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NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF JAPAN (2013)

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Introduction

December 2013 represented a significant watershed in Japan's developing security and defence strategies. The discourse over Japan's supposed security normalizations had been afoot for several years. This National Security Strategy, released in the year 2013, was Japan's first holistic and integrated policy document, although there had been national security strategies but they tended to be widely assumed and debated. The Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, asserted that the documents represent a "*historic document*". It delineated Japan's aims and the strategies it would weigh up, as a crucial and accountable player, to be engage more enterprisingly to the peace, security, and welfare of the global community, remaining committed to being a, "*Proactive Contributor to Peace*" owing to its core peaceful approach.

Japan's National Security Strategy (NSS) 2013, delineated its fundamental policy on national security with an emphasis on diplomatic relations and defence strategies centered on a deep-rooted perspective of the country's national goals. Japan's first National security strategy contains several key phrases such as, "*proactive contribution to peace*", "*dynamic joint defence forces*", and "*seamless response to various situations*"¹. The policies which cited China and North Korea as threats to Japan's national security called for strengthened U.S.-Japan alliance and an expansion of the country's military capability, in part through the establishment of a marine unit and the purchase of surveillance. In today's shifting security dynamic around the world, no nation can guarantee peace and security. Nevertheless, the national security strategy of 2013, accentuated the idea of Japan as a maritime nation that aimed for an approach of "*open and stable seas*", and could only guarantee peace by diligently partaking in endeavors that would make the global community more stable and balanced. Owing to the constantly changing global environment, given the complexities arising from the persistently shifting political and security dynamic around the world, a nation encounters numerous threats. *Therefore, this paper seeks to provide a brief overview of Japan's first National Security Strategy, focusing on its main facets, an analysis, and the relevance of the strategy in the 21st century, given the intricate changes in the global environment.*

¹ "National Security Strategy of Japan". 2013.

Overview of Japan's First National Security Strategy

An unrelenting and intimidating adversary during the Second World War, Japan is conjectured to be among the United States most unwavering and competent ally in the Indo-Pacific. In the midst of a persistently challenging and evolving environment, the region is grappling to deal with the Chinese dominant ascent and a rising North Korea possessing nuclear weapons. In the face of this volatile security dynamic, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government decided to adopt unparalleled postwar measures to guarantee Japan's national security and welfare. In the year 2013, Japan had set foot in a pragmatic phase characterized by a dominant security posture, as it encountered a regional security structure primarily controlled driven by China and accentuated by Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) missile launches. Japan's security posture has long been defined by its anti-war national character, democratic system of economic progress, and military aid stance in the U.S.- Japan partnership². Japan's contentious interpretation of Article 9 and developing leadership positions in regional structure, demonstrates the country's security stimulation.

Japan released its first National Security Strategy in the year 2013, advocating the nation to make a "*proactive contribution to peace*" through global collaboration. The strategy sparked debate both domestically and internationally, over the strategy's true objectives and its purpose. The idea of proactive contribution to peace had sparked significant controversy, as to what it implied? Was it merely a political tag? Was it a mere pretext for the nation's return to pre-World War two militarism and repudiation of after war peacemaking? Challenges to Japan's defence have developed beyond the security of national sovereignty, encompassing terrorism, cyber-attacks, piracy etc. Furthermore, today, Japan's security has grown inextricably linked to other nations.

² HYONG, SUNG. 2013. "IMPACT OF JAPAN'S SECURITY STRATEGY AND POLICIES ON U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE INDO-PACIFIC". *Hsdl.Org*. <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=833062>

The idea of developing a National Security Strategy was initiated owing to the security threats becoming more complex, unpredictable and diverse, necessitating a more holistic, thorough, and coordinated approach. Several nations, including the United States, the United Kingdoms, had developed a National Security Strategy in an era of intricate and intertwined issues. This was most likely due to their willingness to outline their deep-rooted security approaches including both national and international in order to steer clear of misunderstandings. Considering the evolving security dynamic, it was crucial for the authorities to elucidate how they intend to retain security and harmony, while also safeguarding their residents during harmony as well as in crises. Furthermore, the security dynamic in Japan's immediate vicinity had transformed drastically. There were nations in Northeast Asia with substantial military forces, including those that had nuclear weapons or were developing them. Therefore, the origin of the National Security Strategy encompassed the endeavors of Japan to dissuade any attack in its vicinity and engage in diplomatic efforts to improve enhance partnership with its neighbours. Global and regional collaboration were crucial for Japan, in guaranteeing an appropriate response in an environment where one nation's security strategy would have a significant impact on others strategies, along with security concerns being progressively globalized. These factors also contributed and impelled Japan to develop its own National Security Strategy.

Was A National Security Strategy Needed?

The underlying factors for the development of Japan's first National Security Strategy were based on Japan's analysis of the international as well as regional strategic dynamics, and encompassed a comprehensive list of particular security issues. Japan's NSS was motivated by a strong perception of a transforming balance internationally, since the beginning of the 21st century. Moreover, the strategy made mention of rising nations, particularly China's growing global prominence, along with the United States altering dominance. Terrorism and challenges emanating from the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, posed particular challenges to Japan's security at an international level. Shinzo Abe's government also emphasized the challenges of

sustaining “*open and stable seas*”, which encompassed piracy, maritime mishaps, and the overall security of sea lanes of communication. The National Security Strategy distinctly used the South China Sea contention as an exemplar. The escalation of regional conflicts in the Asia-Pacific was conjectured to be the result of the changing power dynamic in the region. There was an evident apprehension about the rise of grey zone conflicts, owing to the territorial authority, which was viewed by Japan to have strained the Asia-Pacific strategic dynamic significantly. North Korea’s Ballistic Missile and nuclear programmes, along with Chinese military expansion and increased presence in the maritime domain and Japanese airspace, were among the regional security threats mentioned in the National Security Strategy, with were regarded as the driving force for the development of the strategy. Japan’s conflict with China over the Senkaku islands, were conjectured by the nation as aimed to independently alter the status quo through intimidation, and violating international law. China’s actions, according to Abe’s administration was a matter of apprehension, not only for Japan but also for the global community. In this regard, as the security dynamic around Japan became progressively strained, the need for a National Security Strategy was evident.

Analysis

The main aspect of Japan’s Security Strategy (NSS), was to prevent China from disrupting the global system. The method is a strategy that was aimed at altering the power dynamic that favored the Japanese more. With regards to funding, the NSS prioritized establishing credibility and bolstering Japan’s soft power³. The strategy aims greater ties and collaborations with several nations, in the diplomatic sphere, particularly with the United States, Australia, ASEAN, India, and the European Union. Japan’s National Security Strategy, when comprehensively analyzed has several paramount strengths and is developed skillfully.

³ Layton, Peter. 2014. "Japan’s First National Security Strategy | The Strategist". *The Strategist*. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/japans-first-national-security-strategy/>.

An important drawback in the Japanese NSS, was with regards to South Korea. Similar to Japan, South Korea was a staunch United States ally, challenged by North Korea and apprehensive about China. Despite this, Japan was reluctant to associate with South Korea that would aid in the implementation of its greater objectives. The NSS mentions Takeshima, an island contended by the nation, occupied by South Korea. Japan has territorial disputes with Russia as well as Taiwan. Japan's unwillingness to overcome these various differences implied that it will not be able to get these countries on an equal footing with its National Security Strategy. This indicated that Japan is not entirely dedicated to answering China's professed threat, and that it is preoccupied with other problems. The NSS also steered clear of utilizing all available financial tools. Fostering stronger and larger economic associations is regarded as a popular strategy of involving other countries, and stimulating their interest about your concerns. Moreover, the strategy mentions prospective free trade agreements only briefly, there could be an emphasis on much more. The success of Japan's National Security Strategy could be hampered by the nation's stubborn adherence to its traditional neo-mercantilist stance⁴. Shinzo Abe's government's presentation of the National Security Strategy did not appear to make a turning point in Japan's security strategy. Japan was apprehensive about the Chinese ascent, which was one of the key causes for Japan's security reform. Japan had taken small moves to adjust to Asia's altering power dynamic over the course of several years.

Conclusion

In the contemporary years, there has been significant progress since the time when the Japanese government adopted the first National Security Strategy. Overall, it aimed at making Japan a “*proactive contributor to peace*”, a nation that is involved and engaged in enhancing security in Asia and around the world. The strategy also suggested a rise in the Japanese defence expenditure, to realize this goal, and also fulfill an anticipated upsurge in need for a deterrent in the East China

⁴ Layton, Peter. 2014. "Japan's First National Security Strategy | The Strategist". *The Strategist*. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/japans-first-national-security-strategy/>.

Sea as well as North Korea. Nonetheless, contemporarily, the Kishida government in Japan has been working towards developing a new National Security Strategy. This new strategy is conjectured to lay significant emphasis on Japan's analysis of China, encompassing its continuous hostile stance to the existing structure.

The NSS released in the year 2013, aimed to counter the increasing security risks associated with China's expanding dominance, along with North Korea's nuclear and missile building initiatives. The NSS aimed for a proactive pacifism centered on the idea of global collaboration, by persistently ameliorating Japanese security capabilities and expanding its partnership with the United States. However, today the notion of national security has broadened significantly since the year 2013. For instance, the ongoing dispute between Russia and Ukraine, as well as illicit operations in the various domains like marine have become more common, further edging the state of affairs into grey-zone clashes. Furthermore, it has been witnessed that there is a greater power struggle particularly between nations like the United States and China. Therefore, it is necessary for Japan to develop a strategy particularly directed toward China, in order to counter its endeavors to alter the regions state of affairs and power dynamic. Moreover, developing technologies like the AI have transformed the idea of national security, and with the emergence of such technologies the security dynamic will persist to transform, demanding an all-embracing strategy. The development of new National Security Strategy should focus on the U.S-Japan ties, since it is a bedrock of peace, balance, and security of the Indo-Pacific. Japan should adopt a more active role and collaborate with the United States to answer to grey-zone menaces by increasing the opportunity of partnership in various domains.

The new National Security Strategy must encompass economic security, owing to the constant economic changes across the world. A well-defined idea of the variety of security menaces and challenges is also a paramount facet of any security strategy. While considering Japan, it will need to decipher if China as a menace will be enshrined as a prime concern. Nonetheless, the NSS should include freedom and resilience to safeguard Japan's capability to strongly counter the emanating menaces. Japan's idea of a new NSS will certainly place its relationship with the United States at its foundation, as well as its security interest with countries like Australia, India, ASEAN etc. In today's globalized era, Japan as a staunch proponent of rules-based system, is required to strengthen and enterprisingly mobilize resources. The nation is exuding a new sense of assurance,

owing to its commitment to broaden the scope of positive pacifism in setting the strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific.