of military assets through FMF is a major difference that sets the two types of military aid apart in assessing the reason for its establishment, utilization, as well as the extent of its influence.

Meanwhile, Japan's position in relation to its adversary is different from the U.S. Similar to the notion above, OSA is not an attempt to find the most effective strategy among others but an attempt to resolve the restrictions that it finds itself in. Japan's proximity to China, whose capabilities far outweigh that of Japan's, is a major factor that shapes Japan's strategies. These conditions that Japan is situated in extinguish Japan's options to build a stronger alliance, enhance defense capabilities, directly provide lethal military assets, or directly engage with China. They are not legally feasible, too risky, or vastly unpopular policies to pursue, which strikes a clear difference in regard to the relative advantage the U.S. held over its adversary.

Implications

Despite such limitations, exploring the motives and directions of Japan's OSA carries much significance as Japan deliberately implemented OSA as an alternative strategy to address its security agendas, not falling into internal or external balancing. To elaborate, the research intends to classify that if Japan's objective is to balance against China, internal balancing would be shown through a focus on efforts to increase its military capability while external balancing would be strengthening alliances to deter the expansion of Chinese influence. The brilliance of OSA is that it lies somewhere outside of this framework as a pursuit of a reserved, conservative approach to addressing emerging security risks without creating unnecessary tension.

First, Japan's OSA does not imply strengthening its military capability. OSA does not increase domestic weapon acquisition, which also goes against not only public opinion but also the Peace Constitution. Second, Japan's OSA does not imply creating a strong form of alliance between like-minded countries to battle against the rise of China. Instead, OSA is focused on regional capacity building, targeting non-traditional security issues such as natural disaster relief, piracy, and other regional crises. In this way, Japan can garner increased security and cooperation without sending the wrong signals to its neighbors. Thus, it is important to note that Japan aims to find answers to its security risks and cooperation with like-minded countries through military aid, which resembles the characteristics of the U.S. FMF. In sum, we proposed a framework that would help us understand Japan's OSA as an instrument to provide military aid as an alternative form of security strategy.

44) Soeya Yoshihide, *Nihon-No Midoru-Pawa Gaiko [Japan's Middle Power Diplomacy]* (Tokyo: Chikuma-shobo, 2005).

Policy Recommendation

If OSA is built on the intentions explained in the study, there will be many challenges ahead for Japan in dealing with the problems that the U.S. has already experienced. For Japan to successfully navigate through troublesome waters, we recommend that Japan focus on the goal of non-traditional security-related cooperation. It cannot be stressed enough that Japan keeps a low profile as it establishes such cooperative relations with its recipients to avoid an unnecessary clash with China would have to be stressed in establishing such cooperative relationships with its recipients. Moreover, by enhancing the necessary defense capabilities of the recipients, Japan can benefit from intelligence sharing and reinvigorating its own defense industry through real-world testing of its equipment. In the end, this mutually beneficial and sustainable security strategy can be a pivotal tool in assisting Japan quietly and slowly but surely in changing the security dynamics of East Asia.

[Received: November 12, 2023; Revised: November 13, 2023; Accepted: November 24, 2023]

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