

RMS⁺



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The introduction of 5th generation combat aircraft substantially enhances the counter air, interdiction and force projection options of Japan.
Photo © JSDF.

Editorial

Small States and Security

COL (GS) Dr. Alexandre J. Vautravers
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Japan and Switzerland may be distant geographically, but share many values and interests and they both deal with a number of very similar issues. The instability of the post-Cold War years, more recently the global arms race and the rise of tensions and international armed conflicts, have challenged both countries' traditional security policies and have sparked discussions, reforms, efforts and new responses.

The "dividends of peace" are long gone. The rearmament and arms race led by Russia and China place Japan in a high risk environment. The growth of Asian economies, regional and global trade, high technology and high added value exports since the 1970s account for a substantial proportion of world trade - and increasingly as well, a substantial proportion of the world energy maritime transportation.

The rise of China, the complicated history and political alliances in the region, account for increasingly contested waters and airspace - not to mention territories sometimes contested since 1945 or earlier.

This has obliged Japan to increase its defense posture, presence and deterrence. With the development and the stockpiling of increasing numbers of strategic and long-range weapons, the notion of "defence" must also

evolve and puts heavier demands on surveillance and early warning capabilities, anticipation and intelligence resources. But 'all eyes and talk' and 'no hands' is not a credible option against such strategic threats. Japan has, therefore, recently committed substantial efforts to its anti-missile (ABM) defences, its airborne early warning (AEW) and counter-air capabilities. With the recently announced doubling of the budget to 2% of its GDP, new capabilities will also be acquired : in particular highly mobile projection forces and retaliatory deep strikes against standoff weapons.

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MAJOR GENERAL Mathias Tüscher, President, ARMS



DDH-182 JS Ise of the Hyuga class, with its escort, lead by destroyer JS Ashigara, of the Atago class.

The interview below was recorded by CAP Kota Otani, of the Embassy of Japan in Berne. All photos © JSDF.

International

Japan Defense Paper 2022

H.E. Yoshinori Fujiyama

Ambassador of Japan to the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein

RMS: Your Excellency, you have been in Switzerland for half a year. What is your assessment of the strengths and security policy of Switzerland?

Switzerland's strength lies in the fact that, while upholding its neutrality, it shares universal values such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law. Switzerland conducts its foreign and security policy based on these values.

For example, Switzerland, in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, condemned Russia's action as a violation of international law and decided to impose sanctions in line with the EU, which is highly appreciated by the international community. Japan also commends Switzerland's initiative in organizing the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano in July of last year.

Switzerland is also, for the first time, serving as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council this year and next year, together with Japan. Both countries attach great importance to the rule of law. This is exemplified by Foreign Minister Cassis' attendance of the open debate on the rule of law hosted by Japan in the Security Council. As the foundations of the international order are being shaken by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan would like to continue to cooperate with Switzerland and strongly promote the strengthening of the international order based on the rule of law.

RMS: Switzerland is neutral and its defence policy traditionally is defensive in nature. But in recent years more and more cooperation and participation in Peace support operations have taken place. Do you see similarities with Japan's situation and policy?

Indeed, the situation and policies of Japan and Switzerland are similar in that the defence policy has traditionally been defensive and that cooperation and participation in peace support operations has become more common.

Japan, as a peace-loving nation, maintains the policy of

“Proactive Contribution to Peace” based on international cooperation. In terms of international peace cooperation, Japan has, in accordance with the Peacekeeping Operations Law, sent a total of more than 12,500 personnel to 29 UN peacekeeping missions over the past 30 years since 1992. Japan will continue to build on its past achievements and actively contribute in the field where Japan is competitive by strengthening its capacity-building support and sending troops and individuals, to those places in need.

However, unlike Switzerland, Japan is not a neutral country. The Japan-US alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's security policy.

Japan will develop diplomatic initiatives to prevent crises, to proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment and to strengthen the free and open international order. The government intends to strengthen the operational capabilities of the Japan-US alliance, and to build and expand a multi-layered network of allies and like-minded countries in addition to the Japan-US alliance.

RMS: Can you share with us the plans and most recent reforms in Japan's security policy?

Last December, the Japanese government renewed its national security strategy after almost nine years. The basic ideas of the National Security Strategy are as follows.

The free and open international order is under serious challenge, and Japan faces the most severe and complex security environment of the post-war era. The line between times of crisis and times of peace, military and non-military, has become blurred, and a wide range of security issues have arisen, not only in the traditional areas of diplomacy and defence, but also in economic, technological, and other areas.

In such circumstances, Japan must maintain peace and security, strengthen the free and open international order, and realise an international environment in which Japan